

NOTES ON THE USE OF TUBERCULIN AS AN AID TO SURGICAL DIAGNOSIS.*

BY

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These notes, with copies of some charts showing typical reactions for temperature which follows the injection of tuberculin, were made in my wards at the Montreal General Hospital during the past six months. It occurred to me that a short paper on the subject might be of interest to the members of the society. I am indebted to my House-Surgeon, Dr. Henry, for the care and extra labour involved in watching the cases and making the notes.

My object in instituting the series was an effort to answer the following queries:—

(1) In what class of surgical cases, due to tuberculous infection, does the use of tuberculin give us most aid as a diagnostic agent ?

(2) Is its use followed by any untoward symptoms either local or constitutional ?

(3) How long after its injection should we expect the rise in temperature which shows the typical reaction ?

(4) Is the reaction constant when tuberculosis is present ?

In surgical cases one is so often called upon to decide whether a given tumour is of tubercular, syphilitic, or neoplastic origin, and the diagnosis is often so difficult to arrive at, that any method which tends to aid in its differentiation is deserving of our careful consideration. I therefore crave your indulgence for a few minutes while I refer to some of the clinical notes (with charts), before giving the conclusions at which I have arrived from my short study of the subject.

The tuberculin supplied by Dr. Trudeau of Saranac was used in all cases. The experiments would have been of more value had I been able to have two kinds of tuberculin, in order to try one where the other failed.

Case I. A. McI., aged 20 years, injury to right knee in October, 1900, with no acute arthritic symptoms until three weeks later, when knee became swollen and painful; symptoms

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