

The burning question of antitoxins, animal extracts, blood serums, etc., flame vividly as ever. The journals teem with articles side by side, laudatory and condemnatory, so that the ordinary practitioner is in a quandary as to how much confidence he should place in these dubious compounds. On one hand we find a man like Joseph Winters, Professor of Diseases of Children in University of New York, one of the brightest and best known pediatricians of the day, who, after months of his valuable time spent in tracing from hospital to hospital, city to city all the world over, the action of the diphtheritic antitoxin, pronounces it, in a tersely written article prepared for the *Medical Record*, June 20, 1896, as useless, and even harmful—therein, by the way, agreeing with the opinion of our worthy Medical Health Officer, expressed more than two years ago. On the other hand, men of the well known attributes possessed by Koplik, Chapin, Booker and others, have published results which would go to prove the remedy almost a specific. In the face of such conflicting opinions pronounced by men of equal skill and fame, after equally zealous and unbiassed search for truth, I repeat that the ordinary practitioner, if he be not over self-confident, must feel an uncertainty leading to feebleness of action which will continue until there has been time in which to marshal hosts of cases before the judgment seat of science in order that the case may be decided by the evidence of the majority. This question, then, is for the whole medical world in general, and for us in particular; and in concluding my remarks on our practical work as a Society, I would like to remind myself and you that by every earnest discussion and well-weighed conclusion arrived at in these meetings, we are adding our mite to the advancement of our great branch of science. Undoubtedly this and kindred societies afford us all an opportunity of crystallizing our theories into facts through the medium of reporting all cases of an instructive character, and inviting free discussion and friendly criticism.

Since last year, death has entered our ranks for the first time in the annals of our Society, and has taken two familiar faces from our circle: those of Dr. McFarlane, and Dr. Cook, of Simcoe Street. Standing thus in the presence of death we are reminded, amid our efforts for the healing of men, of the futility of the greatest skill when the Highest Power has sent His reaper. The first empty chairs, and the first greetings missed from a friendly circle must always be sad. In the case of Dr. McFarlane, it is more so than usually, for, to quote Mr. Gladstone's words on the late Archbishop of Canterbury, "he died as a soldier" while in the active exercise of that most noble part of a medical man's duty, the tending of those poorer citizens