

Dominion Medical Monthly

And Ontario Medical Journal

VOL. XXXV.

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1910.

No. 6

Original Articles

VACCINE THERAPY; ITS ADMINISTRATION, VALUE AND LIMITATIONS.*

BY GEORGE W. ROSS, M.A., M.B. (TORONTO), M.R.C.P. (LONDON).

No more definite indication of the important place that vaccine therapy has come to occupy in British medicine can be found than in the circumstance that the Royal Society of Medicine of London debated this subject at six of its meetings during the months of May and June of this year. In all some thirty-four physicians, surgeons and scientists took part in the discussion. Their remarks have been incorporated in one large quarto volume of 216 pages. As this work is unavailable for the majority of the profession, it was thought that a resumé of the remarks of some, if not all, of the gentlemen who took part in the discussion would prove of considerable interest and instruction.

The subject, as set down in the title, was opened by an address from Sir E. Almroth Wright, who is the discoverer and chief protagonist of the method. Sir Almroth himself appreciated the great difficulty of thoroughly covering his subject, and proceeded first of all to discuss the rationale of vaccine therapy. Its fundamental principle is, according to his view, "to exploit in the interest of the infected tissues the unexercised immunizing capacities of the uninfected tissues," which means in short that all inoculations of a bacterial vaccine (consisting of devitalised bacteria) cause, near the site of inoculation or somewhere else in the tissues, the elaboration of anti-bacterial substances. These anti-bacterial substances are carried by the blood and lymph streams to the focus of infection,

*Being a Resumé of a Discussion on this subject before the Royal Society of Medicine in London.