

Now, Prof. Lister, so far from holding these views, states distinctly, and reiterates the statement, again and again, in his papers, that decomposition is the chief source of mischief in wounds, and the common cause of suppuration, as the following extracts prove:

"Decomposition, or putrefaction, has long been known to be a source of great mischief in surgery, and antiseptic applications have for several years been employed by many surgeons. But the full extent of the evil, and the paramount importance of adopting effectual measures against it, are far from being generally recognized."—*Amer. Edit. Lancet*, 1868, p. 92.

Again: "That all the local inflammatory mischief and general febrile disturbance which follow severe injuries, are due to the irritating and poisoning influence of decomposing blood or sloughs."—*Amer. Edit. Lancet*, 1867, p. 742.

"It is now six years since I first publicly taught in the University of Glasgow, that the occurrence of suppuration in a wound under ordinary circumstances, and its continuance on a healthy granulating sore treated with water dressing, are determined simply by the influence of decomposing organic matter."—*Amer. Edit. Lancet*, p. 92.

Dr. Canniff, in alluding to the practical application of carbolic acid by Prof. Lister, states that "the mode of applying carbolic acid with water amounts to a frequent and much needed washing of the parts."

The following extract will prove that Prof. Lister's practice is not a simple "washing of the parts." "Admitting, then, the truth of the germ theory, and proceeding in accordance with it, we must, when dealing with any case, destroy in the first instance, once for all, any septic organisms which may exist in the part concerned; and after this has been done, our efforts must be directed to the prevention of the entrance of others into it. And provided that these indications are really fulfilled, the less the antiseptic agent comes in contact with the living tissues the better, so that unnecessary disturbance from its irritating properties may be avoided."—*Amer. Edit. Lancet*, 1868, p. 93.

The destruction of the organisms once for all, is effected by the injection of a solution of carbolic acid into the wound, so soon after its occurrence as possible, and the prevention of the entrance of others, by various antiseptic dressings, none of which contain water. That this is the practice of Prof. Lister may be seen by referring to the reports of cases which he has published.

It is not to be wondered at, that Prof. Canniff holding the above incorrect views of the antiseptic system and of its practical application, should seek on other grounds a solution of the undoubted success which has