Malarial Therapy in Non-Syphilitic Psychoses [Malarioterapia en las psicosis no luéticas]. (Archivos de Neurobiología, vol. xii, Sept.–Oct., 1932.) Bianchini, M. L., and Nardi, J.

Malarial treatment in non-syphilitic psychoses promises positive results. Easy of application and free from drawback, it should be employed as the routine method of treatment in early cases of schizophrenia, in manic-depressive psychosis (preferably in the excited phase), and in all syndromes of cortical psychomotor irritation. In schizophrenia, cures have occurred in 8% of cases and improvements in 16% ; the figures for manic-depressive psychosis are 23% and 20% respectively. The mortality, as reported from all parts of the world, works out at 0·77% of all cases, and some of these deaths occurred from causes independent of the malaria. The clinical symptoms produced are similar to those observed in the treatment of general paralysis, and the mechanism of action is probably identical. Transmission of blood from malarialized general paralytics to non-syphilitic patients, or *vice versâ*, is quite unobjectionable. The method has proved of no avail in post-encephalitic parkinsonianism and in epileptic psychoses. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

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7. Pathology and Biochemistry.

Pathology of Central Nervous System in Diseases of the Liver. (Arch. Neur. and Psychiat., vol. xxix, May, 1933.) Crandall, L. A., and Weil, A.

The authors experimented on dogs, producing hepatic damage by ligation of the common bile-ducts and pancreatic ducts, and on rats, producing hepatic damage by ligation of the common bile-duct. They find that following these procedures substances appear in the serum on the fourth day approximately, which act destructively on the spinal cord of rats in test-tube experiments. These toxins are not identical with the lipases, which are increased simultaneously ; they are excreted through the choroid plexus or through the walls of the cerebral vessels. The toxic effect is most marked at the place of elimination and highest concentration. Here there is a spongy necrosis of the walls of the ventricles, or foci of œdema and demyelinization in the cortex are produced. Proliferation of glia occurs simultaneously with the formation of dense felts of fibrous glia.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Are the Histological Lesions of Dementia Paralytica Specific? (Amer. Journ. Psychiat., vol. xii, Jan., 1933.) Wertham, F.

Much stress used to be laid upon the changes in the nervous parenchyma. Increasing knowledge has shown that the diagnostic import of these changes becomes increasingly doubtful. Three types of lesion have been regarded as cardinal signs : (1) Infiltration of small blood-vessels with plasma-cells ; (2) Proliferation of Hortega-cells ; (3) Deposits of iron-pigment in adventitial cells in the intra-adventitial spaces of blood-vessels, and in Hortega-cells. The author has found a spontaneous disease of the brain in chickens ; and in this the histological picture has the closest resemblance to that of dementia paralytica. He concludes that the histological changes in dementia paralytica are a general reaction of the brain, not caused only by the *Spirochæta pallida* (for examinations of the chicken's brain for that organism were entirely negative). The question expressed in the title must therefore be answered in the negative.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Effect of Ephedrine on Blood-sugar Mobilization in Chronic Encephalitis. (Journ. of Nerv. and Ment. Dis., vol. lxxvii, April, 1933.) Finkelman, I.

Ephedrine hydrochloride was used as a sympatheticomimetic drug to observe its effect on blood-sugar mobilization in chronic encephalitis. Seven out of 14

blood-sugar curves obtained in chronic encephalitis showed a reversal of the ephedrine action. The author considers that these results confirm the evidence in favour of the existence of a parasympathetic predominance in this disease. It also speaks against the presence of local liver changes in the disease.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Blood Cholesterol Studies in Mental Disease. (*Amer. Journ. Psychiat., vol. xii, May,* 1933.) *Schube, P. G.*

A study of the blood cholesterol in schizophrenia is presented. There is a tendency to a lowered blood cholesterol in schizophrenia as a group. There are cases of schizophrenia in which the blood cholesterol is normal or increased, but the majority of cases show values below the lower limit of normal, or in the lower limits of the normal range. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Bromide Metabolism in Manic-Depressive Psychosis [*El metabolismo del bromo en la psicosis maníaco-depresiva endógena*]. (*Archivos de Neurobiología, vol. xiii, Jan.–Feb.,* 1933.) *Sacristán, J. M., and Peraita, M.*

Applying Roman's method of investigation, the authors conclude that in manic-depressive psychosis the bromide level in the blood appears to fall in a regular and constant manner. Normal values are reached when the clinical picture indicates an improvement. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

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8. Oligophrenia (Mental Deficiency).

Birth Lesion as a Category of Mental Deficiency. (*Amer. Journ. Orthopsychiat., vol. iii, Jan.,* 1933.) *Doll, E. A.*

The best general term for these conditions is " intracranial birth lesion " rather than " birth injury ". The lesions present at birth are not invariably caused by birth. The most conspicuous features are spasticity and athetosis. Mental retardation is not an indispensable symptom; birth lesions are often associated with high intelligence. Prematurity and first birth strongly predispose toward birth lesions. All extremes of behaviour in the newly-born child are to be regarded with suspicion. The lesions are not progressive after the first few days of life. Heredity is relatively unimportant. The mental examination of the birth-injured subject presents special problems. The handicaps of verbal and motor expression, which are the distinguishing marks in these subjects, greatly increase the difficulties of examination. M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

Size in Mental Deficiency. (*Journ. of Neur. and Psychopathol., vol. xiii, April,* 1933.) *Ashby, W. R., and Stewart, R. M.*

Two hundred and sixty-nine male defectives were examined by the authors. They found that head size diminished with decreasing intelligence. This falling-off affected equally head length, head breadth, head height and ear-to-ear measurements. Brain volume, when made comparable, altered in the same way. The falling-off was most marked among the idiots. Body weight, arm length and foot length all vary with alterations of mental age. (See paper on "The Measurement of the Corpus Callosum", p. 553.)

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

Nature of Feeble-mindedness. (*Amer. Journ. Psychiat., vol. xii, May,* 1933.) *Myerson, A.*

The most practical working field is the influence of environment upon germplasm, and upon the mind and personality of the human being. Uterine conditions should be a sphere for research. A careful study is needed of nutrition before pregnancy, and of the effects of infectious diseases upon ovulation. It is possible