

## Periscope

spasms, seldom unilateral. Tonic spasm of a limb lasting as long as three weeks may occur in epidemic encephalitis, and is usually accompanied by considerable pain. Such tonic syndromes are believed to be extrapyramidal in origin, and to be associated with corpus striatum lesions, or at least with a lesion in the subthalamic or striate regions.

WM. G. SPILLER (*Brain*, 1927, l., 171-187).

### CLINICAL CONTRIBUTION TO DRUG ADDICTION: THE STRUGGLE FOR CURE AND THE CONSCIOUS REASONS FOR RELAPSE.

Relapse in drug addicts is more common to-day than formerly. This is due to the fact that recent legislation is much more effective in preventing the addiction of stable normal persons than of unstable psychopathic persons, and has tended to force the cure of the more hopeful of the curable cases. It is now chiefly those who are most predisposed to relapse who become addicted, the more curable cases having been cured. The relapse is mainly due to the same cause that is responsible for their original addiction, namely a pathological nervous constitution with its inferiorities, pathological strivings, etc., from which narcotics give an unusual sense of relief and ease. The idea that opiates bring about a state of moral perversity that renders addicts indifferent to cure and therefore liable to relapse, or that these drugs produce some physical change that makes their continued use necessary, and the impulse to return to them irresistible, is erroneous and is unimportant as a cause for relapse, certainly during the first two or three years of addiction. In some very nervous persons of many years' addiction, withdrawal of the drug may produce hysterical symptoms or hypomania lasting several months. Nearly all addicts make sincere efforts to be cured during the early period of their addiction. Many of the cures taken later are mere matters of expediency and are insincere. The hope for cure wanes as time passes, and the force of habit, numerous impelling memory associations, and increasing physical dependence on opiates is added to the original nervous pathology. The pleasure derived from opium varies from a slight feeling of calm in persons who are normal to feelings sometimes approaching ecstasy in the extremely psychopathic. Hence the greater susceptibility to addiction of the psychopath. Such persons have in their normal state unusual impulses and disturbing mental conflicts. They feel inadequate or inferior, and their usual restlessness and anti-social conduct are expressions of compensatory strivings against this. Narcotics produce a feeling of calm and peace to which they are not accustomed, and which from its contrast is interpreted as pleasure. Inferiority is replaced by confidence, restless-

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ness by calm, and discontent by contentment. This pleasurable effect is dulled as tolerance becomes established, and discomfort and distress appear. By resort to cure this is removed, and with a return to their previous psychopathic state, relief is again sought in narcotics, and the cycle is repeated. The periodic alcoholic or drug addict is living on a low and unsatisfactory emotional plane. He is always striving for an emotional something just out of his normal reach. Alcohol or drugs bring it within his range and give him the satisfaction he does not know how to obtain in any other way. The normal person can regulate and control such impulses when they take an abnormal direction.

L. KOLB (*Journ. Nerv. and Ment. Dis.*, 1927, lxvi., 22-43).

### METASTATIC CARCINOMA OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM.

According to available statistics slightly over 50 per cent. of all cancers eventually metastasise. While metastasis to the central nervous system is relatively infrequent (4.77 per cent.), cancer of certain organs has a predilection for metastasising to the nervous system. Approximately one-half of the metastases arise from primary cancers of the breast, lung, and prostate. The uterus is next in frequency but the percentage is small, and while no organ is exempt, they are rare from the bladder. In about two-thirds of the cases the metastases take the form of multiple tumours. Any part of the brain or cord substance, their coverings, or the vessels may be involved. Metastasis within the spinal cord substance is extremely rare, only seven cases being so far reported. The dura alone may be involved (pachymeningitis carcinomatosa), or the pia-arachnoid (meningitis carcinomatosa), or the perivascular lymph spaces, or the nervous substance itself. Dissemination may be by the lymphatics or the blood stream, or both, or by direct extension. Lymph emboli usually involve the meninges. Such emboli often lodge in the small vessels of the lungs and invade the small vessels with subsequent distribution by the blood stream. It has yet to be fully proved that tumour cells in the blood or lymph vessels may be destroyed by antagonistic substances.

Twenty-three cases are described here at some length, seven being from the breast and five from the prostate. The fact that the lymphatic drainage from these two organs is extraordinary rich is not considered sufficient to explain this high percentage. There is no special group of symptoms characteristic of metastatic tumour in the nervous system. Occasionally they produce symptoms from vascular occlusion.

N. W. WINKELMAN and J. L. ECKEL (*Journ. Nerv. and Ment. Dis.*, 1927, lxvi., 1-14 and 133-147).

A. N. B.