

When the family histories of those showing cancer in them, and histories with no trace of the disease are compared, there does not appear to be any difference between them, nor that of the general public.

Sir W. R. Gowers gives us much firmer data for the heredity of *nervous diseases than either of the foregoing*.

In the first place he speaks of the early abiotrophies, such as hereditary ataxy, various myopathies, hereditary optic atrophy.

A second class of diseases are those where the heredity shows itself after growth is completed. Here we have the heredo-ataxy of Marie, Huntingdon's chorea is another disease coming late in life with marked heredity, Thomsen's disease is another.

A third class is the functional nervous disease. Here we group epilepsy. Sir W. Gowers thinks that at least 50 per cent. show heredity. It is exceedingly difficult to assign the share heredity plays in such diseases as migraine, hysteria, neurasthenia, etc.

Dr. G. H. Savage said, during the discussion, that he believed acquired peculiarities could be transmitted, and that the tendency to transmit predisposition could be modified by surroundings.

Dr. F. W. Mott said that 80 per cent. of adolescent insanity could be shown to have an hereditary history. General paralysis he regarded as caused by syphilis.

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## THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM.

The old system of a student studying with a doctor had many good features in it. In later years it became somewhat modified so that, while a student of medicine spent some of his student days with a regular practitioner, he was not bound to him as in the old system of apprenticeship.

We are very much of the opinion that the plan of a medical student spending a portion of his college career with a doctor should be again made a portion of the academic course. One of the final summers could be spent with some one in general practice.

The advantages would be that the student would come into real and vital contact with patients and their ailments. He would also learn how to deal with people, and would in this way learn the deportment of a professional gentleman.

We are glad to notice that the Ontario Medical Council has made it count as part of a student's practical work to spend a portion of his fifth year with a doctor as well as in a hospital.