are deaf, and possibly have some slight bleeding from one or other ear. Probably not much notice is taken of it until, a day or so later, there is pain in the ear and a slight muco-purulent discharge. In other cases there is no pain, but only a slight discharge, and the man thinking it only trivial does not complain until it becomes profuse and is accompanied by marked deafness. They probably get treatment in the form of syringing, but the discharge and deafness still persist. I have had numbers of men give me a history of a ruptured drum and the above subsequent course.

It is up to the medical officer of a unit to instruct the men under his care at the Front that any slight discharge from the ear should have attention. They should be always on the look-out for such cases, knowing as they do of the possibility of their cause from high explosive.

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KERNIG'S SIGN.

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Of the three methods of testing for Kernig's sign, the one most commonly adopted—departing, it is true, from that originally described—is to attempt passive extension of the leg, the thigh being flexed at right angles to the supine patient. The presence of increased tone in the hamstrings is the explanation usually accepted to account for a positive Kernig, i.e., the inability to completely extend the leg in these circumstances; and its main significance lies in its diagnostic value in cerebrospinal meningitis. It has also been noted in cerebellar hemorrhage and some other basal conditions.

In the course of the recent outbreaks of influenza a number of cases of cerebrospinal meningitis appeared concurrently, and, a natural suspicion being aroused in all severe attacks of the former disease, it was found that in quite an obvious proportion of cases extension of the leg was more or less incomplete. Further it was noted that more than one definite case of cerebrospinal meningitis presented no greater degree of failure than many other patients beyond suspicion.

In these circumstances an attempt has been made to determine the normal range of variation. Men suffering from slight ailments and practically all up and about were examined on several separate occasions to the number of 212, the percentages being compared and found not dissimilar. None suffering from disabilities likely to interfere with or prejudice the test were included, and a special series of influenza cases was checked to ensure no possible source of fallacy in that direction.

The instrument employed, which takes but a few minutes to construct, consists of a hinged rod, one arm of which slides in a groove cut vertically in a base piece, forming a right angle with the given horizontal surface, e.g., the floor or a convenient table. To this same limb is fixed at the hinge an ordinary geometrical protractor, so that the angle made by the other arm is read off at once.

The patient being supine, with one leg held down straight, the other thigh is flexed to a right angle and, the instrument being adjusted, the angle of the line
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great trochanter—external condyle of the femur with the line head of the fibula—external malleolus is readily seen. These points are sufficiently in a straight line in an ordinary subject in the anatomical position to form convenient and satisfactory landmarks.

The following statement embodies the results, grouped by tens for brevity. The angle noted indicates the angle of departure from the vertical after passive extension of the leg as far as possible.

1. Angle of 0° 107 50.472 per cent
2. , from 1° to 10° 40 18.666
3. , from 11° to 30° 40 18.666
4. , from 31° to 30° 22 10.377
5. , over 30° * 3 1.416

212 100 per cent

* 32°, 33° and 34° respectively.

The results obtained in this investigation are considered accurate enough to warrant the opinion that approximately fifty per cent of individuals will not comply strictly with Kernig's test; and that, to extend the inference further, the sign should not be regarded as positive unless an angle of 45° or thereby is plainly seen.

I desire to express my indebtedness to Colonel A. W. Browne, R.A.M.C., Officer Commanding this military hospital, for opportunity to make the above notes.

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