

The merit of Behring's great work lies in the fact that he has been able to prove that the serum of an animal exposed to the action of certain bacterial poisons acquires the property of neutralizing the effect of the action of these same poisons, although he is probably in error in assuming that the antitoxic substances are of bacterial origin ; they are really dependent on a permanent modification of the tissues of the animal in which the poisons are acting, in which case the theory of serum therapy exalts the functions by which we naturally defend ourselves against microbic invasion. The agent which prevents the paralysis of nutrition and function is manufactured by the tissues themselves as a kind of protective reaction against the action of the organized toxins or poisons.

Professor Bouchard's paper is instructive, not only for what it contains, but also for what it suggests as regards the building up of serum therapeutics on a rational basis.—*British Medical Journal*, Sept. 14, 1895.

At the sixth Italian Congress of Internal Medicine, Rome, a discussion on this subject was opened by Professor Foà, Director of the Anatomico-Pathological Institute of Turin. After referring to his own investigations and to those of others, he summarized the present condition of the subject. Hitherto the most certain and efficacious results have been from toxic infections ; the latest researches, however, show the possibility of obtaining effects quite as certain in septic infections. The concept that every infection reduces itself to a pure poisoning, and that every reaction consists in the production of the counter-poison, is, perhaps, too absolute. In the case of diphtheria, serum therapy has issued triumphant from the test of practice, and statistics show the sensible diminution of the mortality obtained by the new treatment. Serum therapy has been less efficacious in acute cases of tetanus. The tetanic manifestations in such cases would indicate grave organic lesions already complete, against which serum therapy cannot cope : it is, however, the best preventive remedy. In typhoid and cholera it has not found any application up to the present time, probably owing to the notable difference between experimental results and the natural condition of the infections in man. The latest researches of Foà have solved the problem of serotherapeutics in diplococcic infection of the rabbit ; it remains to study the problem in the larger animals, which permit of the results being applied to man. Serum therapy must not be allowed to hinder the development of prophylaxis. Both aim at the prevention of diseases, and serum therapy, where it shows itself in preventive immunization, becomes a prophylactic measure.

Professor Maragliano, Director of the Institute of Clinical Medicine, Genoa, referred to his researches on tuberculosis. He said he had clearly explained the materials used in the vaccinations, and summarized the new results obtained with his treatment by many Italian and foreign physicians. A total of two hundred and fifteen cases had been reported up to date, of most