
In a small series of epileptic patients there has been found duodenal stasis or some other duodenal abnormality in approximately 29 per cent. It has been suggested that pituitary disorder occurs but no alteration in the sella turcica has been found. There is a distinct tendency for patients subject to epileptic seizures to have a lower basal metabolism than normal and this tendency would seem to warrant the use of pituitary therapy. This was employed along with diet and luminal and although no cure was obtained, 68 per cent. were definitely improved.

R. G. G.


The author draws attention to the value of paracodin, a preparation of dihydrocodein, in the treatment of migraine. This drug, given in the dosage of two, three or four tablets at the commencement of an attack, has, in the author's hands, been of the utmost efficacy in aborting the symptoms.

M. C.


Stimulated by the effects of muscle-extract in the relief of angina pectoris and allied conditions, the author has treated a series of patients with intermittent claudication by similar methods. In one patient, the blood pressure fell from 165 to 130, and the dorsalis pedis pulse, which was previously impalpable, was once more felt. Simultaneously, there was a marked subjective improvement and greater power of walking. The patients received up to 26 injections of muscle extract, but it must be emphasized that, in some cases at least, this particular form of therapy was accompanied by dietetic adjustments and reduction of the tobacco.

M. C.

Psychopathology.


In this somewhat discursive paper the author lays stress on the role played by instinct in man's activities even in the spheres of ethic and morality. Thus he points out that all activity is ambivalent, there always being an instinctive
inhibition to any impulse. This applies also to sexual impulses, and inhibitions are imposed not primarily by civilization but by instinct. He draws attention to the absence of affect in the encephalitic, in which he differs from the schizophrenic who may not appear to have affective reactions, but who on analysis may display the most intense affect. He points out that the behaviour of the schizophrenic can only be understood on the theory of failures of integration of impulses, so that contradictory affects and impulses may exist side by side without the slightest modification of one by the other.

The paper touches on manifold aspects of psychology and is provocative of much thought, and it is specially valuable in laying stress on the desirability of a biological approach to psychological problems.

R. G. G.


It has been stated that there is no evidence of any specific process of thought that could not be performed by a child of seven. It is here suggested that there is no age limit in relation to the process of thinking, beyond that imposed by lack of experience. If childish egocentrism makes certain processes of thought impossible before seven years of age, how can we account for the evidence of these processes at three and earlier? The truth seems to be that the child's egocentrism is largely due to his lack of experience, which makes him unable to see relations, and his inability to see these makes him egocentric. The assumption that children are naturally non-social in their thinking is being questioned. A further argument against the view that there is any radical difference between the thought processes of the child and of the adult comes from the fact that when the adult has to think about wholly unfamiliar material he makes the same mistakes as the child. He even does it with familiar material if he has not been obliged to concern himself with it previously. Piaget's picture of a striking difference between adult and childish thinking is, the author thinks, due to an over-valuation of verbal expression as a measure of thinking, and an exaggerated view of the logicality of adult thought.

C. S. R.


The importance of this translated article is in its insistence on the importance of the brainstem both in psychology and psychiatry. In it lie the centres of vital function 'where the animal lives' and from it proceed the urges and striving which are integrated and discriminated by the cortex. It is only by an understanding of both parts of the nervous system that psychic function can be understood.

R. G. G.

In the present study it was found that waking suggestion required about two and a half times as much time as trance suggestion. If a second suggestion is begun within two minutes after the termination of the reaction to a previous suggestion, and in the same state, the suggestion time of the second is reduced about one fourth. The waking and the trance states do not appear to differ in this respect. The influence of the trance, possibly combined with the additional suggestions given the subject while in it, appears to persist rather strongly after waking. Waking suggestions given a quarter of an hour after waking from a trance require only about 60 per cent. as much time to evoke maximal reactions as when not preceded by a trance. Response to suggestion shows a marked practice effect from period to period, the mean suggestion time being only a little over half for the first period. It has long been observed as one of the most conspicuous characteristics of successive trance inductions that, as a rule, every time a subject goes into the trance the process becomes more rapid.

C. S. R.

[24] The metabolic rate in emotional moods induced by suggestion in hypnosis.

From experiments made it was found that the mood of anxiety or apprehension, hypnotically induced, can increase the metabolic rate. Moods of depression, or elation and of irritability, induced under similar conditions, did not produce any certain increase in this rate.

C. S. R.


Experiments show that a dose of 20 gm. of alcohol lowers the intelligence quotient and diminishes the power of recalling past experience. Similarly a 0.4 gm. quantity of caffeine is shown to be detrimental to intelligent or associative performance, but particularly to the latter. With amounts of alcohol and caffeine one-half as large as these the general effect tends to be masked by individual differences, but there is some evidence that intelligence and memory are affected oppositely, the former improving on 10 gm. of alcohol and deteriorating under 0.2 gm. of caffeine and the latter showing the reverse behaviour. This, if confirmed, may be of some importance for theories as to the physiological concomitants of the functioning of intelligence and memory. There is little evidence of any dissimilarity of response among the various forms of
recall; associative reproduction of ideas is impaired under alcohol in proportion to the amount taken and is distinctly improved under the 0·2 gm. dose of caffeine, but the effects of recent associations are more powerful than on old ones. Sex differences of response are not very clearly marked, but there are some indications, the chief of which is that men are more susceptible to caffeine and less to alcohol. On the other hand, some clear age differences are shown, in that middle-aged subjects, in contrast to the majority of the subjects who were in the early twenties, improved in intelligence performance on either quantity of alcohol or caffeine. Compared to the 20-year group the very young group, averaging 17½ years, showed a lesser susceptibility to alcohol and a greater susceptibility to caffeine impairment.

Finally, there are certain well-marked individual differences which manifest themselves most in regard to the response made to the smaller quantities of the two drugs. These individual peculiarities of reaction are revealed to be largely constitutional, in virtue of the fact that they prove to be very similar in blood-relatives. In so far as they correlate with the psychological 'make-up' of individuals they appear to be connected with the particular 'temper' of the conative impulses and to a lesser extent with temperament and character.

C. S. R.

NEUROSES AND PSYCHONEUROSES.


A plea to regard the neurosis from every point of view, recognizing how the lower centres of the medulla and diencephalon influence the cortex, and the cortex influences the lower centres. Childish experiences are revived by an immediate adult situation and the total picture of behaviour cannot be analysed except by taking all such factors into consideration. In this way we get a dynamic and not a static conception of the neurotic, and a positive idea of his behaviour rather than a negative idea of how he fails to reach normality.

R. G. G.


The term 'traumatic neurosis' should be limited to cases exhibiting primitive instinctive emotional reactions to injury. These reactions may be considered as being the response of even a normal personality to fear and pain and the other acute stressful features associated with the accident. Thus the ego is overwhelmed and emotional symptoms occur. The term 'traumatic hysteria' should be limited to those compromise-conversion reactions of maladjusted individuals with physical disorders following injury. The 'post-concussion' neuroses are considered as a traumatic encephalopathy. A head trauma may,