CHAPTER II.

THE PITUITARY GLAND.

The effects of removal in animals—Injection of extracts—Pituitary feeding—Acromegaly and gigantism—Fröhlich's type—Functions of the pituitary gland—Therapeutic value of pituitary extract.

IT will be remembered that this gland is lodged in the sella turcica of the cranium, in an exceedingly secluded position in the body, and it is only recently that its functions have been recognized. It may be that the interesting researches of Schäfer, Paulesco, Cushing, and others, will prove to have opened up a very important and useful chapter in medicine as well as in physiology.

The gland consists of two distinct portions, anterior and posterior, closely fused in man, but with a well-marked line of junction in the dog. The anterior part is glandular in structure, consisting of columns of epithelial cells which generally contain colloid. In young animals these cells line tubules; later, the central lumen disappears. Large blood sinuses are present. The posterior lobe consists of vascular neuroglia. Between it and the anterior lobe is a cleft containing glairy fluid. The anterior portion is derived from a pit in the dorsal wall of the pharynx of the embryo; the posterior is budded out from the brain. We are thus prepared to expect a difference in function.