

Studies in the Excretion of Phosphoric Acid in Urine in the Psychoses [*Studien über die Entleerung von Phosphorsäure mit dem Harn bei Psychosen*]. (*Zeitschr. für die gez. Neur. und Psychiat.*, April, 1924.) Tsuchiya, S.

In this paper the author describes his work on the estimation of the diurnal phosphoric acid in the urine, which he determined by precipitation with uranium nitrate. He states on the authority of Votaire that of the total thus found about two-thirds are excreted as potassium phosphate and one-third as phosphates of sodium, magnesium and calcium, while between 1 and 5 per cent. is in organic combination.

In his series of 10 normal people the average daily excretion was 1.5 to 5.6 gm. phosphoric acid, which agrees with observations by others. In 11 cases of neurasthenia the average excretion was 2.4 times that of the normals; 2 cases had normal values, while of the rest the lowest was equal to the highest normal, and many were very high—the highest being 13.3 gm. This increase is mainly in the calcium phosphate, and is greatest in the cases where sleep was poor. This is ascribed by Klemperer to an increased acidity of the gastric secretion, which leads to greater absorption of calcium as chloride, with diminished excretion by the bowel.

In 18 manic-depressive cases there was an average increase of more than twice the normal, both in excited and depressed cases, and in those convalescing; the highest values were 24 gm. in an improving maniac and 9.9 in an improving melancholic, while a number of both were within normal limits.

In 5 epileptics specimens examined before and shortly after an attack, the lowest values were before and the highest shortly after a fit, while the average was about twice the normal.

In 20 cases of dementia præcox, 9 hebephrenics, not very advanced cases, and 2 dementia paranoides showed values on the average slightly lower than normal; in quiet catatonics the average was 1.3 times the normal, while in excited ones it was about twice normal.

In dementia paralytica 16 cases gave an average of 1.6 times the normal, while in 3 who died within twenty-four hours after the specimens were taken there were enormous values—37, 27 and 17 gm.

M. R. BARKAS.

Dementia Præcox: Some Preliminary Observations on Brains from Carefully Selected Cases and a Consideration of Certain Sources of Error. (*Amer. Journ. Psychiat.*, January, 1924.) Dunlap, Charles B.

In this paper the author challenges a number of the findings which have been described in the brains of cases of dementia præcox. He deals especially with a number of points which have been described by reliable investigators, and among those whose work is challenged are such famous workers as Alzheimer, Nissl, Mott and Vogt.

He selected eight cases of dementia præcox and five controls.

The criteria for the præcox brains were as follows: That the diagnosis of the case was undoubted, that they were not over 40 years of age, and that they must have died from acute illness and not from a wasting disease, and further that the autopsies must have been done immediately after death. The controls included two cases of acute arsenical poisoning and a "bootlegger" who died shortly after being shot through the lung, and also a nurse who died from acute peritonitis. He admitted in the discussion that the history of the controls was meagre, but stated that there was no suggestion of any psychosis among them.

In preparing the material for examination the selected cases and the controls were treated simultaneously and in the same manner. He did not find any increase in the neuroglia, their nuclei or fibres, and after a careful count of the nerve-cells of the outer layers of the frontal cortex he did not find any difference between the psychotic cases and the controls.

The nerve-cells of the "bootlegger" were dark and shrunken, with poorly defined nuclei, in fact, resembling the changes described as chronic organic changes in dementia præcox, and the nerve-cells in cases of arsenical poisoning also showed similar changes.

The nerve-cells of the nurse were of good shape, stained well, and the nuclei were well defined, but two of the cases of dementia præcox showed equally satisfactory nerve-cells. He believes unknown processes at or just before death cause these variations. He does not consider dark-staining sclerotic cells are characteristic of this psychosis. Other conditions, such as the scattering of the cell cytoplasm, he believes are artefacts, and that such changes, if real, would be associated with compensatory neurogliosis. He also failed to find the acidophile staining of the nucleoli described by Sir F. Mott, but admits that he did not employ similar staining methods. In regard to the lipoid increase described by Cotton, the author found in four cases an equal amount of lipoid to that found in the controls. The other four cases showed an excess of lipoid, but not to the extent noted by Cotton, and he also failed to find the degenerations of the axis cylinders reported by that observer.

The conclusions drawn by the author from this preliminary investigation are that he has not found even a suspicion of consistent organic brain disease as a basis for the psychosis. Any changes found are secondary, and not essentially different from the nerve-cell changes found in non-psychotic cases. The article is illustrated with microphotographs.

A. A. W. PETRIE.

6. Sociology.

A Study of Certain Auto-Erotic Practices. (*Mental Hygiene*, July, 1924.) *Davis, Katherine Bement.*

This paper is of the first importance to all students of sex manifestations. It has long been supposed that masturbation is as common (Havelock Ellis and others say more common) among women as among men. But owing to sex repressions, and to the