

Special Reports.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE ANTITOXINE OF DIPHTHERIA IN ONTARIO AND IN LONDON, ENG.

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Subjoined I present a condensed statistical report of fifty-one cases of diphtheria treated by twenty-one different physicians in Ontario. These physicians have been supplied with the antitoxic serum of the New York Pasteur Institute, through the agency of the Provincial Board of Health of Ontario. Contagious disease hospitals, as at Toronto, have been supplied gratis; physicians in private practice have paid for the serum supplied at the rate of \$2.50 per 20 cc. The price is now reduced to \$2.25 per 20 cc. In two instances Behring's serum was used.

Report of cases of diphtheria treated by antitoxic serum under the auspices of the Provincial Board of Health of Ontario: Total cases, 51; physicians reporting cases, 21; recoveries, 44; deaths, 7; percentage of mortality, 13.72; percentage of recoveries, 86.28; bacteriological examinations of membrane made, 13. No other treatment used, except in some instances, local treatment of throat, 14; internal treatment, viz., tr. ferri per, hydrarg. bichloride, stimulants, calomel fumigation, inhalation of steam and slaked lime, 25; treatment not mentioned, though probably similar to that called usual, 12.

This report would be more satisfactory if a bacteriological examination

of the secretion from the throat of the patient had been made in every instance. The bacteriologist of the Board, Mr. J. J. McKenzie, examines specimens of membrane, sent to him, at the Bacteriological Department of Toronto University, and reports by telegram or telephone, if required. That his services have not been availed of, in every instance, indicates on the part of the physicians who have reported cases, either gross negligence or else a failure to appreciate, at their true value, the really striking differences manifested in a study of the life histories of the bacteria, whose battle-ground is the human tonsil. It is earnestly to be desired, that, in future, all physicians reporting cases of diphtheria will not fail to send the report of the bacteriologist, appended to the history of each case.

The subjoined quotations from the very latest report of the medical superintendents of the infectious hospitals in London, Eng., contain some encouraging references to antitoxine. I am induced to present them, in this form, having culled them from the report of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, so that Canadian readers may be in a position to estimate, at their true value, any disparaging references or remarks which may be made at Medical Society meetings, or elsewhere, about the curative virtues of the antitoxic serum. While the best friends of science are quite prepared to admit that the remedy is yet on its trial, it would be regrettable if the victories already won should be forgotten.

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