from its biochemical reactions as a *Strep. pyogenes*, differing, however, in being non-hæmolytic, and thus possibly belonging to the neurotoxic group.

Iodine in thyroid gland.—A new method for estimating iodine in thyroid has been published in the *Biochemical Journal*, and a paper was read at the annual meeting of the Medico-Psychological Society last July and published in the *Journal of Mental Science*.

Basal metabolism.—The work done has shown the great importance of the conscious and unconscious contraction and relaxation of muscles in relation to the basal metabolic rate. A normal person sitting in a comfortable armchair with the muscles relaxed and using no effort in concentrating his attention may show a metabolic rate even below that usually regarded as evidence of hypothyroidism. The question arises as to whether the numerous publications of results of the bag methods have sufficiently taken into account these important factors. This shows that before any reliable results can be obtained, the question of the relaxation of the muscles must be taken into full consideration in estimating the value of the metabolic rate figures. It is also important to know whether the patient has had any exercise prior to the experiment, as exercise creates an oxygen debt which takes quite a long time to disappear. Investigations of the basal metabolic rate during sleep are being carried out. It is hoped to collect all the results soon for publication.

Animal experiments with hypnotic drugs.—This investigation has been continued and demonstrated striking histological changes in the white matter of the central nervous system—as shown by the presence of mucoid bodies resembling, but not identical with amyloid—which can be produced at will by the administration of hypnotic drugs orally or subcutaneously, and so far as the investigation goes are associated with changes which suggest alteration in the metabolism of the neurones. A considerable amount of evidence has been collected from observations on treated and untreated cats and monkeys and will shortly be published.

Permeability of brain membranes.—Following the experiments of F. K. Walter (Rostock), who has determined the ratio of the bromide ion (selected on account of its close resemblance to chloride, which it can to some extent physiologically replace), in the blood and cerebro-spinal fluid after the administration of sodium bromide, and who found the normal ratio of bromide in the blood and cerebro-spinal fluid to be about 3 to 1, there has been commenced an investigation into the permeability of the choroid plexus and brain membranes on these lines in cases of general paralysis, etc., under treatment in the hospital by malaria and other methods. The investigation suggests the possibility of assistance in the prognosis of general paralysis under treatment, based upon this permeability ratio, and also may aid our understanding of the secretion of the cerebro-spinal fluid.

It is well known that a diminution of intake of table salt is a valuable method of increasing the activity of bromide salts used in the treatment of epilepsy; probably this is due to a replacement of some of the sodium chloride of the cerebro-spinal fluid by the bromide salt.

Other work includes the determination of fat, lipoid and cholesterol ratios of the testes and adrenal gland. An attempt will be made to study a few *post-mortem* cases from the bacteriological, biochemical and histological aspects and to correlate the results.

THE THIRD SCANDINAVIAN NEUROLOGICAL CONGRESS.

THE above Congress was held on September 17 and 18, 1926, in Oslo, and the following is a brief account of the proceedings.

After the election of the President (Prof. Monrad-Krohn) and Vice-Presidents (Profs. Marcus, Hagelstam and Viggo Christiansen) reports were read by Borberg and Saethre on neurosyphilis, the first day being entirely devoted to this subject. A short communication by Dahlström stated that meta-lues were exceedingly rare among patients treated on the principles laid down by the late Prof. Boeck, of Oslo (an anti-mercurialist)—a point of great interest.

On the second day Gundersen (Oslo) raised the question of a possible relation of epidemic encephalitis to epidemic parotitis. From epidemiological observations in Norway he showed the probability of a very close connection

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between the two diseases. Ventriculography and cerebral operations were discussed by Antoni, Olivercrona, Magnus, Monrad-Krohn. Prof. Henschen spoke of the physiology of binocular vision, and in another communciation pleaded the necessity of assuming an "agraphic centre." Hansen related observations of a disease which he considered to be identical with Huntington's chorea, and claimed that this disease had been observed and described by a local practitioner in Norway long before Huntingdon. Further interesting communications were made by Hagelstam, Marcus, Wohlfahrt, Thjötta, Winther, Höglund, Wernoe, Jörgensen, Sahlgren and Nylen, Kahlmeter and Bruusgaard.

On the President's proposal, Prof. S. E. Henschen, the nestor of Scandinavian neurologists, was elected "President d'honneur."

Finally it was decided that the Fourth Scandinavian Neurological Congress should be held in Helsingfors in 1929.

[Communicated by Dr. T. Lossius, M.B., Secretary of the Congress].

CENTENARY OF THE DEATH OF DR. PHILIPPE PINEL.

THE following letter from the Association was conveyed by the Association's representative, Dr. Donald Ross, to the Congress of Alienists and Neurologists of France, held at Geneva and Lausanne from August 4–7, 1926, at which the centenary of the death of Pinel was celebrated.

"The President, Officers and other Members of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association send their cordial and fraternal greetings to the Alienists and Neurologists of France assembled in congress at Geneva and Lausanne, August 4–7, 1926, and with their colleagues likewise engaged in the humane and noble duty of treating those suffering from mental disorders, welcome this opportunity of recording their appreciation of the great work done by Philippe Pinel, whose personality has been an inspiration to psychiatric physicians in every country of the world.

"The Members of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association, in acknowledging their indebtedness to Pinel, feel that they have faithfully carried on the great tradition he created. They also feel that they are associated with him in no ordinary way. It was Pinel who translated into French the medical works of Prof. Cullen, of Edinburgh University—himself a great psychiatrist. Our academic courses of lectures on psychiatry were directly inspired by Esquirol—first the pupil and then the friend of Pinel.

"The allied work of John Howard in regard to the reformation of prisons, workhouses, etc., which also drew attention to the pitiable lot of the weak-minded and insane confined there, carried out the ideals of Esquirol, which is another bond between us and Pinel.

"On this memorable occasion, which recalls the glorious and epoch-making work of a great French alienist, the Royal Medico-Psychological Association sends its congratulations to those now assembled, whose brilliant achievements have advanced psychiatry to the high position it now occupies among the medical sciences."

R. WORTH,
Hon. General Secretary,
The Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

OBITUARY.

ROBERT HENRY COLE, M.D., F.R.C.P.Lond.,

Physician and Lecturer in Mental Diseases, St. Mary's Hospital, London, and Ordinary Member since 1892.

THE sudden and unexpected death of Dr. R. H. Cole on August 10 was the result of an attack of angina pectoris. Of the condition which proved so rapidly fatal he had no previous warning, and was active and cheerful up to the evening of the night of his death, when he was preparing to start for a holiday in Brittany.

Dr. Cole was born in 1866, and was destined for the Civil Service. Always

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