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## Original Communications.

### "ERYSIPELAS."

Read before the Maritime Medical Association at  
Charlottetown, July 12th, 1893.

By P. CONROY, M. D., Charlottetown.

The term "Erysipelas" is employed by modern medical writers to designate a certain form of inflammatory action attended by special characters, and due to a specific cause.

The name does not denote any particular or distinct disease involving any special tissue, but is a general term applied to a morbid inflammatory process that may affect any tissue of the body. Erysipelas is not a disease of the skin any more than it is of the peritoneum.

The determining cause of the disease is a specific virus or micrococcus, which finds entrance into the circulation from without, and when once admitted into the blood it sets up a peculiar septic inflammatory disturbance known as "Erysipelas." The spontaneous origin of erysipelas or its idiopathic development as a distinct

disease, is denied by many modern authorities. That the determining cause is a germ cannot be doubted, and that the cause is always extrinsic is confirmed by scientific observation. The fact that the disease has altogether disappeared from the field of antiseptic surgery as well as from that of intelligent obstetric practice proves conclusively its external origin.

The disease may affect the integument, the vessels—the lymphatics—the cellular tissue—the mucous or serous membranes, but the determining cause is always the absorption of a septic germ through an abraded surface. Certain disturbed conditions of the blood may permit the operation of the determining cause by defect of resistance to its influence, but the disease is never directly produced by impaired nutrition, by disordered health, by cold, or by over-indulgence as was generally supposed by the older writers. All these conditions may be pre-disposing causes, but without the presence of the specific germ no erysipelas can develop. The point of entrance of the micrococcus is not always the seat of the inflammatory process. The