

Cholesterol and Lecithin Content of the Blood in Cryptogenic Epilepsy. (*Arch. of Neur. and Psychiat.*, vol. xxix, Jan., 1933.) Rosen, I., Krasnow, F., and Notkin, J.

The authors investigated 47 cases of epilepsy. They found that the average values for the cholesterol and lecithin content did not differ from the normal. All specimens of spinal fluid examined (20) contained small amounts of cholesterol.

No correlation was apparent between the cholesterol content of the spinal fluid and that of the blood.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

7. Criminology.

Psychology of Crime. I. (*Brit. Journ. of Med. Psych.*, vol. xii, 1932.) Good, T. S.

The author deals with this subject on the basis of his own experience, giving as the three groups from which he considers criminals originate—mental defectives, moral defectives and unstable supernormals.

He states that crime is now, in the opinion of many, a mental illness, and is due to faulty upbringing in childhood. The anti-social behaviour is essentially due to a conflict between the instincts of self-preservation and sex—that is, between egoistic and altruistic tendencies.

Psychology of Crime. II: The Place of Psychology in the Treatment of Delinquents.
Field, H. E.

This article gives a survey of the study of crime by an understanding of mental mechanisms, conscious and unconscious. The treatment of the criminal by psychological analysis is probably not applicable at all in some cases, and often where applicable it is not by itself sufficient. Burt has reported considerable success in treating some young offenders by graded moral exercises. It is pointed out that some authorities consider crime as a mental disease, but others regard it as merely an environmental reaction. The primary aim in treatment is to check anti-social conduct, and the secondary aims are the improvement of morals and culture. It is noted that the results of treatment at Borstal are such that 60–70% of the ex-inmates do not again come in conflict with the law.

The question of punishment is discussed. Belief in the efficacy of punishment alone as a cure for delinquency has been well shaken. Treatment and training are now in the foreground of the policies of modern penal authorities. At Borstal deprivations of privileges, which are appeals at the pleasure-pain level, are much used, especially in combination with explanation and persuasion. Punishment is one of the devices necessary to bring or to keep certain individuals in touch with reality, but it is a dangerous instrument and may stimulate unhealthy trends, as, for example, a wish for punishment.

Psychotherapy has an unanswerable claim to be included amongst the treatment devices provided by institutions dealing with delinquents. Healy and Burt have established that among young delinquents, mental problems arise that call for and respond to systematic psychological analysis.

In England and in the United States of America the public has been educated as to the value of psychology in the treatment of criminals, but little has been done to educate the delinquent population as to what they can gain from applied psychology. The author thinks that selected mental hygiene literature might be given to the inmates of penal institutions, provided that care be taken not to weaken the sense of personal responsibility and not to encourage mental invalidism. In the Borstal system during the past few years psychological examination of intellect and temperament has been carried out for the purposes of diagnosis and classification. At Feltham provision has been made for formal psychological treatment.