

Wassermann's interpretation of the reaction has of late been discredited. It was simply that these peculiar substances found in the serum and fluid were specific syphilitic anti-bodies. It has been shewn, however, that the reaction can be obtained, though not so surely, if the syphilitic emulsion used in it is replaced by any one of a large number of other substances. The essential constituent in this antigen is of a lipid nature, and is closely allied to lecithin. The substance in the serum or fluid, the so-called anti-body, is contained, as was mentioned above, in the euglobulin. It is present in small quantities in the normal, but is greatly increased in amount in syphilis and meta-syphilis. A great number of facts have been established concerning its physical and chemical properties, but nothing is definitely known of the origin or essential significance of it. Our present knowledge concerning the pathology of the reaction may be summed up as follows. Various antigens of a lipid nature, which are present in especially large quantities in syphilitic organs, interact, probably as a colloid precipitation phenomenon, with some substance which is contained in euglobulin; the combination has the power of combining with complement, and thus of inhibiting hæmolysis.

If we now withdraw from these confusing details and with a broader perspective attempt to review them in their relation to the classical conceptions of general paralysis, we must at once be struck by the remarkable confirmation two of the most important of these conceptions thus receive. I refer to the specificity of the disease and to the close dependence of it on syphilis. General paralysis is in every sense of the word a *specific* disease. Even on the purely clinical side this has long been suspected. A disease which produces such an extraordinarily delicate lesion as that underlying the Argyll-Robertson pupil, a lesion so fine as to have escaped detection by the most exact methods of investigation, we must suppose to be due to some one constant agent, such as a complex toxin. This surmise reaches