

THE

Canadian Medical Review.

EDITORIAL STAFF:

W. H. B. AIKINS, F. D.,
Physician to Toronto General Hospital.

A. B. ATHERTON, M.D.,
Surgeon to General Hospital, Fredericton, N.B.

J. FERGUSON, M.D.,
Physician to Western Dispensary.

ALBERT A. MACDONALD, M.D.,
Gynaecologist to Toronto General Hospital.

G. STERLING RYERSON, M.D.,
Oculist and Aurist to Toronto General Hospital.

ALLEN BAINES, M.D.,
Physician to Hospital for Sick Children.

Vol. VII.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1898.

No. 2

Original Communications.

Traumatic Neurasthenia. Synopsis of an Address before the Toronto Medical Society.

BY WM. BRITTON.

THIS term, he said, although introduced many years ago, had fallen into desuetude for a time, but had recently been re-introduced to fill the place of such terms as nervous debility and nervous prostration. Various definitions had been given of it. Some authorities held that it is analogous in the physical system to insanity in the nervous system. This was a sweeping assertion, and to prove it required deep knowledge of metaphysics and pathology. But up to the present time the pathology had not been thoroughly investigated. Another definition was a loss of power of the nerve centres, together with abnormal excitability—an unusual susceptibility to be influenced by outside impressions. To this Dr. Britton would add the words “and defective volition.” The patient required to be treated morally as well as medicinally; the power of the will should be called forth by moral suasion; and cures would be more frequent than they are and accomplished in a shorter time.

In considering the causation of the disease, one must, especially if called to give expert testimony, ascertain the condition of the patient