

phenol) derive their importance from the fact that they form an excellent index of the degree of intestinal putrefaction and absorption. The authors estimated them by Salkowsky's method in the urine of four epileptics, and in three cases of sitiophobia. The epileptic cases were specially chosen from cases showing clinically gastro-intestinal disorder. With the approach of an epileptic fit or of the disturbance which may replace it, the quantity of the ethereal sulphates was increased, reaching its highest point with the onset of the fit, returning slowly in some cases, immediately in others, to a normal degree of elimination. The cases of sitiophobia were associated with marked hallucinations in one case, with melancholia in another, and in the third with delusions of persecution and poisoning. The authors, taking into consideration the composition of the diet on which they were forcibly fed, come to the conclusion that there is in these cases disturbance of intestinal function and especially putrefaction of the albuminoids, as evidenced by the increase of the sulphates excreted. Whenever food was taken spontaneously, the tables show a marked decrease of these decomposition products.

J. R. GILMOUR.

*Alkalinity of the Blood in Certain Mental Diseases [L' alcalinità del sangue in alcune malattie mentali]. (Riv. di Patol. nerv. e ment., July, 1899.) Lambranzi, R.*

The writer has examined the blood in several groups of cases. The results obtained were that the alkalinity varied within physiological limits in hypochondria (3 cases), in adolescent insanity (6 cases), in senile insanity (5 cases), in hysteria (3 cases), and in imbecility (10 cases). In alternating cases (9) the alkalinity varied in the two periods, being lower during the state of excitement, especially when accompanied by marked motor signs, but within physiological range. The alkalinity was reduced in seven cases of general paralysis. It was also probably below normal in a case of myxœdema with imbecility. The most interesting cases were the epileptics (10 cases). In them, the author found that the alkalinity of the blood was reduced during the convulsion, and also for a short period both before and after it. He considers that, in epilepsy and general paralysis, the diminution is due to substances in direct relation to the disease, these being periodic in the former class, and permanent in the latter.

J. R. GILMOUR.

*Brain of an Epileptic Idiot [Cerveau d'idiote épileptique]. (Journ. de Méd. de Bord., Jan. 7, 1900.) Gentes.*

The clinical record of this case is incomplete. The patient, however, had numerous signs of degeneration (malformation of the pinna, arched palate, irregular dentition, etc.), and she suffered from typical epileptic fits.

The brain was asymmetrical, the left half being smaller than the right; the lumen of the cerebral arteries was narrower on the left side than on the right, and there was evidence of premature synostosis of the bones on the left side of the cranial vault. In addition to this there was a subarachnoid cyst, the size of a hen's egg, situated at the postero-superior extremity of the left fissure of Sylvius.