

the brain, brought about by relaxation in tone of the splanchnic area. Some objections to his theory are then mentioned. Mere increase of blood does not alone excite functional activity in the skeletal muscles or glands, although in the kidney the secretions are much influenced by the blood supply.

The brain is more complex, but the evidence shows that the irritability of its cells is directly influenced by the amount of blood supply, but the relation of the blood supply to functional activity is still an unsolved problem.

A NEW TEST FOR SEMINAL FLUID.

The recognition of spermatozoa in medico-legal researches is often a matter of considerable difficulty, especially if the material under examination is of old date. Great interest consequently attaches to the test for semen devised by Florence, of Lyons, which has recently been reproduced in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, in conjunction with a confirmatory test due to the ingenuity of Dr. W. F. Whitney. Florence's test comprises the use of a reagent often made use of in testing alkaloids, and is known as the tri-iodide of potassium. The test solution contains 1.65 parts of iodide of potassium, 2.54 parts of pure iodine, 30 parts of distilled water. A drop of this solution placed side by side on a slide with a drop of fluid obtained by moistening the seminal stain results in the formation of a number of characteristic brownish-red, pointed crystals, rhomboidal in shape, and presenting a certain resemblance to haemin crystals. Dr. Wyatt Johnson, who has carried out some investigations with this test, reports that he has been enabled to obtain the reaction with stains upwards of twelve months old, and not only is the reaction not obtained with other organic secretions, but even the semen of animals gives a much less marked reaction. In the same journal Dr. W. F. Whitney confirms the value of the test, which, however, gives a precipitate with alkaloids, and he suggests another test, which may be used in conjunction with the foregoing. A drop of fluid obtained from the moistened stain is evaporated on a slide and fixed by heat in the usual way. The resulting film is then stained with eosin and methyl green, when it will be seen that the head of the spermatozoon is stained at the base of a deep green colour, while the anterior part and the tail stain red. This staining reaction is well marked only in human semen, so that a possible source of error is obviated.—*Medical Press*, June 2, 1897.

SUSCEPTIBILITY OF INFANTS TO HOSPITALISM

Dr. Henry Dwight Chapin has a paper in the *Archives of Pediatrics* on the Babies' wards of the New York Postgrad-