

Abstracts.

EAR.

Mulholland, J. A.—Infection of the Ear with Vincent's Micro-organisms; Report of sixteen cases. "Annals of Otology, xxiv, p. 485.

The points about this infection are: (1) The fact of its occurrence in debilitated children, (2) its apparent contagiousness, (3) its amenability to local treatment, and (4) its good prognosis. Of the 16 cases, 13 were confined to the middle ear, 3 had mastoiditis (2 of which were inoperable and died of meningitis; both had complete facial paralysis). General treatment was symptomatic. In the last 4 cases salvarsan was used (in one case syphilis was excluded by Wassermann examination).

Macleod Yearsley.

Shambaugh, Geo. F.—Focal Infection in the Ætiology of Labyrinth Disease. "Annals of Otology," xxiv, p. 481.

Discusses a group of cases of labyrinth disease in patients without middle trouble or general disease to account for it. The disturbance may be in cochlea, vestibule, or both, and the symptoms in the former case are nerve deafness, usually with tinnitus. Progress takes place by acute exacerbations. In the vestibule, disturbed equilibrium occurs, except in cases where the vestibular involvement is very insidious. Involvement of the whole labyrinth gives rise to Menière's complex, unless progress is without acute exacerbations, when deafness and tinnitus alone occur. The clinical picture in this group of cases, therefore, differs very widely. It is to ætiology that Shambaugh calls attention. He points to the similarity between the phenomena in these cases and the chronic degenerations which occur as the result of focal infections. Chronic arthritis and neuritis, chronic cardio-vascular degenerations, and chronic nephritis are the result frequently of chronic latent foci of infection. In all these systemic diseases there is the chronic progressive character punctuated by acute exacerbations, accounted for by fresh bacterial emboli. In the cases under discussion the target for these emboli is the labyrinth. The focus for these systemic infections is usually found in faucial tonsils or teeth. Histories are given of three typical cases. A very important and instructive paper.

Macleod Yearsley.

ŒSOPHAGUS.

Arrowsmith, H.—Angi-neurotic Œdema of the Œsophagus. "Laryngoscope," 1915, p. 156.

The patient was a female, aged fifty, who was first seen by Arrowsmith in 1911. At that time she had suffered for several weeks from increasing dysphagia and odyphagia. On œsophagoscopy, Arrowsmith found a mass just below the level of the cricoid cartilage occupying two-thirds of the lumen of the œsophagus, and attached to the left wall. The Wassermann reaction was negative, and a diagnosis of probable malignancy was made. The patient wanted a second opinion, and so a second examination was made by Jackson under general anæsthesia. On this occasion no lesion was found. Jackson's diagnosis was that of spasmodic stricture of the gullet. It subsequently transpired that the patient had suffered

from frequent and painful micturition, vesical tenesmus, gastro-intestinal disturbance, pyloric spasm, etc. She had also had œdema of the larynx, and had obtained relief by large doses of morphia and atropin. As might be expected, the patient also suffered from colon stasis, and an X-ray showed adhesions about the hepatic flexure. In 1913 the dysphagia returned, and at this time cutaneous wheals appeared on the neck. Arrow-smith holds that what he observed through the œsophagoscope in 1911 was a localised angio-neurotic œdema.

J. S. Fraser.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Evans, J. S., Middleton, W. S., and Smith, A. J.—Tonsillar Endamœbiasis and Thyroid Disturbances. "Amer. Journ. Med. Sci.," February, 1916.

Following upon the work of McCarrison, Farrant, and others, there has recently become evident a tendency to regard endemic goitre as due to an infective agent. While in no sense wishing to be understood as advancing such an explanation in reference to all cases of goitre, the writers of this paper regard it as probable that some of them are due to an effect on the thyroid gland of toxins elaborated in the tonsils or some other part of the upper respiratory tract, as a result of the symbiosis of the *Endamœba gingivalis* with certain bacteria, notably the *Micrococcus catarrhalis*, the protozoon being supposed to produce, by proteolysis of various cells, a pabulum of special value for the nutrition and growth of those bacteria whose toxins, according to Farrant, possess the power of thyroid stimulation. Of 362 goitrous persons examined, 22·8 per cent. showed infective conditions of the tonsillar crypts, and 90 per cent. showed lesions of either the tonsils or the nasal passages. Of 34 cases with diseased tonsils examined microscopically, 97 per cent. were found to harbour the *Endamœba gingivalis* in the tonsillar crypts. Of 16 individuals of this group who, after treatment by means of emetin hydrochloride, were re-examined, 13, or 81 per cent., were found no longer to have amœbæ in the tonsil crypts. Further, in 18 of 23 persons to whom emetin was administered, a definite reduction in the size of the goitre took place, the improvement being most constant in the dysthyroid cases, in 6 out of 7 of whom varying degrees of benefit were observed, from slight amelioration to apparent cure.

Thomas Guthrie.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE.—SECTION OF OTOLOGY.

It has been arranged to hold a special discussion on "*Warfare Injuries and Neuroses of Otological Interest*" on Friday, February 16, 1917, at 5 p.m. This early notice is given in the hope that those interested will prepare reports of cases to submit to the meeting, and will send full particulars of them not later than November 30 to Mr. E. D. D. Davis, 81, Harley Street, W. The council hope that if they receive sufficient material they will be able to classify and group the cases, as this should add to the value of the discussion; and it is therefore suggested that those sending in cases should later on send a further report on the progress of the cases; these additional reports should be received before the middle of January. Pathological notes of any fatal cases will, we understand, be considered extremely valuable.