

So with deafness, two brothers, their father and paternal grandfather, all became deaf at the age of forty.<sup>40</sup>

Esquirol gives several striking instances of insanity coming on at the same age, as that of a grandfather, father, and son, who all committed suicide near their fiftieth year. Many other cases could be given, as of a whole family who became insane at the age of forty.<sup>41</sup> Other cerebral affections sometimes follow the same rule,—for instance, epilepsy and apoplexy. A woman died of the latter disease when sixty-three years old; one of her daughters at forty-three, and the other at sixty-seven: the latter had twelve children, who all died from tubercular meningitis.<sup>42</sup> I mention this latter case because it illustrates a frequent occurrence, namely, a change in the precise nature of an inherited disease, though still affecting the same organ.

Asthma has attacked several members of the same family when forty years old, and other families during infancy. The most different diseases, such as angina pectoris, stone in the bladder, and various affections of the skin, have appeared in successive generations at nearly the same age. The little finger of a man began from some unknown cause to grow inwards, and the same finger in his two sons began at the same age to bend inwards in a similar manner. Strange and inexplicable neuralgic affections have caused parents and children to suffer agonies at about the same period of life.<sup>43</sup>

I will give only two other cases, which are interesting as illustrating the disappearance as well as the appearance of disease at the same age. Two brothers, their father, their paternal uncles, seven cousins, and their paternal grandfather, were all similarly affected by a skin-disease, called pityriasis versicolor; "the disease, strictly limited to the males of the family (though transmitted through the females), usually appeared at puberty, and disappeared at about the age of forty or forty-five years." The second case is that of four brothers, who when about twelve years old suffered almost every week from severe headaches, which were relieved only by a recumbent position in a dark room. Their father, paternal uncles, paternal grandfather, and granduncles all suffered in the same way from headaches, which ceased at the age of fifty-four or fifty-five in all those who lived so long. None of the females of the family were affected.<sup>44</sup>

It is impossible to read the foregoing accounts, and the many others which have been recorded, of diseases coming

<sup>40</sup> Sedgwick, *ibid.*, July, 1861, p. 202.

<sup>41</sup> Piorry, p. 109; Prosper Lucas, *tom. ii.* p. 759.

<sup>42</sup> Prosper Lucas, *tom. ii.* p. 748.

<sup>43</sup> Prosper Lucas, *tom. iii.* pp. 678, 700, 702; Sedgwick, *ibid.*, April,

1863, p. 449, and July, 1863, p. 162, Dr. J. Steinan, 'Essay on Hereditary Disease,' 1843, pp. 27, 34.

<sup>44</sup> These cases are given by Mr. Sedgwick, on the authority of Dr. H. Stewart, in 'Med.-Chirurg. Review,' April, 1863, pp. 449, 477.