INVESTIGATION seems to show that epilepsy does not predispose to chronic pulmonary tuberculosis, or vice versa. In a series of 100 cases of epilepsy with such intercurrent tubercle in its active stages the frequency of seizures was markedly decreased in the majority of cases, with a demonstrable loss of weight. A review of the literature reveals that there is a reduced metabolic rate in epilepsy and a definitely increased rate in pulmonary tubercle, that convulsions are often absent in diseases with a high blood sugar such as diabetes and cancer, and that hyperglycaemia tends to occur in the tuberculous individual; that a normal blood-serum calcium is usual in epilepsy and that it is often found to be elevated in pulmonary tubercle, that a reduction in the sodium chloride of the blood of epileptics often reduces the frequency of convulsions, and that a constantly low blood chloride is often observed in patients with active pulmonary tubercle; that comparisons of the blood pictures in epilepsy and in pulmonary tubercle show the occurrence of hypocholestæmia and an increased rate of sedimentation of the blood in both conditions; that the pH values of the blood seem to indicate a tendency in the epileptic to approach a more alkaline reaction, and in the tuberculous patient a more acid reaction. From the above data suggestions are made as to the mechanism involved in active chronic pulmonary tuberculosis in raising the convulsion threshold in pre-existing epilepsy so that the frequency of seizures is noticeably reduced.

C. S. R.

This thesis is held to be true in virtue of the demonstration that in a case of traumatic spinal compression involving the posterior roots of the 4—5 lumbar segments, the reflex was abolished, while in a case of spondylitis in the dorsal region causing injury to the pyramidal tracts, the reflex was increased so that the gluteus exhibited clonus. The reflex is therefore a true one involving a spinal arc and is not an idiomuscular twitch.

R. G. G.

The author describes a case in detail and then argues that the pathogenesis of the osseous dystrophy might be the same as that of the epilepsy on the
basis of a deficiency in calcium, which was present, and therefore possibly responsible for both. The deficiency he attributes to an endocrine anomaly due to lesions in the region of the diencephalon and hypophysis.

R. G. G.

PROGNOSIS AND TREATMENT


A discussion of the usefulness of tryparsamide in various types of neurosyphilis and a report of results. In a group of 341 cases of general paralysis clinical arrests or remissions were obtained in 54 per cent. In 306 cases of meningovascular syphilis clinical or serological cures were obtained in 78 per cent. In paresis a combination of tryparsamide and malarial therapy will be found to be desirable.

R. G. G.

Psychopathology

PSYCHOLOGY


Data from 254 distinguished living persons show that the sense of smell still occupies a prominent place in normal mental dynamics and has not fallen into the state of disuse commonly imagined. Of most significance in these data are the emotional ‘drives’ released by certain odours and the symbolism in many of the odour-linked memories and experiences of these accomplished and apparently non-psychotic persons. Regression to childhood odours, giving rise to nostalgia and a poignant longing for the past, was reported. Other brief reports given show varied trends. Some questions are raised by the fact that of many experiences with the romantic element in odours only a small majority are from women. This in spite of the data showing that memories stimulated by odours are more frequent and vivid in women than men. As far as these spontaneous accounts show, artificial, or perfume odours seem to be more potent in sensual stimulation than natural body odours. The relative rarity of olfactory abnormalities should be looked upon as reflecting the evolutionary dictum that ‘the oldest neurologically is the most stable.’ The common occurrence of psychoanalytic mechanisms here reported shows the active rôle of the sense of smell in human mental life.

C. S. R.