

toxemia closely resembling those of diabetic coma in human subjects, there being a profound comatose condition, with strikingly deep slow inspiration and a rise of blood pressure. It is important to observe that β -amido-butyric acid is one of the few fatty organic acids of its series which produces such a comatose toxic reaction, and it is also a striking fact that the blood in cases of diabetic coma has frequently shown the presence of β -acids of the organic fatty series. The author does not conclude positively that β -amido-butyric acid is the identical acid met with in the blood in diabetic coma, but believes it is highly probable that this substance, or one closely allied to it, is the toxic agent, and that by studying minutely the chemistry of these β -acids in the laboratory and on animals it may be possible to discover chemical substances which may neutralize or render innocuous the toxic character of these acids thus afford us with an efficient remedy for administration in cases of diabetic coma.—*British Medical Journal*.

A Case of Death from Psychic Insult.

T. Pagenstecher, Elbelfeld, Germany. A manufacturer, with a good previous mental and physical history, had taken quite an interest in insurance matters and had been insured by an accident company for \$80,000. While in good health he accidentally cut his finger slightly and it became ink-stained. He believed immediately that he had blood-poisoning from the ink; felt pain in the arm and wanted it amputated. The next day there was delirium and great excitation, with delusions; but he could be aroused from his delirium to coherency, and all the time fearing death and praying for amputation. There was no fever nor any change in pulse. Thirty hours after the accident death came suddenly and unexpectedly. At the autopsy there was no evidence of infection, either bacterially or microscopically, and the internal organs were normal, except for a slight concentric hypertrophy of the left ventricle. This case is regarded as delirium nervosum Dupuytren, in which not the severity of the trauma but the psychic shock produced the effect. But there is no way to account for the death except through insufficiency of the heart. This case was considered in the courts, suits being brought against the insurance companies for non-payment. There were presented two witnesses who thought that suicide was committed with curare, supported by the negative results of the autopsy; another witness thought the case one of tetanus. Decision has not yet been rendered by the court.—*Medical Review*.