

ABDERHALDEN TEST IN MENTAL DISEASE.

Charles E. Simon, Baltimore (*Journal A. M. A.*, May 30, 1914), takes up the claims of Fauser as to the findings of the Abderhalden test in certain types of insanity with special reference dementia præcox. He reviews the literature which followed Fauser's publication and says that in surveying it one cannot help but being impressed, on the one hand by the wonderful uniformity of the results reported by Fauser and the wide divergence from those of certain other authors, like Hauptmann and Bumke. He thinks that there is good ground to suspect that Fauser was too enthusiastic in his views and also that his opponents may have lacked complete control of the technic. Fauser himself states that he obtained a reaction with sex gland repeatedly in cases in which it was unexpected and that the diagnosis between maniac depressive insanity and dementia præcox could not always be made with certainty. Simon relates his own experience with the use of the test in 106 cases and says "to summarize the results" that a sex gland reaction may be obtained in nearly if not all cases of dementia præcox at some stage or another but that this action is not specific as Fauser asserts. He finds that the reaction may also be obtained in other forms of insanity and he does not attempt to explain them. He must therefore conclude that Fauser's rule has exceptions or that the positive findings in manic-depressive insanity or paresis are due to errors of diagnosis or technic. The fact, however, remains that in dementia præcox the positive reaction is the rule while in the purely functional psychoses it is the exception. Simon, therefore, discusses at length the technic employed and which he thinks meets fairly any criticism from the technical point of view as far as our knowledge goes at present. He believes, however, that advances can still be made and while we cannot, as yet, draw positive conclusions regarding the significance of the reaction in dementia præcox, certain possibilities suggest themselves. One of these is that of a perverted function of the cells concerned in the production of the internal secretion of the sex glands in dementia. "Considering the problem from the clinical side, the all-important question of course suggests itself whether or not the reaction has any relation to the pathogenesis of dementia præcox. Theoretically, this is of course perfectly possible. Granted that anti-sexgland ferments do occur in the circulation in dementia præcox, and that their presence were the outcome of the appearance in the circulation of an abnormal secretion or of abnormal cells, then we may also assume that digestion of these cells or cell-products will take place, and that all conditions would thus be given for a chronic protein intoxication which might very well expend itself on the central