It is that of a girl of 7, with the following characteristic signs: baldness, large head, narrow chest, and protuberant abdomen; old facial expression; tense skin, with prominent veins; no hairs in either eyelids or eyebrows; thickened and tortuous peripheral arteries, with B.P. 104 systolic; muscular atrophy, thickened and prominent joints. In addition, there were many hard, shotty glands in both anterior and posterior cervical chains.

Evidence of cardiac disease was present in the form of presystolic and systolic murmurs. Many other clinical details are recorded in the paper.

The patient died rather unexpectedly from what seemed to be a coronary thrombosis. Regrettably, no necropsy was allowed.

J. S. P.

[235] The treatment of diabetes insipidus with pituitrin and vasopressin

After a careful study of the uses of pituitrin and vasopressin by the two routes, subcutaneous and intranasal, the authors reach the following conclusions: Pituitrin given as a snuff in diabetes insipidus is of value: administered in this way, larger doses are required than by the subcutaneous route; the snuff method is better than intranasal pledgets of wool soaked with pituitrin, because the application of the pledgets requires careful technique and they must be renewed every six hours; besides, the dose of pituitrin required is greater. Vasopressin subcutaneously is more effective than pituitrin; in powder form as a snuff it acts best.

E. A. C.

Psychopathology.

PSYCHOLOGY.


Twenty-three generations of rats have been trained to the performance of a specific task. The rats of the successive generations have displayed increasing facility in mastering this task. Whereas rats of the control stocks make on the average about 165 errors before learning to avoid the shock, rats of the twenty-third generation of trained stock make on the average only 25 errors; the latter have acquired a greatly increased facility in mastering the task, the increase being measured by the difference between 165 and 25 shocks required for learning. The average degree of facility shown by any group of rats is in the main a function of their genetic constitution. In the light of our present knowledge there would seem to be only two ways in which such change of constitution as is shown by the rats of the trained stock can be
brought about: first, by steady selection of such variations or mutations as may occur in the direction of such change; secondly, by transmission of modifications acquired by the rats in the course of training. It seems very improbable that selection can have played any appreciable part in producing the change of constitution here described; and still more improbable that selection can have been the main or the sole process. It begins to look to the writer as though Lamarckian transmission were a real process in nature; and he submits for criticism the proposition that, if continuance of the experiment, combining training with strongly adverse selection, should result in steadily increasing facility, the reality of Lamarckian transmission will have been demonstrated.

C. S. R.


It is suggested that the difference between maximum capacity recorded under the most favourable conditions and average achievement observed throughout a spell of work is a measure of the combined influence of factors which are detrimental to productive activity. A suitable measure of maximum capacity is the highest rate of working attained in a period of five minutes. This value is very consistent in the case of the same individual observed at corresponding times on different days. The application of this method to industrial procedure can be used to show (a) individual susceptibility to similar conditions of work; (b) the total effect of unfavourable factors in different industrial processes; (c) the approximate influence of particular factors responsible for reduced activity. When applied to the processes considered in this article, there is evidence to show that (a) one worker may be almost twice as susceptible as another to unfavourable elements associated with the conditions of work. (b) The quicker workers tend to deviate more than the slower operatives from their respective high speeds. (c) An imperfect relation exists between maximum and average rates of working, yet when all the workers in a group are actuated by a powerful incentive the degree of imperfection may be very slight. (d) The difference between maximum and average rates of working may vary from 12 to 38 per cent. in different processes. (e) A time-rate system of payment is much less effective than a piece-rate and may cause a reduction in output amounting to approximately 12 per cent.

C. S. R.

PSYCHOSES.

[238] Psychosis and encephalitis (Les encéphalites psychosiques; étude anatomo-clinique).—E. Toulouse, L. Marchand, and P. Schiff. L'Encéphale, 1929, xxiv, 413.

The authors furnish a description of a series of cases of acute psychosis in which a condition of acute encephalitis has been found at autopsy. The clinical
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