

Part III.—Epitome of Current Literature.*

1. Anatomy and Physiology of Nervous System.

The Effect of Adrenaline on Vasomotor Reflexes. (*Quart. Journ. Exptl. Physiol.*, vol. xxvii, pp. 307-17, 1938.) *Chu, Liang-Wei, and Hsu, Fong-Yen.*

In anaesthetized vagotomized dogs, continuous infusion of adrenaline solution depresses vasomotor activity. This depression, localized in the constrictor centre, is largely due to afferent impulses from the carotid sinus, with the chemical receptors playing a major role. A diffuse vasostatic reflex is also accentuated by the presence of adrenaline in the perfusion blood. R. BROWN (Chem. Abstr.).

Alleged Convulsant Properties of Brain Extracts. (*Proc. Soc. Exptl. Biol. Med.*, vol. xxxvii, pp. 543-7, 1937.) *Keith H. M., and McEachern, D.*

Saline extract of the brain residue remaining after acetone extraction and also the acetone fraction were prepared from the normal cat, and from the cat undergoing convulsions due to thujone or electric stimulation. Such extracts when injected into normal cats or rabbits caused marked constitutional symptoms due to cardiac depression, but were without specific convulsant effect on the central nervous system. The claims of Kroll were not substantiated (*cf. C.A.*, xxx, p. 1112).

C. V. BAILEY (Chem. Abstr.).

The Weights of the Brain and of its Parts, of the Spinal Cord and the Eyeballs in the Adult Cat. (*Journ. Comp. Neurol.*, vol. lxxviii, pp. 395-404, 1938.) *Latimer, H. B.*

The brain as well as the spinal cord is absolutely heavier in the male cat, but it forms a larger percentage of the body-weight in the female. The weight of the brain is correlated with that of the spinal cord. The weights of the two eyeballs form significant correlations with body-length in both sexes and with body-weight in the males. RACHEL BROWN (Chem. Abstr.).

Relation of the Cerebral Cortex to the Grasp Reflex and to Postural and Righting Reflexes. (*Arch. Neur. and Psychiat.*, vol. xxxix, p. 433, Mar., 1938.) *Bieber, I., and Fulton, J. F.*

The neck and labyrinthine reflexes and the righting reflexes of Magnus and de Kleyn are normally suppressed by the cerebral cortex. Bilateral ablation of the premotor field (area 6a) and of the motor area (area 4) of an adult monkey or baboon releases the righting reflexes and occasionally the neck and labyrinthine reactions. At the same time the animal exhibits a stereotyped postural pattern identical with that described by Magnus for the thalamic monkey. When the animal is turned over, the postural pattern is reversed. The grasp reflex varies with the position of the body in space, directly with the righting reflexes, and is also to some extent influenced by the neck and labyrinthine reflexes when these are present. Stretching

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of the digital tendons is the most effective stimulus for the grasp. After complete deafferentation of the arm muscles, tension on the shoulder muscles evokes the grasp in an animal with the thalamic reflex pattern. When the shoulder muscles have also been deafferentated the grasp can be elicited by moving the animal rapidly through space. It is concluded that the grasp is an integral part of the body-righting reflex mechanism.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

2. Psychology and Psychopathology.

Present Tendencies in Psychotherapy [*Les tendances actuelles en psychothérapie*]. (*L'Encéphale*, vol. xxxiii, p. 105, Mar., 1938.) Malamud, W.

Psychotherapy has as its fundamental problem the individual maladapted to his milieu. This problem should be approached in a systematic manner. First the immediate precipitating situation is investigated. Next the personal and family history are examined for factors sensitizing the individual to such a reaction. Then a more detailed analysis of the immediate condition is undertaken, in order to determine what portions of the psyche are involved in the maladjustment and what portions, being left intact, may be utilized for readaptation. Regarding therapy, the writer, a follower of Meyer, strongly condemns an obstinate predilection on the part of the therapist for any one psychological theory. Each case must be treated on its merits, and the most suitable treatment for the particular individual decided upon. Physio-therapy, the various forms of analytic therapy, tutelary guidance, social service and the readjustment of the milieu, suggestion and persuasion all have their place. In a stubborn patient, it is suggested, the combined force of these methods may be brought into action. Finally, it is argued, psychotherapy is not only a science but an art. Human nature is infinite in its variations and no two psychopaths are identical. Theory and practice are not enough; the creative artist must adapt himself to the individual case and the new experience.

S. M. COLEMAN.

Some Palæobiological and Biopsychical Reflections. (*Int. Journ. of Psycho-anal.*, vol. xix, p. 214, Apr., 1938.) Bonaparte, M.

From the very beginning of living matter, self-preservation has required that the protoplasm shall protect itself on the one hand from disintegration of its own substance, and on the other hand from penetration from without. In contradistinction to this, propagation of the species has required that certain diametrically opposite processes shall take place. The conjugation of two cells implies the penetration of one substance by another which remains active and alive and has not, as happens in nutrition, first been rendered innocuous by the digestive juices and its prior death. The act of fission involves a disintegration of the substance, which if continued would result in annihilation. It is suggested that the protoplasmic substance is biologically aware of these two dangers, that they are transmitted throughout the whole course of evolution down to man himself, and that they thus constitute the most primitive source both of the perforation complex and the castration complex which analysts discover at work in men and in women.

S. M. COLEMAN.

Adaptation to Reality in Early Infancy. (*Psychoanal. Quart.*, vol. vii, p. 200, Apr., 1938.) Benedek, T.

According to the psycho-analytic theory the course of gratification of instinctual needs during the period immediately following birth is: instinctual need—crying—gratification. The next step is: need—hallucinated gratification—crying—real gratification—sleep. Later, following real gratification, the child does not immediately sleep; he sucks playfully at the nipple or plays with his hands. The libidinal satisfaction keeps the child awake, and being awake enables him to perceive the environment beyond the immediate satisfaction of the need.