

CORRESPONDENCE.

ELIMINATIVE AND ANTISEPTIC TREATMENT
OF TYPHOID FEVER.

To Editor of "CANADA LANCET":

DEAR SIR,—In the reported proceedings of the Canadian Medical Association meeting published in the LANCET there appears under the heading of "Eliminative and Antiseptic Treatment of Typhoid Fever" a brief abstract of my paper. I had in that paper protested against the misrepresentation I had received in certain quarters. Your reporter furnished an apt illustration of what I complained of, and in this short abstract has managed to distort and misstate what I said to an extraordinary degree. For example, I am reported in this abstract as holding "the opinion that the drainage from the intestinal wall following upon the action of a purgative, such as calomel and magnesium sulphate, would tend to get rid of some of these bacilli in the *intestinal walls*, but would not effect their exit from the liver, etc."

I had in the first part of my paper quoted from the recently published Gullstonian lectures, delivered before the Royal College of Physicians of London by Dr. P. Horton-Smith, on "Typhoid Fever and the Typhoid bacillus," to show the correctness of my contention of seven years ago that the specific bacilli were present in the intestinal contents during the first days of the fever—not absent from the intestinal contents as has been asserted—and consequently that the soundness of my theory of their being swept out by the action of purgatives, thus limiting the infection of the body and of the glands in the intestinal walls, became perfectly obvious. Then followed the paragraph referred to, which I shall quote in its entirety.

"Elimination must not be confined to simply clearing out the intestine, but must apply to a much wider process; the clearing of poison from the body by way of the intestine either in the toxic bile or contained in the serous fluid poured from the intestinal wall.

"It is amusing after having made so many explicit statements and having drawn attention so many times to this feature to find Prof. Osler gravely pointing out to his readers 'that, unlike cholera, the typhoid bacilli are not confined to the intestine, but are to be found in the spleen, intestinal glands, etc., and consequently that they cannot be dislodged by the use of purgatives.'

"I shall again be explicit in the statement that the eliminative plan of treatment does not contemplate removal of bacilli from the spleen, intestinal wall and various tissues of the body, but does contemplate *elimination of bacilli and poisons from the intestine and of toxin from the body by way of the intestine.*"