

My chief object in the introduction of this form of brain disease is, if possible, to call attention to a malady of a most serious character, which is on the increase, and which so far has not received the recognition in general practice, or in works or lectures on the practice of medicine that it is entitled to; partly, no doubt, from the obscurity of the primary symptoms, and, mayhap, partly from the minds of physicians not being particularly directed to its manifestations.

Though this short paper cannot be considered of any scientific value, when reported on by the broadest and most kindly critic, yet it may be of some service, if even in one case, it may arrest the attention of a physician when consulted by friends (never by the patient) about a gentleman who has shown of late an alteration in his manner, from prudence to lavishness, from morality to lasciviousness, and this without the exercise of even ordinary prudence or judgment; who, methodical and careful, becomes careless and prodigal and overbearing in manner, and to this adds forgetfulness of recent sayings or doings while carrying on his ordinary avocations.

A physician, who in a puzzling case, can make out a history similar to the above, would be justified in giving a prognosis of the tenor within indicated, and if he have the confidence of the patient, he could indite a plan of treatment, which few, if any of us have ever had the opportunity to essay. He could trace out a path not attempted by a predecessor, and returning (do what is considered almost impossible), give to us something new in the practice of medicine.

LEPROSY IN CAPE BRETON, NOVA SCOTIA.

BY A. MCPHEDRAN, M.B., TORONTO.

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Wm. Fletcher, B.A., undergraduate in medicine, for the following full and interesting history of leprosy in the Island of Cape Breton, N.S., together with the details of a case that came under his observation.

In Victoria County, between the Middle and Margaree Rivers, surrounded by steep

felsitic, limestone, gypsum, and conglomerate hills of about one thousand feet in height, is situate the chain of three small lakes O'Law, weirdly beautiful among the highland scenery, and unsurpassable in romantic charm. Rivulets of clear cold water course down the hillsides every few yards; but here, too, the snow sometimes lies till June, and cold mists hang thickly through the summer and autumn nights. The inhabitants, a vigorous farming community, are of Irish descent with an admixture of Highland Scotch. Their habits are simple, rising and retiring with the daylight; their houses heated with stoves and the old-time hearth; their diet, as in other parts of the island, is of fish, potatoes, oatmeal, flour, beef, mutton, tea, and milk.

Justin McCarthy, of Lake O'Law, farmer, was born in Newfoundland, in 1794, of Irish parentage. When still young he moved to Cape Breton, settling finally in Lake O'Law shortly after his marriage, in 1836, with Betsy Hardy, of Prince Edward Island, a native of Lincolnshire, England. In the year 1852, this Betsy McCarthy became affected with a disease the symptoms of which, as described by the neighbours, in many accounts precisely correspond to those given in the case of James Cameron. Large numbers of the inhabitants of this and other portions of the island saw this case as well as the others about to be mentioned, from time to time; and the local medical men, and parish priest who had been a resident in Tracadie, N.B., where leprosy exists, pronounced the disease to be leprosy. Betsy McCarthy died in 1864, after an illness of twelve years. There is no history of any disease in Justin McCarthy's family, and he himself still enjoys the best of health and has all his faculties unaffected. They had children, five boys and three girls, the course of whose lives were as follows:—

Richard, died from disease, after twenty years' illness: left a family of six, all of whom are well.

John, died after twelve years' illness. Married Peggy Cameron, sister of James Cameron, by whom he had three children, all well. Peggy herself said to be hoarse.

Mike, died after being ill ten or twelve