

## A CONSIDERATION OF SOME FEATURES OF INFLUENZAL OTITIS AND MASTOIDITIS.\*

BY PERRY G. GOLDSMITH, M.D.,

Senior Assistant Department of Oto-Laryngology, Toronto General Hospital.

*Mr. Chairman and Fellows*,—I propose to discuss the subject of Influenzal Mastoiditis as much as possible from a clinical standpoint, giving brief notes on some cases which exemplify in a measure some of the features which stand out prominently in this disease:

1. *Bacteriological Findings*.—Speaking generally, the organisms found are staphylococci, streptococci and pneumococci, probably in this order as to frequency. Why is it that these common organisms can at certain periods of the year, when the peculiar type of colds called influenzal are prevalent, produce such rapid bone involvement, with all variations of symptoms? Is it due to something inherent in the individual, or some special lessening of the prophylactic power of his middle ear, or is it due to some undetermined difference in virulence of the organisms themselves at this period of the year? We all know that influenza varies greatly in intensity, as it were, and as to where it will strike, for example, the type producing peripheral neuritis, bronchitis, gastro-intestinal, cardio-vascular, etc., and is it not also, from our standpoint, correct to speak of a type seen in the air cells, as mastoid and accessory nasal sinuses? One may gain considerable help from the investigation of the bacteria, viz., a staphylococci culture with mastoid tenderness and free discharge is not nearly so much to be feared as a streptococcic or pneumococcic culture; in the latter, operation may be necessary without marked mastoid tenderness, and when only a temperature is to be accounted for. Personally, I consider the presence of the latter bacteria of sufficient gravity to permit a consideration of exploratory opening. The rapidity and profuseness of the culture growth may also aid in determining the virulence of the infection. One must not forget that the early bacteria findings may show streptococci and pneumococci, or even Kleb's *Loeffler*, which later having died out are replaced by less virulent organisms, the resistance of the tissues being now too much damaged to take care of even less virulent organisms.

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