

It is first shown how the psychical functions are influenced by physiological, pharmacological and pathological variations of the vegetative tone. Next, evidence of hypersympatheticotonus (an ergotropic disposition) in states of mania, agitated melancholia, hallucinatory confusion and catatonic excitement is demonstrated. The therapeutic effect of prolonged narcosis is explained as being due to the modifying influence it exerts upon the vegetative tone.

By recognizing the part played by the vegetative apparatus in regulating psychical function, it is possible to understand the importance of constitution and temperament in determining the form which the psychosis in a given case will take.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

The Polypeptides of the Blood and Cerebro-spinal Fluid in General Paralysis [Les polypeptides du sang et du liquide céphalo-rachidien dans la paralysie générale]. (L'Encéph., vol. xxxii [ii], p. 1, June, 1937.) Claude, H., Dublineau, J., Marquin, P., et Bonnard, Mlle.

From investigations on 16 cases it is concluded that in general paralysis the polypeptide level in the cerebro-spinal fluid is nearly always raised. This increase is independent of polypeptidæmia or of hepatic insufficiency. Following malarial therapy the cerebro-spinal fluid polypeptide level diminishes in those cases in which clinical improvement takes place, while remaining at a high level in unimproved subjects. The writers consider that the cerebro-spinal fluid polypeptide curve has a prognostic significance. They are not satisfied that leucocytolysis alone explains the augmentation of the polypeptides in general paralysis.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

An Investigation of the Blood and Cerebro-spinal Fluid Polypeptides in Mental Disorders [Recherches sur les polypeptides du sang et du liquide céphalo-rachidien dans les maladies mentales]. (L'Encéph., vol. xxxii [ii], p. 57, July-August, 1937.) Claude, H., Dublineau, J., Bonnard, Sy. H., et Bonnard, Mlle.

The authors find that in states of excitement, with evidence of hepato-renal dysfunction, the cerebro-spinal polypeptide level is increased, and that as a rule there is a concomitant hyperpolypeptidæmia. In this group it is probable that the increased level in the blood is due to the hepato-renal dysfunction, and that the polypeptides filter from the blood into the cerebro-spinal fluid. In certain cases an isolated hyperpolypeptidæmia is discovered or an increase in the blood and cerebro-spinal fluid level without evidence of hepato-renal dysfunction. Here it is thought possible that the disordered nervous system may exert an influence on the polypeptide equilibrium. In a larger group of cases, including general paralytics and hebephrenic and catatonic schizophrenics, the polypeptide level in the cerebro-spinal fluid only is augmented. The explanations suggested are leucocytolysis, neurolysis and modifications due to the influence exerted by a disordered nervous system.

STANLEY M. COLEMAN.

6. Pharmacology and Treatment.

Influence of Diet upon the Action of Phenobarbital Sodium. (Journ. Lab. Clin. Med., vol. xxii, pp. 1130-2, 1937.) Nedzel, A. J.

Injection of phenobarbital sodium in doses of 0.8 grm. per kg. of body weight produce prolonged general narcosis in a large number of rabbits maintained on an oat diet. A smaller number of those on a diet of carrots undergo complete narcosis. Those on a mixed diet undergo narcosis more quickly, but the narcosis is of shorter duration.

E. R. MAIN (Chem. Abstr.).