

# THE Canadian Journal of Medical Science.

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

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SUBSCRIPTION, \$3 PER ANNUM.

All Communications, Letters and Exchanges must be addressed to the Corresponding Editor.

TORONTO. APRIL, 1877.

## Selections: Medicine.

### ON MENTAL ANXIETY AS A CAUSE OF GRANULAR KIDNEY.

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To the physician who desires, in the highest sense of the word, to be a practical man, a knowledge of the causes of disease is the most precious part of his craft, and may be more valuable to him, if possible, than a knowledge of technical therapeutics. And yet it is in this department of our science that we seem chiefly to lag behind. Much has been done, no doubt, in the discovery of the causation of infectious diseases; but our knowledge of the causation of the organic diseases of the human system is still far behind our knowledge of their pathological anatomy.

With these views, it has been my earnest desire, as a practitioner of medicine, to trace, as circumstances would allow, the causes of disease in those persons who have come under my own eye. For this end, I have taken more or less careful notes of almost every case which has come under my notice at my consulting-rooms for some years past; and these records have led me to many important conclusions, and have incidentally taught me that no case, or but very few cases, can be regarded as trivial or meaningless; but that disorder, at the time slight enough, may often form very important links in the chain of the life history of the individual or of the family. Among the conclusions to which I have been led by the careful record of nearly one thousand new cases each year, I may refer

to the following, which I have published already or which are almost fit for publication.

First of all, I have convinced myself that affections of the skin form most important links in several series, and that many of them enter curiously into the history of hereditary neuroses, as well, of course, as into the gouty and other series; also that, as herpes occurs at the various mucous outlets, so eczema occurs in the bronchial mucous membrane, psoriasis in the tongue and colon, and so forth; that, in fact, skin-diseases are not always placed on the outer skin alone.

Secondly, my notes seem to prove that acute phthisis is, very often at any rate, a neurosis.

Thirdly, that migraine, among many other curious affinities so admirably worked out by Dr. Liveing, is associated with aphasia and right-sided palsies.

Fourthly, that rheumatic fever tends to concur with gout in some persons or families, and with phthisis in others.

To-day, however, I have more especially to urge upon you a proposition, the truth of which has been asserting itself in my own mind for some years; namely, that among the causes of that kind of Bright's disease known as granular kidney, mental anxiety and prolonged distress take a high, if not the chief, place. A middle-aged person, man or woman, will come to us complaining that he is no longer active and eager for work, but is unaccountably languid and heavy; that he has of late become liable to dyspnoea; and that, especially after mental anxiety, attacks of this dyspnoea may come on even during hours of repose. The physician will then find the flesh falling and the complexion fading, the pulse growing tense