

Rigidity of the Spinal Column. (*Journ. Nerv. Ment. Dis.*, Nov., 1899.)
Zenner.

A review of published cases and additional cases are given. The various theories of spinal root affection, arthritic nature, etc., are propounded, but the author inclines to the view that, in his own cases at least, the trouble was primarily of muscular origin.

A Case of Internal Hæmorrhagic Pachymeningitis in a Child of Nine Years, with Changes in the Nerve-cells. (*Journ. Nerv. Ment. Dis.*, Nov., 1899.) Spiller, W. J., and McCarthy, D. J.

The central nervous system is studied microscopically, and changes in the cortical and spinal cells and of the blood-vessels are described and figured. The authors give a *résumé* of the literature of this condition in childhood, and enter into a full discussion of the ætiology of pachymeningitis, the views of a large number of writers being adduced. The conclusion is drawn, partly from experimental evidence, that the new membrane is formed by cellular changes in a subdural blood-clot originating from the under surface of the dura. The degeneration in the nerve-cells may result either from the pressure of effused blood or disturbance in the nutrition produced by intense proliferation of new tissue.

Alveolar Sarcoma of the Right Middle Fossa of the Skull. (*Journ. Nerv. Ment. Dis.*, Nov., 1899.) Lewis, M. J.

The tumour arising from the dura caused a large depression in the temporo-sphenoidal lobe and involved certain cranial nerves. Right-sided anæsthesia of the face and tongue was produced. Diagrams and photographs are given.

Multiple Cavernous Angioma, Fibro-endothelioma, Osteoma, and Hæmatomyelia of the Central Nervous System in a Case of Secondary Epilepsy. (*Journ. Nerv. Ment. Dis.*, July, 1899.) Ohlmacher, A. P.

A single case presenting this remarkable combination of lesions is admirably summed up by the author as follows:—"Adult male—Secondary (Jacksonian?) epilepsy of comparatively recent origin—Spinal paraplegia, rapidly progressing—Terminal pneumonia. Anatomical Diagnosis:—Right lobar pneumonia—Acute splenic tumour—Fibro-endothelioma (psammoma) of cranial dura, pressing into Rolandic sulcus—Cavernous angioma of callosal gyrus, of optic thalamus, and of cervical spinal cord—Hæmatomyelia—Osteoma of spinal arachnoid." The paper is illustrated by macro- and micro-photographs, and the nature and origin of the neoplasms are discussed.

3. Physiological Psychology.

The Rôle of the Blood-supply in Mental Pleasure and Pain. (*Dubl. Journ. Med. Sc.*, Feb., 1900.) Dawson, W. R.

The researches of Flechsig, in particular, indicate that some two thirds of the cortex cerebri are employed neither in receiving sensory

impressions nor in sending motor impulses, but in "weaving into the complex tissue of thought" the infinite variety of sensations received—the brain is thus rehabilitated in the eyes of the world. The structure of the neuron has been shown by recent investigation to admit of vastly complex associations, and the inner structure of the cell body of the neuron, as revealed by Nissl's method, multiplies still further the potential powers of nerve structures and the marvel of the cortex cerebri. The rich blood-supply of the cortex, and the intimate relations between the capillaries and the nerve-cells, suggest an important functional rôle as belonging to the cerebral circulation. Dr. Dawson labours to establish a definite connection between the blood-flow and certain emotional states—of pain and of pleasure. He brings forward evidence to show that states of malnutrition associated with general anæmia are attended by mental distress, melancholia being the prevailing mental attitude. On the other hand, the blood-pressure in mental depression runs high. Anæmias rapidly produced and considerable in degree are often attended by states of mental exaltation, and in these states the blood-pressure runs low. To what actual rate of flow through the cortex do these physical conditions correspond? Here comes the great difficulty, for there is no trustworthy evidence at disposal, the physics of the question being exceedingly complicated. It is obvious that, other things being equal, a high blood-pressure must mean an increased rate of flow through the capillaries, but other things do not remain equal, for raised blood-pressure is attended by arteriole contraction and this may become so great that a given area is actually starved in its capillaries. The paper is well worth reading, but the subject needs more elaboration and is in too speculative a region at present. Meanwhile, as practical physicians, we should take note of the raised blood-pressure in melancholic states, of the low blood-pressure in exalted states, and in our treatment attack these attendant phenomena.

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4. *Ætiology of Insanity.*

Biological Conditions of Families of General Paralytics [*Conditions biologiques des familles des paralytiques généraux*]. (*Arch. de Neur.*, Feb., 1900.) Béchét, G.

Ball and Regis, in an article on this subject (*Encéphale*, 1883), came to the conclusion that general paralysis should be classed among the cerebral diseases and not among the insanities. Dr. Béchét, as a result of his study of forty families of general paralytics, comes to an opposite conclusion. These families were studied from four aspects:—(1) Longevity; (2) Natality; (3) Vitality; (4) Morbidity. The history of four generations (grandparents—children) was traced. He finds that:—(1) The duration of life is superior in the ancestors of general paralytics to that found in normal families. (2) The average of births is higher in the families of general paralytics than in normal families. In the second generation the natality is a little inferior. There is a tendency more pronounced among general paralytics to sterility than