In conclusion, the treatment effected marked amelioration of physical symptoms in all cases, but only the early cases have shown much mental improvement.

D. M.


The author recommends the use of such artificial protein-cleavage products as "phlogetan" in the pyrexial treatment of general paralysis. These should be injected intravenously or intramuscularly in doses sufficiently large to produce pyrexia, but should not cause too sudden reactions. He advises alternating this treatment with courses of antisyphilitic remedies, of which he finds bismuth and mercury the most suitable; five injections of "phlogetan" should thus be followed by five or six of mercurial oil or "trepol," and the cycle repeated. A watch should be kept on the leucocyte and blood-platelet count, as any considerable drop in either of these is an indication for stopping pyrexial treatment.

J. G. GREENFIELD.

Endocrinology.

[26] Lesions in congenital myxoedema (Contribution à l'étude des lésions du myxoédème congénital).—G. MARINESCO. L'Encephale, 1924, xix, 265.

This important paper is based on the histological examination of a case of congenital myxoedema or cretinism. The patient, who died of tuberculosis at the age of fifteen years, appears to have had no thyroid treatment by mouth, but two years before death a thyroid graft was attempted without success.

The examination of the brain was very complete, and particular attention was paid to the cyto-architecture of the cortex and its thickness in different areas. This examination showed that the cretin's brain had developed much more slowly than normal, and that the cortex still presented many infantile characteristics. With the Weigert Pal stain all the cortical myelinated fibres showed evidence of atrophy or non-development with the exception of the tangential fibres in the molecular layer, which were fairly well preserved. The other tangential layers of fibres had disappeared and the radial fibres were much more sparse than normal.

There was no lack of oxydase granules in the large ganglion cells of the cortex, brainstem, spinal cord and dorsal root ganglia. Many of these cells also contained granules of glycogen, and this substance was also found in the tissue spaces of the white matter; it was not found in the cerebellar or the cerebral cortex. Marinesco considers that the pathological anatomy of the disease can be explained by a decrease in the activity of the bodily processes, with deficient oxidation of the tissues and consequent hypothermia. He discusses the influence of heat on the growth and development of nervous tissues, and finds evidence that the slight but constant reduction of the body
temperature in cases of myxœdema might delay the development of the nervous system. The myxœdematous deposits in the subcutaneous tissues and the abnormal deposits of glycogen in the nerve cells are both evidences of defective intracellular oxidation.

J. G. GREENFIELD.

[27] Complex and myth in mother-right.—Bronislaw Malinowski. 
Psyche, 1925, v, 194.

This is the concluding instalment of Dr. Malinowski's criticism of Freud's use of the 'Œdipus complex' in relation to savage societies. Instead of the repressed desire "to kill the father in order to marry the mother," the wish in the matrilineal complex of Melanesia is "to marry the sister and to kill the maternal uncle." Malinowski proceeds to show that this matrilineal complex can also be traced in the myth, legend and folk-lore of the Trobriand archipelago. In discussing disease and perversion, the author was unable to find any traces of neurosis in these islanders. In the neighbouring Amphlett Islands, inhabited by people similar in race, custom and language, but differing in social organization and possessing a code of strict sexual morality, he found a community of neurotics. The Trobrianders, on the other hand, show a minimum of perversions. This, of course, is in accordance with Freud's correlation of sexual perversions with repression. Homosexuality only occurred in the Trobriands under the influence of the white man's morality, as at a mission station.

In their dreams and day-dreams these natives differ from other savages. They dream little and show small interest in their dreams. It is suggested that this may be due to lack of repression and to their extraordinary licence in sexual matters. In questioning the natives on the subject of erotic dreams it was found that the only affective response was produced in association with dreams of the sister. Although brother-sister incest is most reprehensible, a breach of clan exogamy is considered 'smart' and desirable, owing to piquant difficulties in carrying it out. Stereotyped modes of abuse include three incestuous expressions directed against the mother, sister and wife, the worst insult being the saying: "Cohabit with thy wife." Reference to lawful sexuality in coarse language mortally offends the sensitive Trobriander. This discloses the fact that one of the main forms of abuse lies in the relation between the reality and plausibility of a desire and its conventional repression. The word for 'my sister' is used in magic, and signifies incompatibility and mutual repulsion. Myths concerning the origin of man possess matrilineal characteristics. Man originates from a hole in the earth, and the first ancestral group always consists of a woman, never accompanied by a husband, but sometimes by her brother or the totemic animal. These myths reveal the spontaneous procreative powers of the ancestral mother; the father is non-existent in the mythological world. In