

THE

Canadian Journal of Medical Science.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN MEDICAL SCIENCE, CRITICISM, AND NEWS.

U. OGDEN, M.D.,
EDITOR.

R. ZIMMERMAN, M.D., L.R.C.P., London,
171 Church Street Toronto, Corresponding Editor.

SUBSCRIPTION, \$3 PER ANNUM.

All communications, remittances and Exchanges must be addressed to the Corresponding Editor, 171 Church St.

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1880.

Selections: Medicine.

[Translated for the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.]

ECZEMA AND PSORIASIS.

BY E. GUIBOUT.

Gentlemen, after a long day of marching and exploration, when night approaches the traveller delights to collect his thoughts. He ascends some high place, and casting his looks back over the route traversed, he embraces it in a single glance, both as a whole and in all its details. So we—we have just traversed a very long route. First of all, we saw what dermatology was: I have shown it to you as being, in the greatest number of cases, the expression, the faithful translation, on the external argument, of a crowd of internal affections, the lightest as well as the gravest. Looked at from this point of view, it is indeed the light of diagnosis and the lamp of pathology.

We have then studied together the different anatomical lesions which constitute the cutaneous affections. You have seen how these lesions, in the variety which they present, form different kinds of dermatoses, which serve to distinguish them from one another, and establish their individuality and their morbid autonomy. After these general and fundamental data, we entered into the particular study of the dermatoses taken separately, and we began with eczema and psoriasis. The history of these affections has brought together very numerous details, very numerous descriptions of conditions and of pathological facts themselves varied. Your memory has been overburdened with them. Let us do then as the tra-

veller of whom I have just spoken: let us look backwards—let us recall, let us co-ordinate our remembrances in order to make them more durable. Place them side by side, the two great figures of eczema and psoriasis; look at them thus united in a single picture; we will see between them notable resemblances, but differences greater and much more marked.

Eczema and psoriasis are, of the diseases of the skin, by far the most frequent. They are more important than all the other cutaneous diseases, not only on account of their frequency, but also by their gravity and by the tendency they have to become general, by the functional troubles they produce, by the deformities they occasion, by their long duration, by their tenacity, by their recurrence and by the formidable complications that accompany them. They are, each of them, the expression the most common, the most formal and the most clear, of that undeniable diathesis, although it be denied, which is called herpetism. Both are hereditary, but not contagious. Both finally belong to the great class of secreting affections. But there ceases their points of resemblance, and we then find nothing but dissemblances the most marked.

Thus eczema and psoriasis are both secreting diseases; this is true, but eczema is the type of the *humid* secreting affections. The secretion which characterizes it commences under the epidermis, which it raises into vesicles; then when these have been broken, this secretion continues to operate on the surface of the ulcerated derma. Psoriasis, on the contrary, is the type of the *dry* secreting affections. In it there is nothing moist, all is absolutely dry; its secretion is purely epidermal; it is the epidermis altered, that is all.