

is in agreement with Batten's statement that the later in life the disease appears, the less acute the course seems to be, and in those cases in which the visual defect manifests itself during or after the second decade of life, there appears to be little or no liability for the central nervous system to be affected.

REFERENCES

1. **Leber.**—Graefe-Saemisch Handbuch, p. 1204-11, 1915.
2. **Behr.**—Die Heredodegeneration der Makula. *Klin. Monatsbl. f. Augenheilk.*, Bd. 65, ss 265-505, 1920.
3. **Batten.**—*Brit. Jl. of Ophthal.*, 1921.
4. **Alkio.**—*Acta Ophthal.*, Vol. 1, p 27.
5. **Stargardt.**—Ueber familiäre Degeneration in der Makulagegend des Auges mit und ohne psychische Störungen. *Arch. f. Psychiatrie*, Bd. 58, ss. 852-87, 1917.

 ANNOTATION

Pedigrees

It was Juvenal, so far as we know, who first threw cold water upon genealogy. *Stemmata quid faciunt*: of what use are pedigrees? He was speaking of the absurdity of trying to derive all and sundry from noble blood; and in this connection it is worth while reminding our readers that one of the greatest genealogists of all time has written on this subject as follows:*

“It is not always that the generations of a family, of mere knightly degree, can be traced with certainty up to the beginning of the thirteenth century. The latter half of the twelfth century is, in similar investigations, a limit not often surpassed with probable truth, whilst its earlier half is only a field for the wildest conjecture.”

In dealing with the genealogy of disease, we must remember that it is very unusual to find more than four generations in any family, alive at the same time. We do not think that it would be possible for a surgeon to examine more than four generations of any family with regard to the eyes. In this matter of pedigrees of disease we are building for our successors; and so long as no attempt is made to trace eye disease in families back to mediaeval times, the pedigrees which are now being drawn up and carefully recorded, such as those published in this number and those recorded in the monograph on colour blindness, will be of the greatest value in years to come.

*EYTON. Antiquities of Shropshire, Vol. 1, p. 99.