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## Original Communications.

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### THE CLINICAL ESTIMATION OF THE PRESSURE OF THE CEREBRO-SPINAL FLUID.\*

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The method of lumbar puncture was introduced to the profession in 1890 by H. Quincke, of Kiel. Since that time it has been used a great deal, and is looked upon, according to Rothmann, of Berlin, as one of the most valuable contributions to our clinical armamentarium for the study and treatment of diseases of the nervous system.

Lumbar puncture is used for the obtaining of some of the cerebro-spinal fluid for chemical and microscopic examination, and also for the study of the elastic pressure that the fluid is exerting within the cranio-spinal cavity. It is with the latter part of the subject that we are here concerned.

The subarachnoid spaces of the brain and spinal form the only cavity that normally always contains any considerable quantity of fluid. This fluid is constantly exerting a positive pressure upon the surrounding and contained structures, and it was partly with the object of measuring this pressure that Quincke first advocated his method of lumbar puncture. Since 1890 he has again and again urged that this pressure should be measured as a routine method whenever lumbar puncture is considered necessary, but this is certainly not usually done, it being much commoner to find the pressure merely guessed at by noting how rapidly the fluid drops from

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\* Read at the meeting of the Ontario Medical Association.