

Selections.

The Necessary Peroxide of Hydrogen.

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Stop suppuration! That is the duty that is imposed upon us when we fail to prevent suppuration.

As the ferret hunts the rat, so does peroxide of hydrogen follow pus to its narrowest hiding-place, and the pyogenic and the other micro-organisms are as dead as the rat that the ferret catches when the peroxide is through with them. Peroxide of hydrogen, H_2O_2 , in the strong 15-volume solution, is almost as harmless as water; and yet, according to the testimony of Gifford, it kills anthrax spores in a few minutes.

For preventing suppuration we have bichloride of mercury, hydronaphtol, carbolic acid, and many other antiseptics; but for stopping it abruptly, and for sterilizing a suppurating wound, we have only one antiseptic that is generally efficient, so far as I know, and that is the strong peroxide of hydrogen.

Therefore, I have qualified it, not as "*good*," not as "*useful*," but as "*necessary*." In abscess of the brain, where we could not thoroughly wash the pus out of tortuous canals without injuring the tissues, the H_2O_2 injected at a superficial point will follow the pus, and throw it out, too, in a foaming mixture. It is best to inject a small quantity, wait until foaming ceases, and repeat injections until the last one fails to bubble. Then we know that the pus cavity is chemically clean, as far as live microbes are concerned.

In appendicitis, we can open the abscess, inject peroxide of hydrogen, and so thoroughly sterilize the pus cavity that we need not fear infection of the general peritoneal cavity, if we wish to separate intestinal adhesions and remove the appendix vermi-