

The Canada Medical Record.

MONTREAL, JANUARY, 1879.

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PHARMACEUTICAL DEPARTMENT.

Original Communications.

Animal Vaccination. By W. E. BESSEY, M.D. (Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society, Montreal, Dec. 27, 1878.)

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—The vast importance of the subject of *vaccination* as a prophylactic measure against the contagion of small-pox must be my apology for troubling you with a paper upon such an old and familiar, yet far from threadbare subject. A full discussion of the subject of *animal vaccination* would involve a consideration or retrospect of the whole history of vaccination. This I shall not attempt to do. Neither have I set myself the task of producing a mere technical paper on the vaccination of animals; but I intend to lay before you some considerations in favor of *animal vaccination* in contrast with *humanized vaccination*, or, in other words, to advocate the performance of all vaccinations with *virus* obtained by direct transmission from heifer to heifer, for reasons that are sufficiently weighty to deserve the cordial consideration of the profession. We are, in this city, brought face to face with an influential and wily antagonist to the practice of vaccination, as a prophylactic against small-pox, and I am sorry to be obliged to say, that in my humble opinion the profession are much to blame, by the indifferent manner in which much of this work has been done in the past, for the accidents and arguments which have been placed at the disposal of those opposed to the practice.

These accidents I may enumerate as follows: First, the frequent occurrence of erysipelas as the immediate sequel of the operation, sometimes ending in death. The frequency with which skin eruptions of a doubtful character have succeeded the use of human-

ized virus. The frequency with which small-pox has followed vaccination by long humanized virus, indeed to such an extent as to have caused certain portions of the community to regard it as no preventive whatever. The popular belief is latent constitutional diseases or tendencies, such as scrofula, &c., have been aroused into action, and enfeebled health has too often resulted, from careless vaccination although I think this danger has been much overrated. The *positive* proofs however of the transmission of syphilis by this means, are among some of the considerations which require that we should pause and consider what have been the defects in the practice which could have occasioned such untoward events; and, whether, the principle of the antagonism of a specific contagion against subsequent incursions of a like contagion in the animal organism for the rest of life, supposed to have been well established in pathological science, should be reconsidered.

The medical philosopher, Jenner, in contemplating the fact that the modifications which the system undergoes in the reception of measles, scarlatina, and other contagious fevers, is protective of the individual against these several specific contagions for the rest of life; in conjunction with the well-known immunity from the contagion of small-pox conferred by the spontaneous vaccination upon the hands of the servants engaged in milking animals affected with the cow-pox,—led him to perceive in cow-pox, *small-pox* in its mildest possible form, or in other words that pox was pox, one and the same, no matter upon what animal it might make its appearance, and only modified in character and severity by the animal through which it happened to be transmitted.

This, gentlemen, I need hardly add, is the patho-