

## IMMUNITY.

Presidential Address delivered October 6th, 1902, before the Kingston Medical and Surgical Society.

GENTLEMEN :—

**P**ERMIT me first to thank you most heartily for electing me to the honorable position of President of this Society. Believe me, I look upon it as a very great honor and as a token that my work in Kingston for the past seven years has not been altogether a failure. It has been the custom since our society was organized a little over six years ago for the incoming President to open the winter's proceedings by an address or paper on some subject of medical interest and in falling in line with this custom I have chosen the important subject of immunity upon which to address you this evening.

This subject is one of the most fruitful topics of investigation and discussion amongst workers in the fields of bacteriology and experimental pathology, is also one of vast importance to the sanitarian and is daily assuming more importance to the practicing physician.

One may define immunity as the possession of the power of resistance against disease, either general or specific. As its opposite we have predisposition or susceptibility, yet we cannot lay down in many instances the line of cleavage between the two conditions for one fades indefinitely into the other.

All living beings have certain natural powers of resistance against disease (injurious agencies) generally. In some, these powers of resistance are highly developed i.e. such individuals possess a high natural immunity. On the other hand we find individuals or species in whom the resisting powers are low, they are susceptible to all forms of injurious agencies, predisposed to disease. This natural resisting power of the individual varies greatly at different periods and is subject markedly to the influences of external conditions. We all recognize the injurious influences upon tissue resistance of poor food, bad ventilation, cold, improper clothing, uncleanly surroundings, drug habits