Hubrecht in identifying the ganglia of the vagus, and other cranial nerves, with the brain lobes, of the nemertea, and further thinks that they probably also represent the cerebral ganglia of annelida and arthropoda. The ramus lateralis he regards with Hubrecht to be identical with the lateral nerve strands of nemertea, and, in addition, regards it as being homologous with the main nervous system of annelida and arthropoda, and possibly also with the coelenterate nerve ring. The study of the vagus may, in his opinion, throw light on the question of the chordate ancestor, but will not help to any great extent in solving the problem of the segmentation of the vertebrate head. In conclusion, he suggests that the following points should be elucidated on the plan initiated by Gaskell on the dog, i.e. by studying the histological composition of the various parts of the vagus.

1. Does the "ramus visceralis vagi" resemble in structure the visceral portions of spinal nerves?

2. Are the fibres of the branchial nerves of the same nature as those composing the "ramus visceralis"?

3. Do the fibres of the "ramus lateralis" resemble histologically those of the rest of the nervous system?

4. Do the spinal metameric nerves of the segments corresponding to vagus visceral distribution, themselves contain visceral fibres?

With these questions he hopes to deal in a subsequent paper, to which this one must be regarded as a preface.

W. L. SYMES.

Ball on Traumatic Aphasia relieved by the Removal of a Blood-clot from the Cerebrum (*Dublin Journal of Medical Science*, September, 1888).—The author records a case of peculiar interest successfully operated on by him for the cure of aphasia. The patient had been struck a blow in the head with a penknife ten days before admission to the hospital. He had noticed, since the blow, increasing difficulty in using the right words. On examination, a small scab was found adherent to the scalp, over the squamous portion of the left temporal bone. This, when detached, showed a cicatrix extending deeply through the temporal muscle. There was well-marked motor aphasia, word-blindness, and word-deafness. No paralysis could be detected. Five days after admission, as the symptoms had increased, an operation was determined on. A flap was turned down including the cicatrix, and a wound of the squamous portion of the temporal bone, such as could be caused by the small blade of a penknife, was found. A circle of bone was removed, containing in its centre the wound in the bone. The knife was found to have penetrated the dura mater and brain. The dural wound was enlarged and a Sims' forceps was passed into the brain wound, and was gradually separated. A dark-coloured blood appeared and was extruded by the internal brain pressure; more clot was removed by Sims' forceps and weak perchloride irrigation, a drainage tube was introduced, and the external

wound was sutured. On the evening of the same day the patient carried on a long conversation with very few mistakes in his selection of words. The following morning aphasia was again increased, but disappeared on cleaning the blocked drainage tube. The recovery was, after this, uninterrupted and complete.

J. W. WHITE, M.D.

J. Hoffmann on Tetany (*Deutsch. Arch.*, 1888, xliii. 53).—This paper is based on eleven cases of tetany, reported in full, and accompanied by numerous references to cases of other observers and their opinions concerning the disease. In all but one of the author's patients the affection began between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five years. He is disposed to believe that the nature of the occupation is not without influence on its etiology, and that shoemakers, seamstresses, clerks, &c., are, perhaps, especially liable to it. After reviewing at some length the literature relating to the bearing of the thyroid gland on tetany, he concludes that, in all probability, the removal of this organ is one of the etiological factors. He does not agree with Strümpell that they are endemic influences in its production. The spasm was rather widely spread in the cases which he reports, and was always bilateral. The attacks lasted from several minutes to some hours, and in one instance ten days. The premonitory fibrillar muscular trembling was absent in most cases; the tendon reflexes were usually normal, but in one case diminished, and in another nearly absent. The attacks of spasm were always preceded or accompanied by paresthesias. Trousseau's symptom (the production of an attack by compression of the main artery of a limb) was always present during the height of the disease, while the compression of a nerve had this effect in but one case. The disappearance of this symptom is in no sense a sign that the disease has terminated, but only that it is in abeyance. The galvanic and faradic electrical excitability of the nerves was much increased in all cases in which it was carefully examined; and even the facial and the hypoglossal nerves may share this excitability. An increase of the mechanical excitability of the motor nerves was absent in but one instance. A series of experiments convinced the author that the mechanical and electrical excitability of the sensory nerves is increased. The disease lasted in the author's cases from half a year to twenty-one years. Most commonly the attacks occur in groups, lasting some weeks, and with variable periods between them, in which there exist only certain symptoms of latency; or the intervals may continue for years, with absolutely no sign of the affection.

According to most authorities, the prognosis is favourable, though the disease may last for years. Death occurs only exceptionally, from exhaustion or spasm of the diaphragm. Certain of the author's cases exhibited evidences of paralysis, for which the tetany was apparently responsible. Frequent shedding of the finger-nails and a brown pigmentation of the skin of the hands and face was observed in one instance, and the author considers the probable cause of the latter to be nervous influence combined with repeated small extravasations of blood into the skin, induced by the muscular spasm. Hoffmann reports the results of autopsies which have been made, and quotes extensively the opinions of various writers concerning the pathological anatomy of tetany; all of which indicates that, though fine molecular nutritive changes of the nervous system are almost universally considered to be the cause of the disease, making it, therefore, a neurosis, the seat of the changes is still a much disputed point. He obtained the best therapeutical results from bromide of potash, morphia, and the galvanic current. In an appendix the author reports four additional cases of the affection, in two of which shedding of the nails took place, accompanied, in one instance, by falling out of the hair. He shows still further the positive influence of extirpation of the thyroid gland on the production of tetany, and calls attention