

Part III.—Epitome of Current Literature.

1. Neurology.

The Columnar Arrangement of the Primary Afferent Centres in the Brain-stem of Man. (*Journ. of Nerv. and Ment. Dis.*, March and April, 1927.) Freeman, W.

A tendency has developed, especially among the American school of anatomists, to consider the brain-stem as a column, thus likening it to the spinal cord. The bulb is divided into somatic and visceral afferent, and somatic and visceral efferent columns, separated by a sulcus limitans. The author indicates that the fifth, seventh, ninth and tenth cranial nerves are similar in construction to the spinal nerves. Each one (*a*) innervates a certain cutaneous area with general exteroceptive cutaneous sensation, (*b*) innervates a certain area of mucous membrane with general interoceptive sensation, (*c*) supplies motor fibres to certain muscles which spring from the visceral motor system originally surrounding the alimentary canal, (*d*) carries proprioceptive fibres from the muscles it innervates, (*e*) contains segmental reflex fibres. The afferent divisions upon entering the brain-stem divide into two main portions, a ventral division carrying exteroceptive fibres and segmental reflex fibres, and a dorsal division carrying interoceptive and proprioceptive fibres. When the location of the columns is compared at various levels it is seen that a constant relationship is maintained, and that the relationship is practically identical with that observed in the spinal cord.

G. W. T. H. FLEMING.

2. Clinical Psychiatry.

Lethargic Encephalitis and Tremors [*Encéphalite léthargique et tremblement*]. (*Bull. Soc. Clin. de Méd. Ment.*, December, 1922.) Coiin, Henri.

The author remarks on the varying character of the tremors in certain cases of lethargic encephalitis. The tremors were different in type in each of the three cases described. The first was comparable to that of disseminated sclerosis and was not under control of the will. In the second patient the tremor was under control of the will. In the third case the patient, who was also a somnambulist, suffered from a continuous generalized gross tremor, which ceased in the somnambulistic state. The existence of an associated hysterical factor in such cases is emphasized.

J. S. ANNANDALE.

Post-traumatic Psycho-neurosis associated with Epilepsy. Gustatory and Genital Aura [*Psycho-névrose post-traumatique et comitialité associées. Aura sensito-gustative et génitale*]. (*Bull. Soc. Clin. de Méd. Ment.*, December, 1922.) Briand, M.

A description of a case in which a fall from a motor cycle, with injury to the head, was followed by disorder of memory, with

marked pessimism and phobias. There also developed vertiginous attacks, each of which was preceded by an aura—peculiar sensations of taste and smell, and eroticism. The author concludes that the psycho-neurosis was due to the emotional shock occasioned by the accident, while the epilepsy was the result of actual cerebral commotion.

J. S. ANNANDALE.

Two General Paralytics—Railway Servants, one a Guard, the other a Pointsman [*Deux paralytiques généraux ; l'un aiguilleur, l'autre conducteur de train dans les grandes Compagnies de Chemins de fer*]. (*Ann. Méd. Psych.*, July, 1924.) Pactet, M.

The two patients concerned were carrying on at work almost to the date of their admission to hospital, their mental deterioration having escaped notice. M. Pactet has previously drawn attention to the dangers that may ensue in such cases, and points out that although arrangements are in force for the physical examination of railway employees, no means are taken regularly to ascertain their mental state.

J. S. ANNANDALE.

Another Case of Fatal Status Epilepticus in the Course of Treatment by Gardenal [*Sur un nouveau cas d'état de mal mortel au cours du traitement par le gardenal*]. (*Bull. Soc. Clin. de Méd. Ment.*, October, 1924.) Trenal, M.

In this case the incidence of the seizures was on the whole greatly lessened over a long period, but the patient eventually died of *status epilepticus*. The *post-mortem* findings were very indefinite. In the course of discussion stress was laid on the fact that *status epilepticus* is no more frequent during treatment by gardenal than with the older drugs, but that in many instances diminution of the number of seizures was followed by equivalents, such as outbursts of excitement, violent and impulsive acts.

J. S. ANNANDALE.

Sudden Arrest of a Maniacal Attack as a Result of Arterial Thrombosis. Recurrence of Manifestations on return of the Circulation [*Arrêt brusque d'un accès maniaque à l'occasion d'une thrombose artérielle. Reprise des manifestations avec le retour de la circulation*]. (*Bull. Soc. Clin. de Méd. Ment.*, February, 1926.) Claude, Henri, and Badonnel.

The maniacal symptoms in a case of periodic insanity ceased suddenly on the development of a thrombo-arteritis. The arteritis was accompanied by a considerable rise of temperature. The authors incline to attribute the sudden amelioration of the symptoms to the alterations in the proteins of the blood during the thrombotic process and suggest that the effect is akin to protein shock. They cannot ascribe the beneficial results to the coincident rise of temperature, as in a recurrence of the maniacal symptoms artificially produced fever was of little service.

J. S. ANNANDALE.