

Ontario Medical Journal.

SENT TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION IN ONTARIO, BRITISH COLUMBIA,
AND NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

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VOL. III.]

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1895.

[No. 6.

Contributions of various descriptions are invited. We shall be glad to receive from our friends everywhere current medical news of general interest. Secretaries of County or Territorial Medical Associations will oblige by forwarding reports of the proceedings of their Associations.

Physicians who do not receive their Journal regularly, or who at any time change their address, will please notify the editor to that effect.

Editorials.

DIPHTHERIA: ITS EARLY DIAGNOSIS, ISOLATION AND PROPHYLAXIS.

Now that the above disease is so prevalent in our city, the present seems to be a fitting time to urge upon the Medical Health Department the necessity of paying the strictest attention to the subject. We are quite aware of the fact that the law requires medical men to report cases which come to their notice at once. The Medical Health Officer, on being notified, investigates and takes the ordinary precaution for the safety of the public.

Whether the fault lies at the door of the Department or not we cannot say, but we are confronted with the fact that most lamentable results have followed because of the inefficiency of the system now adopted for the prevention of this dread disease. One will suffice to substantiate our statement. A child who had been attending Lansdowne school was allowed to be removed from the city to a northern town. At what stage we know not, but it was certainly before danger of contagion was over, for now three deaths from the disease are recorded in one family and upwards of forty cases reported in that vicinity, apparently all traceable to the case referred to. That the

necessary isolation was not carried out in that case, is evident to all. The reason we do not know.

We admit that medical men and even medical health officers may find difficulty in making a positive diagnosis early enough to prevent further trouble, but the system now adopted by those in charge of the public health in New York and England commends itself to us as one calculated to reduce the danger to a minimum.

The attending physician at once notifies the Health Department of suspected cases. An inspection is made, the officer inoculating tubes of blood serum which he carries with him. If the Klebs-Loeffler bacilli are present, the colonies grow with such rapidity that they can be separated from other organisms. A simple microscopical examination of the membrane helps materially in the early diagnosis and takes but a short time. It is not entirely to be relied upon, the streptococci and diflococci which may be present giving rise to confusion. In from twelve to twenty hours cultures can be made from the tubes and diagnosis confirmed. All cases are then strictly isolated in a hospital. The Local Government Board in England are now taking the same precautions.

A bacteriological examination should be made in all cases. A positive diagnosis arrived at early would often affect treatment as well as prophylaxis,