

Amongst these cases of the inheritance of monstrous deviations, those are specially interesting which consist in an abnormal increase or decrease of the number five in the fingers or toes of man. It is not unfrequently observed in families through several generations, that individuals have six fingers on each hand, or six toes on each foot. Less frequent is the number of four or seven fingers or toes. The unusual formation arises at first from a single individual who, from unknown causes, is born with an excess of the usual number of fingers and toes, and transmits these, by inheritance, to a portion of his descendants. In one and the same family it has happened that, throughout three, four, or more generations, individuals have possessed six fingers and toes. In a Spanish family there were no less than forty individuals distinguished by this excess. The transmission of the sixth finger or toe is not permanent or enduring in all cases, because six-fingered people always intermarry again with those possessing five fingers. If a six-fingered family were to propagate by pure in-breeding, if six-fingered men were always to marry six-fingered women, this characteristic would become permanent, and a special six-fingered human race would arise. But as six-fingered men usually marry five-fingered women, and *vice versâ*, their descendants for the most part show a very mixed numerical relation, and finally, after the course of some generations, revert again to the normal number of five. Thus, for example, among eight children of a six-fingered father and a five-fingered mother, two children may have on both hands and feet six fingers and toes, four children may have a mixed number, and two children may have the usual number of five on both hands and feet. In a Spanish family, each child except the