narrower here than at the levels immediately above. The funiculus is not covered by arachnoid in the canal, and there is no fluid round it, hence it is prone to suffer from extrinsic mechanical influences; at the same time the venous plexus round it is likely to become congested if inflammatory or infective processes exist in the vicinity.

Sciatica of this type is not associated with abdominal or inguinal pain, with sphincteric disorders, or with paralysis (as a rule); it does not occur before the age of 15; and there is no lymphocytosis in the spinal fluid.

Excellent results in treatment have been secured by a combination of radiant heat with immobilisation. With a Bier’s apparatus dry heat is applied daily for 30 to 40 minutes to the proper area; some 18 to 20 applications commonly suffice. Immobilisation is effected by means of a corset of plaster for pelvis and trunk, leaving the limbs free. It is applied after the heat treatment has ceased. Some two or three months later it is replaced by one of celluloid; six months, or more, up to a year, complete the course. In more than 300 cases the author has had gratifying success.

S. A. K. W.

Endocrinology.

[120] The influence of the thyroid on character (La tiroide e la sua influenza sul carattere).—C. E. Roberti. Riv. di pat. nerv. e ment., 1927, xxxii, 125.

The author discusses the three pathological conditions of thyroid activity, viz., hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, and dysthyroidism. He deals with their relation to character and concludes that the hypothyroidic subject exhibits affective stability, slight excitability, and a certain slowness in all the nervous processes, while the hyperthyroidic shows an increase in general excitability, an instability of mood, and a great liveliness of emotion.

These characteristics may paradoxically coexist in the same person, and the combination corresponds in a wide sense to what is found in dysthyroidism.

R. G. G.


From a study of the ages of onset of epilepsy taken from the histories of 7,200 admissions to Craig Colony, New York, it is evident that there are two periods of life wherein the greatest number of cases of epilepsy develop; viz., the first four years of life, and puberty. Were there only the one group of early life one might attribute the affection to some structural change of the nervous
system, but when the group occurring at puberty is considered it would seem that the endocrine system offers the best field for study. Inasmuch as menstruation is known to be intimately associated with the endocrine system, an effort to demonstrate endocrine dysfunction was made by the study of the menstrual records of 124 female patients over a period of five years. The minimum age at the beginning of this period was 15 years and the maximum age at the end was 35 years. A perusal of these records would convince the most sceptical that irregularities of menstruation are very common. The percentage was well over 50. A similar group of normal females for comparison with the above was not available but it is argued that among them no such high percentage of irregularities would be found. The author, however, does not attempt to prove that epilepsy is caused by endocrine dysfunction.

C. S. R.


The case described by the author does not correspond in its entirety to the usual clinical picture of lipodystrophia progressiva; there was a striking ‘adipositas’ (not, however, ‘dolorosa’) of the lower part of the trunk and of the lower limbs, the right being hypertrophied. By way of etiology the author incriminates the ovarian system (“ovarian dysfunction”). In the upper part of the body, shoulders and face, was some fat shrinkage (not particularly noticeable in the photographs), the cause of which is unknown; the fatty hypertrophy of the other parts is declared to be associated with the ovarian involution already mentioned. Two types are said to be distinguishable; the infantile (mainly lipoatrophy) and the juvenile (mainly lipo hypertrophy).

S. A. K. W.

Psychopathology.

PSYCHOSES.


From many careful experiments this author concludes that irradiated ergosterol causes a reversal of the abnormal blood reaction known as the haemolastic crisis in cases of dementia praecox, and the dose required to establish a permanent reversal is 2 mgrm. (1.33 gr.). There was no evidence in control cases of any deficiency of vitamin D obtained from the skin and from the food supplied. Ultra-violet radiation does not increase the production in the body of vitamin D sufficiently to produce a reversal of the reaction, and the quantity