# Selections.

## Infantile Spinal Progressive Atrophy.

At the Gesellschaft für Innere Medizin, Popper presented two sisters, act. 4 and 2 respectively, who seemed to be suffering from the Hoffman-Werdnig disease, viz., progressive muscular atrophy in the young. According to the mother's story the children were healthy and active when they were born; no apparent weakness about legs or arms. About six months after birth the movements of the legs and arms began to get gradually weaker, commencing in the legs. Through length of time it extended over the entire body, the limbs becoming quite helpless, and the child being unable to sit up without support. At first, never having learned to walk, the legs remained thick, but soon became emaciated. Their present condition may be recorded thus: The elder fairly well nourished for its age, the cranium normal, the brain and cerebral nerves in the same condition. The younger, two years old, was soft and flabby, with apparent fatty degeneration of the cellular tissue, so that the muscles of the extremities, which were certainly atrophied, could scarcely be felt. In consequence of the weakness the child could scarcely raise its hand to its mouth. The left arm at the shoulder-joint was quite loose, and could be bent far beyond the normal range; there were no contractions or fibrillary vibrations. The child, when placed erect, bent convexly towards the spine, the thorax crushed together and the head had to be held up. The muscles of the shoulders, back and pelvis were distinctly atrophied, while the lower extremities were in the same condition. There was no hypertrophy present, and both feet assumed the equino-varus position. There was no tendon reflex, and degenerative reaction was obtained by the electric current. The sphincters were normal, sensibility undisturbed, and the intelligence active. The elder, a girl, act. 4, had a similar condition, but from the history it appeared to be more protracted in its approach than in the younger. There were still slight contractions to be obtained in the lower extremities, which were held in the bent position.

These symptoms seemed to agree in every particular with Hoffmann's and Werdnig's recorded cases under "Chronic spinal muscular atrophy having a congenital basis," or what they preferred later to designate "Premature infantile progressive spinal muscular atrophy."—Correspondent *Press and Circular*.