THE INFLUENCE OF INTELLECTUAL WORK ON THE BLOOD-PRESSURE IN MAN. By MM. A. Binet and N. Vaschide. (Paris, Psychological Review, January, 1897.)

Mosso's sphygmomanometer was used. The principle of its application is as follows: Two fingers of each hand are placed in rubber finger-tubes, and through these tubes are exposed to the pressure of water; this pressure is varied by means of a piston and measured by a mercury manometer, which registers at the same time the pulsations of the fingers. If we begin with 0 and increase gradually, we find a regular change in the amplitude of the pulsation; this is very small at first, grows and reaches a maximum, decreases again and finally disappears; thus the amplitude does not vary directly or inversely with the pressure; there is a most favorable degree of pressure, equal on the average to 80 mm. of mercury at which the pulse attains its maximum amplitude.

The mental effort tested was a series of easy calculations—two figures multiplied by two figures—and lasted about two or three minutes. The subject closed his eyes, knit his brow, leaned his head a little forward. Ten experiments in all were made on different days, but on the same hour and under strictly comparable conditions. It was found that a pressure of from 100 to 120 completely suppressed the pulsation during repose and intellectual labor. As soon as the mental calculation begins there is an increase in the pulsation. The first three or four pulsations which register themselves are usually of same character as the preceding; sometimes they are slightly shortened—an effect probably due to the vascular constriction which was habitual to the subject at the beginning of intellectual work. Then the pulsation increases; it doubles in size or becomes twice and often three times as great. This increase in amplitude maintains itself, in general without increase or diminution, and with great regularity during the whole of the mental calculation; when the subject has found the solution and has given it, there is no sudden diminution of pulsation; it may retain its amplitude without change for fifteen seconds, sometimes even longer; then the pulsation begins to diminish very gradually; finally it recovers the same amplitude that it had at the beginning of the mental calculation. This return to the original condition shows that the change is not due to the apparatus but to the physiological condition of the subject.

Three subjects in all were tested with much the same result.

CHRISTISON.

CLINICAL NEUROLOGY.

MIND-BLINDNESS—FOR OBJECTS ONLY. (Lépine, Lyon Medical, May 16, 1897.)

The author first defines the word blindness as an inability to understand the meaning of the words read, although the subject may read fluently. He then reports the case of a man aged thirty, well educated and intelligent, who was supposed to be in the first stages of general paralysis of the insane. He was, however, sufficiently intelligent, understood all that was said to him, wrote perfectly, spoke fluently, and had apparently no trace of aphasia. Central vision was somewhat impaired, and the visual fields somewhat restricted on the left side. His writing was perfectly correct, but he could make a drawing of nothing, even copying of the most simple objects being impossible; neither could he recognize persons or objects except those with whom he had been very familiar.

The case is not unique, although similar reports are exceedingly rare, and the author refers to only one source of bibliography—a paper by Mueller in the Arch. für Psychiatrie, 1893. PATRICK.