

Selected Articles.

SERO-DIAGNOSIS OF TYPHOID FEVER.*

A STUDY OF ITS PRACTICAL CLINICAL VALUE, WITH A DEMONSTRATION OF THE BLOOD REACTIONS.

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SIX months have now passed since Widal first proposed and described a new method of diagnosing typhoid fever by means of an examination of the blood. During this period many clinicians and bacteriologists have repeated Widal's observations, and their published reports, so far as I have seen them, have all confirmed his conclusions as to the value and accuracy of the serum test. Early in November last the subject was brought to the attention of the physicians of New York by the action of the board of health, who offered to examine the blood of all cases of suspected typhoid fever occurring in either private or hospital practice in the city. Having at that time a number of cases of the disease in my service at Bellevue Hospital, I thought it an excellent opportunity to study the new test, especially as I had the aid of a zealous and most efficient house staff, that *sine qua non* of all good hospital work. Indeed, if I remember rightly, it was at the suggestion of Dr. Humphreys, the house physician of the first medical division, that we decided to provide ourselves with the apparatus and broth cultures necessary to performing the test ourselves. At the same time, we availed ourselves freely of the assistance so kindly offered by the bacteriologists of the health department. Careful records were kept of our investigations, as it was my intention at the time to present a report of our work to this society. In order that the principles underlying the test may be fully appreciated, I shall also give a short account of the experimental observations which paved the way for the discovery of

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