

Abstracts.

DIPHTHERIA, Etc.

Armstrong, J. R.—*The Use of Diphtheria Antitoxin in General Practice, with the Results of the Treatment of 122 Cases of Diphtheria.* "The Lancet," March 4, 1899.

This paper is written in view of the author's opinion that the general practitioners of the day do not employ antitoxin as often as they ought to do in the treatment of diphtheria, and do not seem to recognise the value of the sovereign remedy which they have at their disposal.
StClair Thomson.

Bolton, Charles.—*The Complications of the Serum Treatment of Diphtheria.* "The Lancet," April 1, 1899.

These complications are the following: rashes, pains in and around the joints, fever, transient albuminuria, abscess, bruising, and sloughing at the seat of injection, and certain constitutional disturbances.

In conclusion, one may say that the complications of antitoxin are at times very painful and inconvenient, but quite harmless, the only exception being one case in which sloughing occurred, and in that case the child was in an exceedingly bad condition, as the result of scarlet fever and diphtheria combined, when the antitoxin was administered.
StClair Thomson.

Tonkin, A. J.—*Two Hundred Consecutive Cases of Diphtheria treated with Anti-diphtheritic Serum.* "The Lancet," October 21, 1899.

This study is illustrated by a series of interesting tables showing the mortality according to the situation of the membrane, according to age and sex, in relation to day of illness on which antitoxic treatment was begun, etc.; also tables showing the amount of albumin cases, the frequency and mortality of tracheotomy, etc.

The foregoing figures and statements tend to establish the following results as to the use of antitoxin: 1. The general mortality rate is reduced. The mortality for cases treated during the first three days of illness is reduced to about 3 per cent., and that for all other cases to about 12 per cent. 2. Laryngeal cases treated early are markedly affected for the better, the death-rate being very considerably reduced. 3. The tracheotomy mortality is very much lessened. 4. There is less need for tracheotomy if treatment be begun early. 5. All ages and both sexes are equally affected. 6. The chances of nephritis are lessened. 7. When treatment is begun early albuminuria may not appear, will probably not be severe, and will disappear soon. 8. Paralysis is lessened for cases treated on the first and second days of the illness. The paralysis mortality is much reduced. 9. Extension of disease to the larynx and parts below was not noted after injection of antitoxin. 10. The only disadvantage noted after its use was a slight discomfort for a few days from urticarial rashes and pains in the joints in a small percentage of the cases. The conclusions arrived at may be taken as a plea for early diagnosis and early antitoxic treatment.
StClair Thomson.