

CANCER: ITS CAUSE AND CURE

The *Dominion Medical Monthly* has the following:

Cancer in Ontario.—Whilst tuberculosis is declining in Ontario, cancer is increasing. Towards reducing cancer **nothing** has been done, and the reason is all too obvious—its exact nature is not known to medical science.

The deaths from cancer are thus recorded: 1902, 1,048; 1903, 1,156; 1904, 1,253; 1905, 1,224; 1906, 1,411; 1907, 1,329; 1908, 1,348.

Having in mind, then, the undoubted good work which has been done in checking the spread of tuberculosis and the good work which may be done in checking the increase of cancer, there would appear to be every reason that the Government of the Province might wisely consider it a justifiable procedure to place a special competent official in charge of all the work pertaining to the prevention and spread of these two diseases in Ontario.

Recently Sir Alfred Gould, before the Royal College of Surgeons, as the subject of his Bradshaw Lecture, spoke, in part, as follows:

Cancer, he said, is the result of a breach or failure of fundamental cell-law. The conditions known to exert an influence on the causation of cancer are age, sex (women being much more subject than men), prolonged exposure to X-rays, and alcohol. Statistics of the mortality of various occupations from certain diseases reveal the fact that cancer is twice as frequent among brewers and publicans as among clergymen, and that the cancer incidence in any trade varies with the attendant habits as regards alcohol.

In conclusion, the lecturer referred to various cases of cancer which he has treated at the Middlesex Hospital, and though in some of these cases the disease was not "cured" in the sense of being wholly and permanently removed, yet in several there was a strong reason for thinking that the word "cure" could be justly used.