

Dominion Medical Monthly

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

(No paper published or to be published elsewhere as original, will be accepted in this department.)

THE ANTITOXIN TREATMENT OF DIPHTHERIA.*

By J. J. CASSIDY, M.D.,

Member of the Provincial Board of Health of Ontario.

GENTLEMEN,—In view of the fact, that there has been, for many years, a large mortality from diphtheria in Ontario, and that this Board is frequently appealed to by municipal health authorities to apply the latest remedies of science to its prevention, it is very satisfactory to find, that a new remedy has begun to dawn on the medical horizon, which promises to be not only a prophylactic, in the sense of securing immunity from diphtheria, but also curative after the attack has begun. This remedy is an antitoxin, or antidote, prepared from cultivations of the diphtheria bacillus.

With regard to the extent and ravages of diphtheria in this province, it is indeed pleasing to know, that, according to the report of the Registrar-General for 1892, the deaths in that year were less than in 1891, viz., 890 in 1892, and 952 in 1891. From a perusal of the report of the Medical Health Officer of Toronto, for 1893, I observe, that fewer cases are reported in Toronto than formerly. For instance, during a period of one year, ranging from May 1st, 1891, to April 30th, 1892, 1,566 cases of diphtheria were reported in Toronto, whilst during a similar period, ranging from May 1st, 1892, to April 30th, 1893, 1,339 cases were reported, showing a reduction of 227 cases in one year.

To the public generally, and sanitarians in particular, these are gratifying indications that methods of quarantine, isolation and disinfection, such as have been recom-

*Read at Meeting of Provincial Board of Health, October 18th.