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ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

ART. XX.—*On the Prevention of Pitting in Small Pox, by a strong solution of nitrate of silver.* By ALEXANDER ROWAND, M.D. Physician to the Marine and Emigrant Hospital, Quebec.

John Henry Smith, lumberman, aged 20; well proportioned and athletic, was admitted under my care, at the Marine and Emigrant Hospital, Quebec, on the 23rd of April, 1856. Three days after admission, an eruption of small pox made its appearance, which soon became confluent. Three days after the eruption presented itself, I applied a solution of nitrate of silver all over the face, of the strength of one drachm of the salt to an ounce of water, which was much stronger than I had heard of having ever been employed before. This was done with the view of preventing pitting, which appeared inevitable, from the severity of the disease and its tendency to confluence. For, in addition to high fever and constitutional excitement, the cutaneous inflammation ran a severe course, in some parts assuming an erysipelatous character, terminating in subcutaneous abscesses. The patient experienced a grateful sense of cooling from the application, which also relieved the distressing itching, and tension from which he suffered, and he begged earnestly to have the wash again applied. The practice was pursued daily till the 13th May, when it was discontinued. The blackened cuticle now began to peel off, leaving the face perfectly free from pitting, while the hands, in which the disease had been purposely allowed to follow its course, were deeply and numerously scarred.

Other striking beneficial effects were observed to follow the use of this strong solution, besides the prevention of pitting—the inflammation about the face and head became diminished, and the itching and heat were lessened, whilst the application caused no pain, gave rise to no disagreeable odour, and was not followed by any secondary fever. The patient recovered completely from the disease, and is now a servant in the Hospital.