

preparation claimed by some enthusiast to be the ideal antiseptic. A recent writer on *pyorrhoea alveolaris* counted, if I remember rightly, something over one hundred different remedies for that bugbear of dentistry.

In a paper so limited as this, it will be necessary to apply the principle of exclusion to arrive definitely at the drugs we consider permissible. An ideal antiseptic or germicide should not be escharotic, coagulant, toxic or odorous; should not stain the tissues to which it is applied, and should be possessed of the greatest possible germ destroying power.

On consideration, in the light of these specifications, a great many of the oldtime favorites will be found wanting in one or more points. For example, such drugs as iodoform and creosote, with their terribly persistent odors are scarcely to be tolerated in a modern dental office. The operating room possesses terrors enough for the delicately organized patient, without the odor of such drugs.

Some of these otherwise desirable medicaments are to be avoided on account of their tendency to stain the tissues; as, for example, iodine or oil of cinnamon in the canal of a prominent tooth will cause a stain very awkward to deal with.

While the question of coagulants and non-coagulants has been a much vexed one during the past year, I am inclined to believe that these agents should preferably be non-coagulant.

Carbolic acid is, perhaps, one of the most common drugs to be found in the average dental office. Pure, it is reliable when applied to an ulcerated surface, or in a cavity before filling a tooth of poor quality. Diluted with water or glycerine, it is an efficient wash in cases of fetid breath from any local cause, such as after extensive extraction. Used one part in twenty of water, it is a reliable bath for instruments. The main objections to its use in the mouth are its odor and its caustic action. The odor may be disguised by the use of oil of cloves.

Carbolic acid, 51 parts, combined with camphor gum, 49 parts, by rubbing in a mortar will give campho-phenique, a remedy which stands to-day one of the most useful in the dentist's cabinet. It is one of the best dressings for root-canals, abscesses, etc., and will prevent soreness of separating teeth with cotton. In fact, it has so many uses as to call forth from Professor Flagg, of Philadelphia, the statement that it is "the most remarkable medicament which has ever been offered in connection with dental therapeutics."

Boric acid is an antiseptic possessing very great merit in diseased conditions of the mucous membrane, and after the extraction of a number of teeth. A combination of borax and boric acid, to which some one has given the name boracine, is not caustic, toxic,