

## REVIEWS.

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*Tratamiento de la Reaccion Leprotica (Lepto-reaccion Lepromatosa) con Plasma* by F. Contreras and others.

In the English summary the writers state:—

' In other diseases of a serious nature for which also no effective treatment has been found, treatment with blood plasma or other fractions of denatured blood has been employed. Of the blood fractions it seems that the gamma globulin is the richest in immune bodies and it might be useful in the treatment of the reactions in leprosy. Twenty-two patients with advanced lepromatous leprosy who had frequent lepra reactions were given 85 transfusions of "iso plasma" (plasma from disanaphylactized calf blood). Tolerance to this treatment was found to be fairly good. Twelve of the patients tolerated the heterologous plasma perfectly. Six had slight side effects of no importance. In four cases there were serious although shortlived ill effects of allergic nature. All patients treated showed improvement. The best results were seen in patients who had nausea, vomiting and intolerance of all kinds of food, which condition yielded rapidly. Persistent and repeated epistaxis also ceased quickly. Great improvement was seen with respect to neuritis, manifestations in the skin and mucous membranes, the general condition, and the fever, which in some instances subsided after the first transfusions while in others its subsidence occurred after the other symptoms disappeared.

*Changes in the Anterior Nasal Spine and the Alveolar Process of the Maxillary Bone in Leprosy* by V. Møller Christensen and others.

The first writer noticed a marked atrophy of the alveolar process of the maxillary bone and also atrophy of the anterior nasal spine in 110 of 150 skulls of leprosy patients buried in the Naestved, Sct. Jorgensgaard between 1260 and 1540 A.D. in addition to the typical changes in the hands and feet. He assumes that this atrophy is typical of leprosy and calls it "Facies Leprosa". Seven living patients with leprosy were studied and in five X-rays showed atrophy of the ant. nasal spine and all seven showed atrophy of the alveolar process of the maxillary bone but this was probably due to earlier loss of teeth. No changes of sensitivity were found which might indicate that the atrophy was due to neurotrophic disturbance of the bone. They consider that atrophy of the ant. nasal spine may be an early manifestation of leprosy and may be demonstrated by X-ray or palpation.

*Changes in the Lepromin and Tuberculin Reactions of Lepromin-Negative Patients after Vaccination with B.C.G.* by J. Convit and others.

The writers believe that the prognosis in persistently lepromin negative lepromatous cases can be improved by the previous vaccination with B.C.G. A group of 113 patients with lepromatous leprosy whose lesions had disappeared under diasone or promin treatment were given B.C.G. vaccine. Of these patients 51 were negative to tuberculin and 62 weakly positive. Of the 51 cases negative to both tests 25.4% became positive to lepromin after B.C.G. vaccination, and of the 62 who were negative to lepromin but weakly positive to tuberculin 53.2% became lepromin positive.

In a group of 40 patients with the indeterminate form of leprosy who were negative to both tests the lepromin reaction became positive in 87.5%.

*A Nonchromogenic culture of an Acid-fast bacillus isolated from the nasal mucus of a leprosy patient; Its virulence for laboratory animals* by H. C. de Souza-Araujo.

This paper describes the isolation and cultivation of an acid-fast coccobacillus obtained from the nasal mucus of a young Brazilian woman leprosy patient. The culture called " Dalva " strain after her produced generalised infection and considerable lesions in guinea-pigs, black mice and cebus monkeys. In the original culture on Loewenstein's medium the germs were predominantly coccobacilli but became bacillary in the lesions in the laboratory animals. The bacilli were strongly positive to the Dubos test, as strongly as the Koch bacillus, but did not produce tuberculous lesions in guinea pigs. At first the culture could not be recovered from the experimental lesions but in a addendum to the paper the writer says that in further experimentation a cebus monkey was reinoculated on Jan. 15, 1952 with a suspension of a two-month-old culture grown on 5% glycerin-agar and nodules developed which were very rich in acid-fast bacilli. From these growths were obtained on Loewenstein's media similar to the original Dalva strain.

*The Mechanism of action of the Sulphone derivatives in Lepromatous Leprosy* by Paulo Rath de Souza and M. de Souza Lima.

This is a very interesting and provocative paper. In their descriptions of the fundamental lesions of lepromatous infiltration and lepromata they state that both are formed essentially by variable numbers of histiocytic (Virchow) cells assembled together and sometimes forming tumour like masses. Within these cells are found the agent of the disease, Hansen's bacillus. These lesions do not last indefinitely but undergo regression either after treatment or spontaneously and when complete leave only scars. The Virchow cells in regression are definitely swollen with a pycnotic nucleus and a cytoplasm with a great number of rounded vacuoles of various sizes which give them a foamy appearance. After staining with scarlet red these vacuoles are seen to be filled with lipids. These cells in regression contain few of rare acid-fast bacilli of granular appearance and they may contain no bacilli whatever. Virchow cells which are not in regression are smaller than those in regression. They have a vesicular nucleus and their cytoplasm is contrary to what is currently believed, is not vacuolated and still less is it foamy. They are fairly simple macrophages of a wide variety of shapes and forms. They are seen teeming with typical bacilli forming globi. The quantity of lipids found is in general inversely proportional to the number of bacilli. G. O. TEICHMANN.