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ACTINOMYCOSIS: A DISCUSSION BEFORE THE MONTREAL  
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INTRODUCTION AND RECITAL OF CASES.

BY

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Actinomycosis is an infectious disease common to man and some of the domestic animals, notably bovines, but also found in sheep and pigs. It is due to the presence in the tissues of a vegetable parasite, the *Streptothrix Actinomycotica*, which gives rise to an inflammatory process, generally chronic, but sometimes acute. The lesion produced is characterized by much proliferation of tissue and little suppuration, and in the chronic forms, situated externally, it falls into the class of granulomata and is likely to be confounded with other granulomata, especially chronic tubercular and tertiary syphilitic lesions. Indeed, I have not the slightest doubt that many cases of actinomycosis have been and are still constantly overlooked in this way.

The diagnosis is most important as we now know sufficient of the character and progress of the disease to be able to adopt definite lines of treatment, when it is recognized. The parasite was first recognized by Langenbeck in 1845 in a patient with caries of the lumbar vertebrae, but the history of the disease, in man, dates from Israel's work, published in 1878. According to Warren, Murphy was the first in America to report a case of actinomycosis in man; and he (Murphy) states that up to January 1st, 1891, there had been reported altogether 250 cases of actinomycosis in the human subject. A great many cases have been reported since, and, as I have already said, I am sure that a great many have been overlooked. Absolutely certain diagnosis depends upon the discovery of the parasite, and this is always more or less difficult and often impossible. In old cases with sinuses which have been discharging for a long time demonstration is very difficult indeed. Clinical diagnosis will often be practically convincing, but cannot, of course, be final in itself. The lesions of actinomycosis may be found in almost