

(2) *Brain Injury and Character Changes.*—Friedmann reports the pathological findings in two rabbits on which experimental puncture of the brain had been performed. A complete change in the character of the animals developed. This consisted mainly in a condition of ceaseless activity, and a change to a wilder disposition in the animals. In these animals there was present an intense lymphoid inflammation in the lymph spaces, about the blood vessels and in the pericellular spaces. These changes were very elusive and were considered as the manifestation of a condition of chronic irritation.

(3) To be continued.

MCCARTHY (Philadelphia).

MISCELLANY.

ALCOHOL A FOOD OR POISON? KASSOWITZ (Pflüger's Archiv. f. Physiol., June 3, 1902).

The conclusions of this author, as to whether alcohol can, in the same organism, act at once as a food and a poison, are as follows: There is a supposition that alcohol has a nutritive value, in that, during the process of its metabolism, a portion of it is directly split up or burned without being first built up into the protoplasmic substances. There follows, as a natural corollary to this belief the assumption that foods equally valuable as fuel can be substituted for one another. This, however, has been proved false by authenticated experiment. This hypothesis disposed of, there remains the reasonable supposition, borne out by the facts obtainable, that all foods are assimilated into the protoplasmic structures, the products of metabolism resulting from the splitting up of this chemical unity. A high degree of complexity of the protoplasmic molecule and instability of equilibrium are implied by this assumption. The labile molecules of protoplasm are disorganized by all stimuli and chemically active poisons, therefore, since protoplasm is distributed by alcohol, not only as a stimulus but also as a poison, it follows that it cannot also act as a food. The toxic effect of alcohol is an increased nitrogenous elimination, the protoplasm disorganizing, either with the splitting off of fat and nitrogenous waste products, or a nitrogenous retention manifested by the splitting off and formation of gelatin-yielding tissues in the form of connecting tissue fibers, showing itself by the formation of inflammatory products in the different tissues and organs. After a short period of stimulation by alcohol the production of carbonic acid is decreased by paralysis of the centers of innervation and the consequent diminution of their activity, which does not mean a sparing of the tissue-fats and proteids, but is an indirect result of the toxic action of alcohol. The observation that a diminished working capacity and dissipation of the vital resources follows the substitution of alcohol of equal caloric power for a part of one's non-nitrogenous food, accords with the theory as stated. That the nutritive property of a substance cannot depend upon oxidation in the organism, and, therefore, that alcohol is useless as a food, is shown the author by these facts, and from them he draws the conclusion that neither for the sick nor well should alcohol be used for the purpose of supplying food.

JELLIFFE.

SENILE TABES. A. PITRÉS (Jour. de Med. de Bordeaux, May 18, 1902).

Although locomotor ataxia is most common between the ages of twenty-five and forty-five years, this author reports that one-fourth of the cases which he observed occurred after the fiftieth year, and of these three were after the seventieth year. Of these three, two had