ABSTRACTS


A review of the results of this operation, which are not very promising. Perforating ulcers due to tabes and syringomyelia may heal temporarily, but recur. The operation is most useful for causalgia and ulcers due to injuries to the nerves or vessels of the limb, and for so-called 'essential' ulcers, but it is of doubtful or negative value for the many other conditions for which it has been tried.

R. G. Gordon.

Endocrinology.


A woman, age nineteen, subject to sudden attacks of unconsciousness, presented all over her body and on the extremities masses of painful adipose tissue, giving the characteristic 'bunch of worms' sensation on palpation. A general neurological examination was negative.

The sugar tolerance test after fasting revealed 99 mg. of blood sugar per 100 c.c.; after one hour, 111 mg.; after two hours, 66 mg., and after three hours, 80 mg. The oral administration of dried thyroid and pituitary substance was followed by a marked improvement; the patient lost weight, the painful areas disappeared, and the epileptiform attacks were diminished in number.

The authors consider that the syndrome of adiposis dolorosa represents a polyglandular dysfunction, the pituitary and thyroid being the chief offenders, in the order named.

R. M. S.

[172] Complete destruction of the pituitary by a growth arising in the nasopharynx without the so-called pituitary syndrome (Destruction totale de l'hypophyse par tumeur d'origine rhinopharyngée sans syndrome dit hypophysaire).—G. WORMS and G. DELATER. Rev. neurol., 1925, xxxii, 361.

The patient presented during life the symptoms and signs of a tumour of the nasopharynx invading the base of the skull, and died after an illness of four and a half months. He had finally complete blindness from secondary optic atrophy, and had lost all sense of smell. Several of the cranial nerves were also affected. There were no signs of polyuria, no obesity, no dystrophy of the sexual organs.

Autopsy revealed a lymphosarcoma, which had invaded the cranial cavity at various points, but did not penetrate the dura mater. It had burst through the roof of the sphenoidal sinus and completely destroyed the pituitary gland without, however, destroying, or even raising the fibrous roof of, the
sella turcica. The infundibulum and base of the third ventricle were intact. Microscopic section showed nothing of the pituitary gland remaining except for a few clusters of anterior lobe cells.

This case supports the experimental evidence obtained by Roussy and others upon ablation of the pituitary in dogs.

C. P. S.


A complete clinical and morphological description of a pineal tumour, with an admirable review of the literature and a full bibliography. The relationship of the pineal gland to precocious development of bodily growth, intelligence and sexual function is lucidly discussed.

R. G. Gordon.


Of 194 consecutive cases of myxœdema, fifty-one manifested some form of hallucination of sight, and a small group, hallucination of hearing. The most common form of visual hallucinations is that in which patients see small animals, generally mice, sometimes rats, cats or dogs running on the floor. These symptoms manifest themselves at intervals. When once established they may recur daily or a number of times during the same day. They are always transient in character and appear to be superinduced by a sudden rotation of the head or a lateral glance to one side. The animals appear in front and pass obliquely outwards and backwards to the right or left and then vanish. Sometimes these visual disturbances take the form of illusions; thus patients may see pictures distorted and moving on the wall, or they may have the sensation of the floor becoming uneven, which causes difficulty in walking. Visual and auditory hallucinations are often associated in the same individual in addition to other alterations in psychic functions. Such symptoms are regarded as almost, if not absolutely, pathognomonic, though literature has neglected them. The author’s studies indicate that this syndrome is of considerable diagnostic value. The diagnostic proof resides in the fact that feeding with small doses of thyroid over a period of three or four days will almost invariably dispel the hallucinations.

C. S. R.