

child has a bearing upon incidence. Only children do not appear to be spoiled as frequently as in the case of two-children families, but delinquency is more common in the former than in the latter.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Epilepsy as an Exaggerated Form of Normal Cerebral Inhibition.
(*Amer. Journ. Psychiat.*, January, 1931.) Rosett, J.

Normal consciousness is composed of elements which are known as states of attention. Each moment of attention embodies the complete series of the epileptic seizure. A diminished orientation is habitually accepted as the normal result of a small but intense amount of co-existing sensory activity. Different states of attention correspond to specific chemical changes in the body. The phenomena of an epileptic seizure are directly caused by the process known as inhibition. Any condition which disturbs the chemical, physical or mechanical balance of the nervous system may result in a facilitation of the normal process of cerebral inhibition, with the appearance of epileptic seizures as the consequence.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

3. Psychiatry.

Manic-Depressive Psychosis. The Relation of Hereditary Factors to the Clinical Course. (*Arch. of Neur. and Psychiat.*, December, 1930.) Paskind, H. A.

The author studied 485 extra-mural cases of manic-depressive insanity to find if there was any relation between familial neuropathic factors and the age of onset, the duration of the attacks and the length of the intervals. He states that the most benign course of the disease is found in cases in which the family history is entirely free from taint. Here the onset tends to be comparatively late. In cases where both parents have a neuropathic taint, the disease runs a more severe course. The onset is earlier, the attacks are longer and the intervals shorter. Cases in which migraine was detected in a parent had comparatively severe courses, the intervals were short and the age of onset two years below the median value for the whole group.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Archaic Regressive Phenomena as a Defence Mechanism in Schizophrenia. (*Arch. of Neur. and Psychiat.*, November, 1930.) Levin, M.

Levin points out that recent work, particularly that of Störch, has shown that schizophrenia is a regression to a phylogenetically archaic type of behaviour. The behaviour and mode of thought of the schizophrenic is to some extent similar to that of primitive races. When regression serves as a protective mechanism it may indicate that a certain amount of adjustment is possible even if it is