

"There is some further comfort for those who have begun to use formaldehyd in the fact that its only alternative is sulfurous acid, which will not destroy diphtheria infections or others as resistant."

These latter quotations are from the report of the Committee of Publication which edited the *Journal of the American Public Health Association*, 1898. Franklin C. Robinson, Prof. of Chemistry in Bowdoin College, Maine, was chairman of this committee.

I might multiply proof indefinitely perhaps without making stronger evidence concerning the efficacy of formaldehyd as a general surface disinfectant.

*Uses and Limitations.*—To us as experts in the proper use of it, formaldehyd comes in one of three following guises:

In aqueous solution, sometimes with, sometimes without, the addition of other antiseptics.

As a paraform lozenge, or else we are presented with a miniature factory over which we are expected to exercise a superintendency.

Formaldehyd in aqueous solution is useful in various dilutions as a *wash*, both for persons and for things. 1 to 2500 with one hour's contact has been found by a contributor to the *Pharmaceutical Journal* as adequate to destroy any and all micro-organisms,—even the most resistant. 1 to 500 is recommended by this writer as a mouth-wash, and 1 to 250 as a general disinfectant for washing hands, instruments, etc., in surgery, and for spraying departments as a deodorant.

Parke, Davis & Co., in their latest pamphlet, quote the *University Medical Magazine* as authority for the statement that a four per cent. solution will almost immediately deodorize feces. Acting on this suggestion, I have found that a four per cent. solution will completely deodorize that most distressing odor which sometimes persists in clinging to my fingers after the tedious treatment of a putrescent pulp-canal.

In regard to washing dental instruments in solutions of formaldehyd, my experience coincides with the findings of the Committee on Publication of the *Journal of the American Public Health Association*: "The dry gas seems without action upon polished metallic surfaces, but in the presence of water bright steel is quickly attacked; hence its water solution is unfit for sterilizing instruments."

For all office cuspidors as a deodorant, formaldehyd solutions cannot be too highly recommended. It must be borne in mind, however, that nickel-plated ones will be attacked and tarnished by its use; 1 to 250 is the proper strength solution.