

difference, however, exists; whereas the experimental variety is almost wholly unattended by complications, human diphtheria not infrequently presents evidences of secondary infections, septicæmias, broncho-pneumonias, etc. Hence, too, the use of the serum in the respective instances varies, for the power of the antitoxine in combating the secondary events is limited, in fact, quite valueless, excepting as a prophylactic. That it should prevent their development is but natural, inasmuch as it antagonizes the causes of the increased susceptibility of the tissues to complications.

The same holds good for individual cells and tissues; once necrosed the antitoxine cannot regenerate them—though its timely administration diminishes the liability to degeneration. The importance of early treatment is strongly emphasized, and the fatality statistics are quoted to indicate the necessity of this rule. In nearly all the series it is shown that patients treated at the earliest manifestation present a far smaller mortality than do those in whom injections were made after several days had supervened.

Further, a sufficiently large dosage is essential to successful results; our methods, hitherto entirely empirical, have been modified according to the age of the patient, and the severity and duration of the disease. The large number of unsatisfactory results in the early days of serum therapy are attributable in no small degree to insufficient dosage.

A large and valuable series of statistics cited affords ample evidence of the success which has attended the employment of the diphtheria serum, and the writer asserts his conviction that the antitoxine is "a specific curative agent for diphtheria, surpassing in its efficacy all other known methods of treatment for this disease. It is the duty of the physician to use it." The paper throughout is one of unusual interest, and the information so concisely put together that any adequate abstract thereof is practically impossible, while the careful perusal of the series will repay the time spent.

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