are often sufficient, though a patient investigation of past history may be necessary. The writer tries to show that many psychoanalytic interpretations are not established, and may safely be ignored.

E. B. G. R.


Operations may play a provocative rôle in an individual predisposed to mental illness by the castration-complex or by narcissistic fixation. In such persons, surgical interference, except to save life, is to be avoided. To illustrate, the author records six cases. The first is that of a man of twenty-eight who had a wart excised from the right hand; analysis revealed that the operation represented the realization of the castration-phantasy. The second case is that of a man of thirty, who, as the result of submitting to a herniectomy, "simply because he did not care to wear a truss," developed schizophrenic symptoms. A man of twenty-six developed symptoms of mental illness after an operation for deviated septum; the analysis pointed to "a castration-phantasy involving the unconscious image of the father." The fourth case illustrates the serious consequences that may arise from correction of a deformity of the right hand due to an old fracture; analysis revealed "the typical unconscious striving as found in such cases." The last two cases represent the distressing outcome of plastic operations on the nose; such patients suffer from narcissistic fixation and "are in danger of a psychosis when their narcissism is injured."

LEWIS YEALLAND.

[33] Some observations on the types of blood-sugar curve found in different forms of insanity.—K. K. DRURY. Jour. of Ment. Sci., 1925, lxxi, 8.

The object of these investigations has been to find out if carbohydrate metabolism is disordered in the different forms of insanity. In the normal sugar tolerance curve the fasting level lies between 0·09 and 0·11 per cent.; after the ingestion of 50 grm. of glucose the blood sugar rises to about 0·18 per cent., reaching its maximum in from a half to one hour, and returns to, or below, the starting level within two hours.

An endeavour was made to select typical cases from the several forms of insanity, those of doubtful diagnosis being omitted.

The conclusions arrived at are that in a large number of cases of insanity the blood-sugar curve varies greatly from the accepted normal. Whenever we find a rapid fall of the curve to, or near to, the starting level within two hours, we feel confident we are not dealing with a case of confusional insanity (infection-exhaustion-psychosis). The converse, of course, does not hold true. In the confusional cases the injection of insulin has most remarkable effects on the sugar curve and on the behaviour of the patient. There is a marked general improvement, and a noisy, confused, and sleepless patient will become quiet, less confused, and eventually fall asleep. Unfortunately, the insulin injections gradually lose their effect, and the initial promise of a valuable therapeutic agent in this type of case has not been fulfilled.
In manic-depressive insanity the curves vary, the 'church steeple' type of curve being characteristic of alternating insanity, and a curve approximating to the normal of hypomania. A broad curve similar to that met with in confusional insanity is found in first attacks of mania in young people, associated with some confusion.

In dementia praecox the curves show considerable variation. Acute cases give a broad curve suggestive of confusional insanity, and chronic cases give small low curves. In epilepsy the curves approximate most nearly to the normal.

In climacteric cases the fasting level is high, the curve rises to abnormal height, and at the end of two hours is still high. In the pancreatic psychoses, although carbohydrate metabolism is grossly disordered, it is not a true diabetes, as there is a marked pancreatic reaction at the end of the third hour. The paper is well illustrated with graphs typical of the various cases.

D. M.

[34] The Kottmann reaction as applied to psychiatric cases.—Theophile Raphael and George J. Smith. Amer. Jour. of Psychiat., 1924, iv, 161.

In this paper a report is given of the Kottmann reaction findings over a series of 754 sera from 291 psychotic patients, negative somatically save for neuropathological defect in certain cases, of wide age range, and including sixteen distinct psychotic types, 168 being females and 128 males, and studied, as far as possible, in 'long section.'

The Kottmann test is a simple photochemic procedure based on the protective property of human blood serum towards colloidal iodine, and the writers, accepting the findings of Kottmann and Petersen, regard it as a definite indication of the efficiency, or otherwise, of endocrine, and specifically thyroid, functioning. The validity of the reaction was first tested on a series of twenty normal controls and eight medically frank hyperthyroidal cases, with results approximating to those of Kottmann and Petersen. Details of the technique employed and of the history and findings of nine of the investigated cases are given, and results summarized as follows: "It appears that evidence, and of an essentially direct type, has been adduced as to the fundamental significance of the physiological substrate, and specifically, at least by inference, through this work, of the thyroid unit of the endocrine chain as regards the mediation of affective and feeling reaction on the psychic level, and, by corollary, emphasizing the importance of the psychogenic factor in cases showing actual clinical or medical endocrinopathy. This study is admittedly preliminary, and it is only in the hope of stimulating further investigation over this avenue of approach that formal presentation is made."

E. B. G. R.


A study of the carbon dioxide combining power of the blood plasma, and of the urea nitrogen of the blood in 200 consecutive admissions to the Blooming-
dale Hospital. The authors' findings corroborate the negative results reported by other observers.

Glucose tolerance tests show more or less characteristic changes in the glucose content of the blood of patients in either phase of affective psychoses and in the acute stages of dementia praecox. These changes indicate a definite retardation of functions of the vegetative nervous system in manic-depressive depression and in the acute stages of dementia praecox, and an acceleration of these same functions in manic-depressive excitement.

R. M. S.


The authors have abstracted from American newspapers and other sources the gist of a criminal trial of peculiar interest from the point of view of the psychology of crime, and the attitude of the legal profession thereto, in America.

Two young men, eighteen and nineteen years old respectively, the sons of wealthy parents, kidnapped and murdered the fourteen-year-old son of a wealthy Chicago resident. They also wrote the boy's father previous to the murder, demanding a ransom. From the point of view of intelligence, both young men were above the average standard; indeed, they were the youngest graduates of their college. They had no animosity against their victim, and gave as the motive of the crime the desire to experience a hitherto untasted thrill and to plan and carry out a perfect crime. The prosecuting counsel held that the motive for the crime was to obtain the ransom. The defending counsel did not, as might have been expected, bring forward the plea of 'guilty but insane.' He admitted the 'legal sanity' of the accused, and then announced his intention of bringing forward medical and psychological evidence with the view to the mitigation of the sentence. A concise abstract of this evidence is given, the burden of which is that the crime was the result of the interaction between two abnormal personalities, neither of whom singly could have carried out the crime. The accused were sentenced to a life term of imprisonment, so there will be an opportunity for further observation and investigation. It is to be hoped that the results of this will be published some day.

D. M.


Cases are received into the Rampton State Institution from all parts of England and Wales. They represent those defectives who are unfit for association with others, and who are not amenable to control in local institutions and homes. They have demonstrated their violent and criminal behaviour before admission. The cases belong to the higher grades of mental defect; there are no idiots and few imbeciles in the institution. Their ages run between sixteen and twenty-five.

Cases are divided into three main groups:—

1. Simple Mental Defectives.—Here the consciousness of inferiority finds
expression in aggressive and antisocial behaviour. Their condition becomes aggravated during adolescence.

2. Mental Defectives with Abnormal Emotional Instability.—In this group ordinary laboratory tests will demonstrate a satisfactory amount of reason, judgment and wisdom, yet a study of their behaviour will show that none of these faculties are consistently exercised. These individuals are subject to outbursts of restlessness and defiance, often with mischievous and destructive behaviour. Apart from these outbursts, which are quite uncontrollable, their behaviour is good. Their irregular behaviour is due to lack of emotional balance.

3. Mental Defectives with Psychoses or Psychoneuroses.—In this group the mental defect is often disguised by a psychosis or a psychoneurosis, or there is the history of an early psychosis which has impaired intelligence. The attacks of mental illness are frequently transient, the symptoms vague and ill-defined. Homosexuality is a frequent manifestation of this group. Criminal conduct may take place during one of these transient psychotic attacks, and when the patient is up for examination all symptoms of the psychosis may have disappeared. It is of first importance that the mental defect should be recognized, so that justice may not miscarry.

D. M.

[38] Drug addiction in its relation to crime.—Lawrence Kolb. Mental Hygiene, 1925, ix, 74.

All preparations of opium capable of producing addiction inhibit aggressive impulses and make psychopaths less likely to commit crimes of violence. The inflation of personality produced by large doses of morphine is a state of ease, comfort, and freedom from pathological tensions and strivings brought about by the soothing narcotic properties of opiates on abnormal persons. Nervously normal addicts are not inflated, and psychopathic criminals are less dangerous when inflated than when in their normal condition. Both heroin and morphine in large doses change drunken, fighting psychopaths into sober, cowardly, non-aggressive idlers. Cocaine, up to a certain point, makes criminals more efficient as criminals. Beyond this point it brings on the state of fear or paranoia, during which the addict might murder a supposed pursuer. Habitual criminals are psychopaths, and psychopaths are abnormal individuals who, because of their abnormality, are especially liable to become addicts. The increased addict prison population is due to the rigid enforcement of laws enacted within the last ten years, and designed to curb the evil by making the possession or handling of narcotics by unauthorized persons a prison offence. In New York City, the centre of heroin addiction, the homicide rate has decreased during the past twelve years in the face of an increase in the rate for the country as a whole.

C. S. R.


Evidence as to mental condition is admissible on the question of mitigation of sentence for the following reasons: (1) Since all conduct involves mental
activity, evidence of mental condition is always admissible to throw light upon the motives that were actually at work in the causation of the crime; and since the worthy or wicked motive with which a criminal act is committed does not ordinarily affect the defendant's responsibility, it can only be considered by way of mitigation of punishment. (2) Evidence of mental condition is admissible in mitigation in order to enable the defence to rebut properly the evidence of aggravating circumstances, or of the details of the offence, by attempting to prove by medical testimony that the facts which the prosecution interprets as indicating a 'depraved' defendant actually indicate a disordered mind, but one that falls short of the requirements of the technical 'tests' of irresponsibility. (3) The "defence of insanity" involves two steps: proof of mental disorder, and proof that the mentally disordered person meets the requirements of one of the 'tests' of irresponsibility. If evidence of mental unsoundness were not admissible in hearings on mitigation, then the mentally diseased individual whose condition did not happen to be such as to fall within one of the more or less arbitrary 'tests' would be in exactly the same position with respect to punishment as the absolutely normal offender. If the law provided for degrees of responsibility, and permitted the acceptance by the jury of evidence of mental disorder insufficient to constitute complete irresponsibility as 'measured' by the 'tests,' but sufficient to permit the jury to find a less degree of the offence than would be the case where no such evidence was introduced, then resort to the plea of "Guilty" and introduction of psychiatric testimony before the court by way of mitigation of the sentence would not be necessary.

C. S. R.

[40] Problems of the personality of schoolchildren and the responsibility of the community for dealing with them.—C. Macfie Campbell. Amer. Jour. Psychiat., 1925, iv, 471.

This short paper outlines the work of a school clinic established near Boston, in compliance with legislation, for the determination of the number of retarded children attending public schools. Examples are given of the types of cases investigated, and the author suggests that the data secured would form a useful basis for dealing with important educational and medical problems.

E. B. G. R.

TREATMENT.


The history of science has largely been the story of the struggle to detach itself from the religious and mystical prepossessions arising from earlier beliefs in animism and magic. Mental science, more slowly than the others, is freeing itself from these distorting and retarding influences. The main obstacle to scientific psychotherapy is the atmosphere of occultism with which it is surrounded.