

Schaefer himself found that the mean amount of albumen in the spinal fluid was—

1. In dementia after apoplexy . . . 0.25—0.3 per mil.
2. In secondary dementia . . . 0.3 —0.5 „
3. In congenital weak-mindedness . . . 0.33—0.5 „
4. In epileptic dementia . . . 0.3 —0.5 „

In four cases of this form it was 0.75—1.5 per mil.

Dr. Schaefer gives as the general result of his researches that in general paralysis the pressure of the cerebro-spinal fluid is notably increased, as also the proportion of albumen, and that in the other forms of mental impairment the pressure of this fluid is almost always higher than in the normal condition. WILLIAM W. IRELAND.

6. Treatment of Insanity.

The Serum Therapeutics of Epilepsy [La sieroterapia dell' epilessia].
(*Arch. di Psichiat.*, vol. xxiii, fasc. 4, 5, 1902.) Roncoroni.

The author criticises adversely the experiments and theories of Dr. Ceni published in a paper analysed by Dr. Sainsbury in this JOURNAL (*vide* page 782), and records a series of observations which he has made with a view to testing Ceni's results.

In Ceni's cases any favourable effects of the serum injections were evident within the first fortnight of treatment. Roncoroni has therefore assumed that a relatively short period of experiment is sufficient for decision, and his observations have accordingly been made within a period of three months.

Serum from one female and five male epileptics was injected at regular intervals and in increasing doses into eight other patients—six epileptics, one dement, and one imbecile. No effect whatever was produced either on the body-weight or on the frequency of the fits. In further experiments serum from two of the epileptics and from the two non-epileptics in the above series, taken at the beginning of the second month of treatment, was similarly injected in progressively increasing doses into four other epileptics. Here also the results were entirely negative. In none of the experiments were any toxic effects noted.

These observations accordingly are in contradiction with Ceni's theory of a "specific stimulating substance" in the blood-serum in epilepsy, and also with the hypothesis that the serum in epileptics contains any substance capable of determining the formation of epileptic antitoxins. W. C. SULLIVAN.

Clinical Treatment of Inebriety. (Quarterly Journ. of Inebriety, vol. xxiv, No. 2, April, 1902.) Crothers.

In this paper the author has put together some general observations suggested by his exceptional experience in the treatment of the inebriate. It is noteworthy that, on the whole, his attitude is distinctly optimistic. In the first place he pleads for more discrimination

of cases. He distinguishes three classes of inebriates : (1) paroxysmal cases, where there are often premonitory symptoms in change of character, morbid impulses, etc., treatment of which may abort the attack ; (2) delusional inebriates with mental exaltation, which may be prodromal to general paralysis ; for such cases rest and change with eliminative and subsequently tonic treatment are indicated ; and (3) senile and demented cases.

Crothers attaches a high value to treatment by suggestion, but holds that, at least in its simple form, it is never sufficient alone to effect a cure. He insists on the need of supplementing it by drugs and physical methods, having as their end—first, the promotion of elimination by skin, bowel, and kidneys ; and secondly, the re-establishment of nervous tone. For the latter purpose strychnine is the most useful agent amongst drugs.

Regarding the home treatment of cases of delirium tremens, the author advocates the use of massage and hot baths with mild purgation in the early stages, and is strongly opposed to the exhibition of narcotics. He adds a word of warning, by no means superfluous, against the dangers of over-feeding in the early stages of the attack ; at this time the risk of exhaustion is usually small compared with that of further poisoning the patient with products of intestinal fermentation.

W. C. SULLIVAN.

The Suppression of Salts of Chlorine from the Diet in the Treatment of Epilepsy by Bromides [*La diète hypochlorinée dans le traitement bromique de l'épilepsie*]. (*Rev. de Psychiat.*, No. 4, April, 1902.)
Cappelletti and D'Ormea.

The authors give the results of their treatment of epileptics by the method suggested by Richet and Toulouse, according to whom diminution of the excess of chlorides present in the organism favours the curative action of bromide salts in epilepsy without disturbing appreciably the normal physiological metabolism. They experimented on twenty patients, eleven men and nine women, who were taking from 45 to 120 grains of bromide *per diem*. Chlorine was suppressed from the diet. They noted the number of crises during the six months preceding this special treatment, during the forty days of treatment, and during the two months following. A brief history of each case is given. No objection to the treatment occurred on the part of the patients. Their general conclusions may be thus summarised :

(1) The diet suggested by Richet and Toulouse has a marked effect, and is undoubtedly efficacious, with regard to the number, severity, and duration of the convulsive seizures ; (2) this diet produces no appreciable harm ; (3) the psychical condition is often improved under this method of treatment ; (4) the general nutrition improves in the majority of cases ; (5) the suppression of the treatment by diet does not do away, at all events for some time, with the improvement observed, and causes no exacerbation of the convulsive attacks, even when suddenly effected ; (6) the return to a diet including chlorides does not improve the condition of the general nutrition. The authors give tables showing the number of attacks during treatment, body-weights, etc.

H. J. MACEVOY.