

"It almost puts one's eye out just to get the merest whiff of it."

Now who shall decide for us when doctors so disagree?

Perhaps we'll go least far astray by accepting the consensus of up-to-date *conscientious* opinion. This I attempt to summarize before discussing uses and limitations in dental practice. I shall not detain you with numerous quotations, however, choosing rather to cite a few comparisons from authorities undoubted,—those which after careful reading and proper investigation I have elected to esteem the highest.

Concerning Penetration.—On the subject of house disinfection Williams, in his most recent publication,* sums up as follows: "Instead of formaldehyd, sulphur dioxid may be used for room disinfection, but in the light of recent knowledge the formaldehyd method is superior."

This opinion of Dr. Williams—who is professor of pathology and bacteriology, Medical Department, University of Buffalo—is that also, to my knowledge, of Professor Roswell Park, director of the New York State Pathological Laboratory for the investigation of cancer; of Dr. Ernest Wende, health commissioner of our city, and of Drs. Bissell and Carpenter, who are respectively chief and assistant bacteriologists in the Buffalo Bureau of Health.

Concerning the Tendency of Albuminous Matters to Retard Antiseptic Action.—"As compared with other disinfectants, such as corrosive sublimate, carbolic acid, lysol, etc., formaldehyd solutions have the advantage of *not being retarded*" (italics mine).—A. E. DeSchweinitz, Ph.D. (Dr. DeSchweinitz is chief of the government bacteriological laboratory at Washington.)

Concerning Certainty of Disinfection.—"Formaldehyd has extraordinary powers as a surface disinfectant, greater than that of any other known substance."—Charles Harrington, M.D., Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass.

Concerning its Poisonous Effects on Higher Forms of Life in a Concentrated Atmosphere.—"It is *not* poisonous in the sense of easily destroying the higher forms of life, but the human subject suffers great discomfort upon being long exposed to it."

Concerning Certainty of Action.—"Of one thing there is no doubt, when formaldehyd in certain quantity comes in contact with the bacilli of infectious diseases, they are surely killed."

"A comforting fact also is that infectious material from a patient is more easily sterilized than artificial cultures."

*"A Manual of Bacteriology," by HERBERT U. WILLIAMS, M.D., Professor of Pathology and Bacteriology, Medical Department, University of Buffalo. Philadelphia: Blakiston's Sons & Co.