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EDITORIAL

VACCINATION.

This term in years gone by meant an operation to produce immunity against smallpox. It has now come to have a much wider meaning, and we now speak of vaccination against typhoid fever, against tetanus, pneumonia, and other diseases. The term vaccination is derived from vacca, a calf, as the matter employed is obtained from this animal. The term has now become general.

Take the case of typhoid fever. There were about 500,000 Canadians serving in the army, for a period varying from one to five years. The number of cases of typhoid fever was about 300, and only a few deaths. In the South African war, the British army was approximately about 500,000 for a period ranging from one to two years. The deaths from typhoid fever were over 20,000. In the recent war the Canadians were "vaccinated" against typhoid fever, while in the South African war of 20 years ago, there was no such protection furnished the troops. Such a case defeats all arguments against this form of preventive treatment.

During the recent war tetanus was almost unknown, whereas in former wars, it was a severe scourge. This again was due to the use of the antitetanic serum.

Coming to the immediate question of vaccination against smallpox, the case is of the strongest possible kind. There is no use referring to the names of a few who call themselves "doctor," some of whom are not, and others are blinded by prejudices and will not listen to reason, and a few may be governed by mercenary motives of catering to the anti-vaccinationists for their clientele. In a circular letter, sent around the city to stir up the people to attend a meeting called to oppose vaccination, some very remarkable statements appear.

One of these statements is as follows, from Dr. Melville C. Keith, of Belleville, Ohio, writing in 1908:

"Two years ago we were in a place where in and around the country we were called to about four hundred cases (of smallpox), and not one