

weeks, disappearing faster in girl babies than in boy babies.

Failure of this masculine element to disappear from the adrenal cortex fast enough or at the normal time may be responsible for the development of virilism in the girl later on, he suggests.

Probably its disappearance is due to the action of some other sex-controlling gland such as the pituitary, and failure of the mechanism that maintains proper balance between the glands may be the actual cause of virilism.

Science News Letter, May 19, 1934

PSYCHOLOGY

Right-Handed Rats Made "Southpaws" by Brain Lesions

NEW evidence that an injury on the left side of a right-handed person's brain may make him left-handed although leaving his vision undisturbed, was found by S. A. Kirk, a graduate student at the University of Michigan in experiments with rats.

Rats, as well as human beings, are right or left-handed, and Mr. Kirk began his experiments by testing the hand or paw preference of his rats.

The rats were forced to reach for their food from a narrow dish into which they could not insert their mouths, but could use either of their paws. Having determined whether the rats were right or left-handed, a brain lesion was made in the hemisphere opposite the preferred hand. In the majority of cases such lesions caused a change in handedness of the rats. In other words, a right-handed rat could be made left-handed, and vice-versa.

Effects of brain lesions on man's ability to think, read, write, or speak have puzzled psychologists for years. From observations on men who have had brain lesions as a result of accidents, operations or war injuries, a theory has been evolved which asserts that a lesion on the left hemisphere of the brain of a right-handed person, or a lesion on the right hemisphere of a left-handed person will result in changes in the ability to think, read, speak or write.

Reversing Letters

The possibility that the inclination shown by many children to reverse their handwriting and to read backwards, confusing letters such as b and d, might be determined by interference with the normal dominance of one brain hemisphere, was tested by another of Mr. Kirk's experiments.

He caused the rats to jump from a stand to one of two windows in order to get to their food. One window was latched and the other unlatched. If the

rat jumped at the correct window, which had a letter "F" on it, he got through to his food, but if he jumped at the wrong window, with a mirrored or reversed "F" on it, he bumped his nose and fell into a net. The letters were alternated irregularly and the rats learned to jump to the correct form.

Does Not Control Vision

According to the theory of brain-dominance, an injury on the left hemisphere of a right-handed rat should result in a loss of the ability to discriminate between visual patterns, whereas an injury in the non-dominant hemisphere should not disturb the function. Preliminary investigations indicate that there is some evidence that the dominance of one brain hemisphere controls handedness in a rat but that very little evidence is found for such control of the visual function.

Mr. Kirk explained that a rat's bodily response to a visual form is somewhat analogous to child's motor response to a letter or word. The experiment is being continued.

Science News Letter, May 19, 1934

PHYSICS

Find Diamonds Transparent To Ultraviolet Light

STRANGE diamonds that are transparent to invisible light have been discovered by the British scientists, Sir Robert Robertson, Dr. J. J. Fox and Dr. A. E. Martin, in the course of a physical examination of 300 diamonds, water-white, uncut and originating in both South Africa and Brazil.

Five out of the lot were transparent to infrared and ultraviolet invisible light to which ordinary diamonds are opaque.

To the eye, the "transparent" diamonds, as the experimenters called them, do not differ markedly from the

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