

*Barbiturates.* (*Journ. Pharmacol.*, vol. lii, p. 70, 1934.) VII: *Experimental Analysis of Barbituric Action.* Koppányi, T., and Dille, J. M.

Rabbits acquire the ability to oxidize barbituric, whereas cats and dogs retain the drug in brain-cells and show cumulative depressive reactions on repeated doses. Albino rabbits are more susceptible to the toxic effects of barbituric than coloured rabbits.

T. H. RIDER (Chem. Abstr.).

*Poisoning by Dial; Treatment by Strychnine; Cure.* (*Medico-Legal Crim. Rev.*, vol. ii, p. 275, 1934.) Laignel-Lavastine and Bidou, S.

Description of a case of acute intoxication by 1 grm. of dial followed by recovery on treatment with strychnine (0.11 grm. administered altogether).

A. PAFINEAU-COUTURE (Chem. Abstr.).

## 7. Criminology.

*Is there a Relation between Kleptomania and Female Periodicity in Neurotic Individuals?* (*Psychol. Clinic*, vol. xxii, p. 232, 1933-34.) Middleton, W. C.

Genuine cases of kleptomania are exceedingly rare. The condition is subject to wide variation in definition and is amenable to unscientific diagnosis. The author had a patient, of ample means, who was often guilty of stealing during her menstrual periods, but apparently at no other time. A questionnaire was sent to a number of psychiatric specialists, asking the question indicated in the title. The replies indicated that menstruation does not appear to play a primary causal rôle. The general physical and psychical disturbances incidental to menstruation may be exciting factors. In this sense, kleptomania finds facilitated expression during the premenstrual and menstrual periods. Kleptomania, like other compulsive conditions, is found only in neurotic individuals.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*A Scientific Police Force [Policia Cientifica].* (*La Semana Méd.*, vol. xli, p. 1271, Oct. 25, 1934.) Pierangeli, E.

There is a close relationship between medical and penal science. The former tends more and more to discard empirical methods, and seek the aid from ancillary sciences in prevention rather than cure. The latter is still content to deal with an offender after he has committed an offence, and to disregard the many complex factors which may have produced the commission of that offence. A long period of study is required before a candidate is allowed to undertake the removal or regulation of our teeth. The correction of social ills is no less important; but compare the training of a dental surgeon with that of a police official. The establishment of a police college is urgently required, with a period and quality of study equal to that of a university. Modern psychology, normal and abnormal, would be an important faculty in such a college.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Crimes of Unintelligible Motivation as Representing an Initial Symptom of an Insidiously Developing Schizophrenia.* (*Amer. Journ. Psychiat.*, vol. 91, p. 639, Nov., 1934.) Hackfield, A. W.

This study is based upon a series of 32 capital criminals under observation at Zurich. The cases are divided into three groups: (1) those who committed their crime while in a latent or manifest schizophrenia; (2) schizophrenic criminals who were treated medically instead of being sentenced to the penitentiary; (3) criminals diagnosed as psychopathic personalities, but who were declared responsible for their actions. Prison life had a deleterious effect upon those in Group I. In most cases, those in Group II have shown good remissions; prison life did not precipitate a psychosis in any case in Group III. In the prodromal stage of an insidiously developing schizophrenia, persons previously adjusted may commit

atrocious and unintelligible crimes. Such crimes, when primary schizoid tendencies are present, are symptomatic of a latent schizophrenia. From the medico-legal aspect, such criminals must be treated as if suffering from a manifest psychosis. The matter is of special importance in countries where capital punishment obtains.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

*Crime and Punishment: Contribution to the Study of the Psychology of the Psychopathic Delinquent* [*Crimen y castigo: contribución al estudio de la psicología del psicópata delincuente*]. (*Arch. de Neurobiol.*, vol. xiv, p. 579, 1934.) Garma, A.

The crime of the psychopath is a "symptomatic action" largely independent of the offender's will. If we punish the psychopathic offender we increase his mental conflicts and set up a vicious circle of offences and punishments. Investigation has shown that there are three main factors in the mechanism of these cases: unconsciousness of the motives for the offence, masochism, and a sense of guilt. The primary step in treatment is to discover the psychological motives which impel the psychopath to his anti-social conduct. Only when this has been done can we hope to make the offender comprehend the social reality by which he is surrounded. Punishment may have a place in this secondary process, but such punishment must be of the least possible intensity, and the offender must understand that it is not intended as a retaliatory measure.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

## 8. Mental Deficiency.

*Amaurotic Family Idiocy: Genealogical, Clinical and Histopathological Studies of the Infantile Form.* (*L'Encéphale*, vol. xxix, p. 505, Sept.-Oct., 1934.) Bertrand, I., and van Bogaert, L.

The importance of racial factors is stressed. The incidence of the disease predominatingly amongst Jewish or partly Jewish peoples is in no doubt. Consanguinity is less certain as a causal factor. Tuberculosis, epilepsy or endocrine dyscrasias have been constantly observed in the family history, together with other neuro-psychiatric features, schizophrenia, melancholia, etc. The disease assumes the character of a Mendelian recessive. A gliosis of microglia is constantly observed. Various other histopathological points not of an original nature are mentioned. The degenerative process follows the track of immature myelinization, which explains the shading of progressing degeneration observed with Weigert's method from anterior pole to posterior pole of the brain. The authors use the word "scale" to describe this. The cerebellipetal type of atrophy is restricted to this condition. The pathogeny is in doubt. Schaffer is in disagreement with Spielmeyer and Bielchowsky. The latter two consider it as a manifestation of a general lipid disorder, while the former regards it as an undifferentiated cellular defect of protoplasmic constitution.

W. MCC. HARROWES.

*A Case of Infantile Dementia with Amaurosis.* (*L'Encéphale*, vol. xxix, p. 561, Sept.-Oct., 1934.) von Mayendorf, E. N.

This is a case where a female child of five died after showing symptoms suggestive of Tay-Sachs' disease. At autopsy, however, the brain showed no confirmation. This led to the consideration of the status of the case. One striking feature was the presence of very large cells similar to those described by Schaffer (*Arch. f. Psych.*, 84, xiii, p. 493). These cells were found in all parts of the brain. At a congress Schaffer stated after hearing an account of the case that it occupied a position midway between Tay-Sachs' disease and the juvenile amaurotic idiocy of Spielmeyer. The child had died at the age of five, whereas the age at death in Tay-Sachs is generally one and a half years.

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