

INTRODUCTION TO
THE DISCUSSION ON THE RELATION OF RHEUMATOID
ARTHRITIS TO DISEASES OF THE NERVOUS
SYSTEM, TUBERCULOSIS, AND RHEUMATISM.

BY

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Rheumatism in its acute and sub-acute arthritic and general manifestations, is a very common disease in this country; while rheumatoid arthritis is comparatively rare. I have been unable to collect any evidence as to its comparative frequency in Canada and the United States, and it is doubtful whether our more vigorous Canadian climate especially predisposes to it or not. It is well known that both in the United States and Canada, gouty arthritis is extremely rare. Of the few cases that I have met with, the great majority were in people who had previously lived in England, and who had suffered before coming to this country, or had a very strong gouty predisposition.

Owing to the kindness of many of my fellow practitioners in this city and the surrounding country, I have had an opportunity of studying during the past three and a half years in the wards of the Royal Victoria Hospital upwards of 40 cases of rheumatoid arthritis. An analysis of these cases is the chief foundation for the remarks that follow.

The number is small as compared with the experience of many physicians in England and the continent of Europe, but as far as I know it is the largest number that has been reported on from any one hospital on this continent.