

mitted by divergence according to optical laws. They are refracted more or less by different media and are manifested by an increase of brightness in the proof-screen, which is variable according to the intensity of the emission and the distance.

In a second note, M. Charpentier brings out the interesting point that the rays given out by living organisms differ from the N-rays discovered by M. Blondlot in certain points, and he thinks they are formed of N-rays and another new form of radiation. This is especially true of the rays from the nerve centres or nerves, whose striking characteristic is that they are partially cut off by an aluminium screen. A sheet 1-50th of an inch is sufficient to cut down considerably the rays emitted by a point of the brain. The portion of the rays which passes through the screen is no longer cut off by new screens of the same metal, even an inch thick. This latter part therefore consists of N-rays proper. On the contrary, the rays from the heart, diaphragm, and different muscles are scarcely modified by the aluminium screen. This forms a characteristic distinction between the muscular and the nerve radiations. Other differences also separate the two. The effect from the nerves is strongly increased by compression; that of the muscles is much less so. A third characteristic of the nerve radiation is that it gives a much stronger effect over the other tissues upon a phosphorescent screen which has been heated to 40 or 45 degrees C. These facts show the predominant and special role of the radiation coming from the nerve tissues. It is the nerve radiation which shows the greatest differences from the recognized N-rays.—*Sc. Am.*

VITAL STATISTICS.

The progress that has been made in collecting mortuary and vital statistics is a matter of congratulation to the medical profession. Sources of error are being eliminated, approved methods are receiving wider adoption, and the facts deduced from these figures are coincidentally becoming more valuable and more authoritative. Occasionally there is an obstacle in the march of progress.

Almost every law requiring the reporting of births provides for the payment of a small fee to the reporter. The absence of such a provision in the law of St. John, N.B., has been, in part,