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THE ANTIOXIN TREATMENT OF DIPHTHERIA.

Evidence is steadily accumulating of the value of the antoxin treatment of diphtheria. A prolonged and very lively discussion recently took place in the Royal Medical Society of Vienna on this subject. Widerhöfer and others contributed some valuable statistics which certainly seem to show that there is an undoubtedly favorable influence exerted by this mode of treatment. From the pathological side of the question, evidence of very special importance was brought forward by Prof. Kolisko. He has had unusual opportunities of becoming acquainted with the pathological changes brought about by the diphtheria poison. Since the introduction of the antitoxic serum into practice in Vienna, he has performed 75 post-mortem examinations on patients in whom this treatment was carried out. He is convinced that it exerts a decidedly favourable influence over the course of the disease. The membrane is easier removed and is often found in a partially dissolved state. In the trachea and bronchi this breaking up of the membrane was found to be a very constant occurrence, an event very rarely met with in diphtheria treated by other methods. He explains this on the supposition that the antitoxic serum paralyzes the toxin action of the bacillus and prevents it from throwing out successive fibrinous layers. It causes a serous exudation, which dissolves and loosens the fibrinous material already thrown out. Kolisko