

fellows;" while in the very same issue it records the following thoroughly authenticated case reported by Mr. Hillis, the superintendent of the largest leper asylum in the West Indies: "A shopkeeper at Demerara, whose business as contractor for provisions took him frequently to the asylum, became leprosy. For at least ten years his wife remained free from any sign of leprosy. The case was well known, and Mr. Hillis had been frequently called on to explain with reference to this very person, how, if leprosy was in any way contagious, this man's wife escaped so long. In May, 1886, this woman came to him with well-marked symptoms of leprosy, and was under treatment when he left the West Indies." Other cases are on record in which the period of incubation was nineteen and twenty years. It will not do to say that because cases of leprosy have existed for a few years in a certain community and no instance of contagion has been discovered (I say discovered because the tendency of the leper is to conceal his malady and he may succeed for a considerable length of time) that *ergo* leprosy is not contagious in that locality. This is an experiment which demands time, a long series of years, and while it is being made such precautions should be observed, that, should the result be in favor of the theory of contagion, numbers of lives will not have been sacrificed to it, nor centres of infection have been established in every centre of population.

It is only theorists and those who take cursory and distant glances at it who pronounce it harmless. All who have been in a position to study it practically for a lifetime, unite in raising a warning voice against this dangerous delusion.

Daniellson and Bock, who observed the disease in a climate even colder than our own, gave the following as the mature result of their experience. "Our whole theory of lepra rests incontestably upon the sad fact that within the bounds where it commits its ravages, it can be made harmless to the rest of the people only by isolation."

In the short space of forty years, one-tenth of the entire population of the Sandwich Islands has become infected from two individuals.

Mr. Hillis, after twenty years experience, thus formulates his conclusion: "Wherever lepers are allowed to congregate and no attempt is made at isolation, *other cases will in due course assuredly arise*, irrespective of hereditary tendency, peculiarity of diet or locality."

According to H. Besnier, a member of the French Academy of Medicine, leprosy, far from disappearing by degrees, is spreading rapidly. Since the extension of the French colonial possessions, soldiers, sailors, traders, and missionaries have fallen victims to it in large numbers. He, therefore, exhorts physicians in all countries to study the fell disease, in order to find a means of counteracting its ravages, for it has active focuses of infection in every part of the globe.

Thoroughly substantiated cases of its transference by vaccination have been placed on record by Tilbury Fox and Erasmus Wilson. There is a curious tendency in minds which have not had a strictly logical training to give equal weight to positive and negative testimony. But as H. Besnier well says, "In a question of this kind a few positive instances of contagion count for more than an innumerable number of negative instances." From among a large number of positive instances which he cites, I quote only such as have a direct bearing on the question as it concerns our duty, from the fact that they have occurred in climates similar to our own. They are collated in the *British Medical Journal*, Nov. 12th and 19th.

In 1872, Dr. Hawtrey Benson showed to the Dublin Medical Society an Irish leper who had contracted the disease in the Indies, where he had lived twenty-two years. For a year and a half this man's brother, who had left Ireland for a visit to England forty-six years before, slept in the same bed and wore his clothing. He became a leper, and was presented to the Medical Society. There was no leper in the family, and there had been no leprosy in the British Isles for several centuries.

An inhabitant of Sagra established himself at Parcent about 1850. Leprosy was quite unknown there, and the Indian who had the first symptoms of it did not know the gravity of his illness. He went to live with a friend, and a little while after two cases of leprosy were reported. The friends of the first victims were the only ones attacked.

Betty MacCarthy, of Prince Edward Island, was married in 1836, became ill in 1852, and died in 1864, of leprosy. Had five children. (a.) Richard died of leprosy after twenty years' illness. (b.) John died of leprosy after twelve years' illness. (c.) Mike died of leprosy after ten years' illness. (d.) William died of leprosy at twenty-one years of age.