but it does not last beyond the third day. Two cases were regarded as failures.

The method is most suitable for cases of root sciatica, but Jordan has found it almost equally efficacious in sciatica of the nerve-trunk, though in the latter some pain in the calf is liable to remain. This may be treated by novocain injection of the nerve-trunk.

J. P. M.

**Endocrinology.**


Examination of the nervous system of fatal cases of myxœdema reveals the presence of chromatolysis of certain ganglion cells. There is no constant relationship between the weight of the thyroid and the body weight. Conceivably the bodily disease may influence the weight of the thyroid. Deficiency of iodine in the thyroid may be due either to excessive consumption or to deficient production. The intervesicular epithelium is the important factor in the secretion of iodine. Introduction of iodine into the diet diminishes the incidence of epidemic goitre.

The ovaries, testes, adrenal medulla and pituitary show pathological changes in mental disease, but no such changes are noticed in the thyroid. In death from chronic debilitating diseases the iodine content of the thyroid is found to be very low. An interesting fact is that in cirrhosis of the liver it is found to be relatively high. A good thyroid, according to Rollier, is of good prognostic significance. Iodine plays an important part in the metabolism of the body.

Chemical analysis of the thyroid glands from various sources brings out the fact that the iodine content is relatively low in cases suffering from mental disease (excluding general paralysis), viz., 0·066 per cent. as compared with 0·158 per cent. in tubercular patients, 0·124 per cent. in cases from a general hospital, and 0·136 per cent. in cases of general paralysis.

In myxœdema, in addition to the atrophy of the thyroid, there is hypertrophy of the pars intermedia of the pituitary, the part that secretes colloid into the cerebrospinal fluid. This may explain the changes in the nervous system mentioned above.

The cortex adrenalis contains in its cells a lipoid cholesterine ester which is essential to body metabolism. In sepsis the cholesterine ester disappears from the cells. Seventy-five per cent. of deaths in asylums are from infective processes, and in the majority of these cases the cholesterine ester has disappeared from the cells of the cortex adrenalis. When well-developed sexual organs exist there is usually a well-developed cortex adrenalis.

D. M.


A case of a male, aged fifty-five years, who presented some evidence of Fröhlich’s syndrome in sexual and skin changes, together with signs of
increased intracranial pressure of one year's duration and a positive Bordet-Wassermann reaction in the blood and cerebrospinal fluid. At autopsy, an endothelioma was found to extend from the lamina terminalis and the optic chiasma to the junction of the aqueductus sylvii and third ventricle. The cortex showed changes compatible with those of general paralysis.

LEWIS YEALLAND.

**Psychopathology.**

**PSYCHOLOGY.**


Commenting on the persistent vitality of the materialistic system of thought, the author examines Lange’s views as exploited in his ‘History of Materialism,’ about to be reissued. Lange believed that materialism is unable to explain consciousness and is scientifically refuted by the psychology and physiology of sensation. In considering what is true and what false in materialism, it is doubtful whether any substantially new arguments have been produced since Greek times. The author rejects the theory of psychophysical parallelism, and presumably that of deterministic psychology also. With the disintegration of ancient orthodoxies, materialism is replaced by scepticism. It still exists in Russia and America as a protest against traditional theology. The materialistic dogmas are expressed by the belief in the sole reality of matter and the reign of law. Apart from the belief in the reality of sensation, the sole reality of matter is now disputed by physics, which produces the theory of relativity. Time merged into space-time interferes with the notion of substance more than philosophy does. A piece of matter has become a system of interrelated events. Nothing is permanent and nothing endures. The reign of law must include human volition if it is to become part of the materialistic outlook. As a margin of error exists in all observations it cannot be proved that events obey any law exactly. Even in physics the reign of law is not indubitably universal, and in biology and psychology this doubt becomes increased. Controversies between determinism and free-will spring from a conflict between the desire for safety and the desire for power. In the present time Haldane maintains that living phenomena cannot be explained solely in terms of chemistry and physics, while Loeb stands for the mechanistic view. The behaviouristic school of psychology has shown a materialistic tendency by denying that introspection is an independent source of scientific knowledge. If the tendency of some psychologists to regard consciousness as a dubious term and ‘thought’ and ‘reason’ as analogous to processes of learning among animals reducible to the law of habit should prove correct, belief in psychological materialism will become easier. Materialism may be accepted if it means that the good of every science is to be merged into physics. There is, however, no good reason to suppose that materialism is metaphysically true.

ROBERT M. RIGGALL.