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THE PRODROMATA OF INSANITY.*

By W. H. HATTIE, M.D.,

Medical Superintendent Nova Scotia Hospital, Halifax.

Some years ago a paper, bearing a title very similar to that upon which I now venture, was presented before the Harveian Society of London by one of England's most eminent alienists. The subject was dealt with comprehensively, and so great a variety of symptoms prodromal to mental disease were presented that, it is said, every one who heard the paper went away in a great state of perturbation; every one discovered that he possessed, on his own account, some of the symptoms indicative of oncoming insanity. In the face of such an experience, by one whose fame is for all time established amongst those who favor psychiatry, it surely requires courage, as well as presumption in me, to come before you with a paper on the prodromata of mental disease.

Lest you fear that you may, like those of the Harveian Society, be stimulated to an unpleasant degree of introspectiveness as my paper proceeds, a disclaimer of evil intent at the outset may be reassuring. There is to be no attempt at exhaustiveness in this paper. It will not venture even a superficial glance at the whole psychiatric field, but will deal only with the more common forms of mental derangement—those with which the general practitioner is more or less intimately acquainted. And because it is presented by one whose

* Read before Canadian Medical Association, Halifax, August, 1905.