
In 1924 appeared the second edition of Dr. Müller's Lebensnerven, a volume of 614 pages. To incorporate the advances of six years has necessitated enlargement to such an extent that now almost 1,000 pages are required for a description of the vegetative nervous system. No more convincing proof can be forthcoming of the truly enormous development of work in connexion therewith; the present volume forms a kind of encyclopædia of knowledge which must prove indispensable to all neurologists. The wide-ranging character of its topics can be appreciated when we point out that they deal with the anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology of the sympathetic system as a whole, and with those of the different viscera of the body, as well as of the skin; the relations of the same system to trophicity, to fat, bones, joints, to muscle tonus, organ sensibility, and, last but not least, to psychopathology—all receive full consideration at the hands of experts.

Although the pathological histology of the system is fairly if not thoroughly known, it is scarcely matter for surprise that correlation of such changes with recognisable clinical syndromes has been prosecuted to a very limited extent. The section on affections of the system is distinctly meagre, and while the reader is given the minutest account of the mesencephalic and hypothalamic vegetative centres he may still profess doubt as to whither such information leads from a purely clinical standpoint. Little or nothing is said (so far as we have discovered) of the alleged connexion of muscular dystrophy with sympathetic lesions, for instance; nor of the explanation of myotonus on a similar basis. The conclusion of the useful discussion of muscle tone is to the effect that the sympathetic system exerts an influence solely on the state of the sarcoplasm.

A book of this comprehensive kind, beautifully illustrated and clearly printed, may be cordially recommended to the attention of all whom the subject interests.

The clear thinking and logical cast of mind of the French are well exemplified in M. Paulhan's interesting study of the laws of feeling, existing ignorance in regard to which is contrasted with the immeasurably greater advances of psychology in all that concerns the intellectual side of the human psyche. His task has been to seek out what particular relations of psychical elements or systems generate affective phenomena. Every emotion, every feeling, comes into existence under certain general conditions, among which is one, relatively primitive but most important, described as the 'arrest of tendencies.' By this is meant 'a more or less complicated reflex action which cannot terminate as it would if the organization of the phenomena were complete, if there were full harmony between the organism or its parts and their conditions of existence, if the system formed in the first place by man, and afterwards by man and the external world, were perfect.' The arrest of a tendency, in other words, is to be thought of as an impediment to the systematization of certain psychical or physical elements. If organic needs are interrupted affect is produced; and if we ascend to a higher level, to desires of a higher order, we find again that they give rise to affective phenomena only when the tendency awakened undergoes inhibition.

- The general thesis is handled in masterly fashion in an essay which is well translated and in English form should serve to stimulate interest in the work of a psychologist that has been somewhat neglected in this country.


This book is chiefly an account of the author's work and views on the physiology of the cerebrospinal fluid, and on the means of diagnosis of tumours of the cerebrospinal axis by injections of air and lipiodol. But the ground which the book sets out to cover has become fairly extensive of recent years, and within the limitations which he has set himself the author has succeeded admirably. The accounts of his own experiments, not only on laboratory animals, but also at the bedside, are full of interest and fairly convincing. For example he has attacked the vexed question of the normal rate of secretion of cerebrospinal fluid, by the new method of leaving the needle in situ after a lumbar puncture with the patient at rest and noting the time taken by the fluid to regain its original manometric level. By this means he has observed that on an average one hour was needed to replace each 10 c.c. of fluid removed. The method has one fallacy in that since the intracranial pressure has been reduced by the withdrawal of cerebrospinal fluid, the rate of secretion will tend to be rather more rapid than under normal conditions; but it affords a more direct attack
on the problem than the other methods which have been used in the past.

The book is divided into four chapters, the first on technique, the second on the physiology of the fluid, the third on various special methods for the diagnosis of tumours of the brain and spinal cord, and the last, which is also the shortest, on the changes in the fluid encountered in various diseases. This last chapter might well have been greatly amplified, and is the least satisfactory part of the book, which is otherwise excellent. But the author's plea of giving the reader a clear knowledge of diagnostic methods and physiological principles, and leaving him to make his own deductions therefrom, is rather to be applauded than condemned.

J. G. G.


This instructive and readable monograph is concerned with the content of the general paralytic's mind at various stages of the affection and as revealed during acute and chronic periods or in the course of mild or severe phases. It deals with the clinical material from a dynamic viewpoint and is descriptive and analytic rather than pathogenic in its character; knowledge has not advanced sufficiently to render association of psychopathological features with encephalitic substrata practicable. Besides, this would entail recognition of the all-important principle that destruction of cortical elements will never account for positive manifestations such as megalomania, and to this principle we find no definite allusion in the book.

The author deals successively with the interference produced in mental activity due to disorder of 'impulse to thought,' of both intrinsic and extrinsic origin, that due to disorder in conception, to failure of insight and absence of correction, and also such as are occasioned by the latter and result in the 'breaking through' of primitive experiences of an infantile or child-like kind. Combinations of the dementing process with derangements of other nature—melancholia, confabulation, hallucinosis, etc.—are subjected to detailed examination. From a psychoanalytic angle dementia paralytica is held to be a narcissistic disorder, linked on the one hand to a castration complex and on the other to consciousness of syphilitic infection.


Professor Jaensch's work is of a novel character and as such merits consideration and understanding ere comment of a critical kind is passed thereon; in
Reviews and Notices of Books

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