

CASE OF HUMAN INFESTATION BY A DOG TAPEWORM

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A fecal sample from a two-year-old boy was sent by Dr. José S. Belaval to the laboratory of the Presbyterian Hospital to be examined for parasites. Being uncertain as to the findings, Dr. Charles Weiss referred the specimen to the writer who found that it contained proglottids and uterine capsules of *Dipylidium caninum*, the common dog tapeworm. Since the child was in good health, with no intestinal or other symptoms, the infestation would probably have remained undetected but for the mother's discovery of worm segments in the child's feces, and hers and the physician's interest in determining the nature of the worm.

Human infestation by this tapeworm is rare, judging from the small number of published cases. Brumpt in his "Precis de Parasitologie" (1927) records only sixty. The cases reported have all been individuals, chiefly children, who have associated intimately with dogs. In the present case, Dr. Belaval states that the child is known to have played so much with dogs that it was a matter of comment.

One of the intermediate hosts of *D. caninum* is the dog flea. Infection of the dog results from his catching and eating fleas that harbor the cystocercoid forms of the worm. Presumably human infection takes place through a similar accidental ingestion.

The case herewith recorded is the first to be reported from Porto Rico, so far as our review of the literature shows. For this reason alone the observation seems worthy of publication.