This family consisted of six living children, two of whom were normal, while four presented the combination of cataract, rickets, imbecility and infantilism which forms the title of the paper. No etiological factor could be discovered, and in particular both congenital syphilis and pellagra were definitely excluded. But the blood calcium was found to be well below normal not only in the affected children but also in the healthy children and the father. The authors consider that the cause of the disease was a disturbance of the endocrine balance with special default in the parathyroids. The cataract also seemed to be dependent on diminished parathyroid secretion, seeing that the combination of rickets with cataract is usually associated with tetany. Seeing that good results had occasionally been claimed for the treatment of imbecility with parathyroid extract, the authors subjected their patients to this as well as ultra-violet rays, but without obvious good effect. Injection treatment with parathyroid extract does not seem to have been tried.

J. G. G.

PROGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.


Dehydration was carried out on a series of typical institutional epileptics but had no definite effect on the occurrence of fits or on the patient’s disposition. The giving of unlimited fluids after a period of dehydration and the forcing of fluids without previous dehydration had no definite effect on the number of fits. The patients were adversely affected by the diet, and preliminary loss of weight was severe. Resistance, too, was lowered. Nitrogen retention either precipitated or complicated stages of excitement and stupor, and acidosis occurred during the excitaments. The results obtained in 12 cases were such that this method would appear to be of little value. This conclusion is reinforced by the injurious effects noted.

C. S. R.

Endocrinology.


The author conducted previous experiments on birds and now repeats them in dogs. As a result of these experiments he finds corroboration of his previous work, that pituitary lipoidal substance—the indication of activity of the gland—is in excess when sexual activity is in abeyance, and undergoes diminution during periods of sexual activity. This applies both