

Editorials.

Exophthalmic Goitre.

Few diseases have attracted more attention than this one. Its symptoms are so pronounced and distressing, and its pathology so obscure, while treatment has yielded such poor results, that many have turned their search-light on this malady.

In a recent number of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, Dr. J. J. Putnam once more reviews what we know about this trouble, and recalls to mind, or suggest what we do not know. It must be confessed after reading the very able article of Dr. Putnam's, that what we do not know, far exceeds what we do know. Yet his paper is hopeful; and, while it shows how little we really know, it also shows that we are finding out something about it, and the day may not be far off, with new methods of research, before the door shall fly open.

The writer speaks of the two main theories—the nervous and the toxic. He states that it is very natural to look to the nervous system, especially the medulla, for an explanation of this disease. In this mysterious region we have the centres controlling the heart, respiration, vaso-motor action, the digestion of sugar, and the action of the sympathetic nerve system. Again, lesions of the medulla give rise sometimes to emotional disturbances that seem to create a connection with Grave's disease. Experimentors have succeeded in causing, by injury to the medulla, many of the features of the disease.

But, in the face of all this apparent presumption, the medulla theory is not proved, and is not probable. In many cases of Grave's disease no lesions have been found in the medulla; and in others the changes in this portion of the nervous system have differed widely. It may be said that this theory is disproved because it is not adequate to explain the vast array of symptoms that claim our attention.

The theory that seems at present to hold the lead is the toxic. This is a good word to speculate with. How the poison acts, or what it is, or whence it comes we do not know. We only theorize. There are some strong arguments in favor of this view.

1. Thus many cases pass into myxædema as the thyroid becomes diseased, and the two diseases may be found in the same family.
2. It has been noticed that when thyroid preparations are given in myxædema, many of the symptoms of Grave's disease appear, such as rapid pulse, feverishness, diarrhœa, loss of flesh, excitability. Also when thyroid preparations are given to persons in health similar