warrant me in taking this opportunity of bringing them before you. The material, I may remind you, is a sort of double salt, an amorphous powder, insoluble in water, composed of cyanide of mercury in combination with cyanide of zinc. It does not seem to be a true double cyanide, inasmuch as the proportion of the mercurial element is considerably less than that which should be in a true double salt ; nevertheless, the mercurial element, as I have found, is of essential importance to the full antiseptic efficacy of the material. It was necessary that this powder, if introduced into a gauze or other fabric, should be fixed so as to prevent it from dusting out; for it is highly irritating to the nostrils, and besides, if it dusted out, the dressing charged with it would lose more and more of its virtues. I described at the Medical Society a means by which this was prevented; how by the use of starch the powder might be fixed in any fabric which was charged with it. But I have long felt that it would be an exceedingly desirable thing if this material could in some way be colored, because, being perfectly colorless, if a gauze is charged with it, we have to trust entirely to the manufacturer as to whether the antiseptic element is present in due proportion or is not. It would be very advantageous if it could be colored, so that we might see by the tint where the antiseptic substance was, and whether it was uniformly distributed or otherwise. Therefore, before publishing the note which I had promised as to the preparation of the substance, I made attempts to stain this material. I tried various forms of dye, and I found that some of the aniline dyes are precipitated by this zinco-mercuric cyanide and some are not. For instance, magenta is not precipitated in the least, but methyl-aniline violet and gentian violet, which seems to be a mere variety of the same thing,these are precipitated, and an exceedingly small amount of the dye is sufficient to give adequate color to the double cyanide. I proceeded to charge a piece of gauzo with some of this dyed cyanide, to seehow it would tint it; and when it was dry I was much surprised to find that the gauze charged with the tinted cyanide did not

dust in anything like the same degree as a gauze would have done which had received the untinted salt; so much so that a gauze charged with the tinted cyanide was very much on a par as to dusting with the gauze charged by means of starch.

Of course, if this were so, it would be a very satisfactory arrangement; we should dispense with the starch and also with a quantity of sulphate of potash which was used for purposes that I need not here refer to; we should greatly simplify the method of manufacture, and also, by getting rid of the starch, we should make our gauze softer and more comfortable to the patient. It seems a remarkable thing that the dye should thus be able to fix the powder. Of course, we understand how the starch does it. The starch particles, becoming attached to the particles of the cyanide, glue them, as it were, to the fibres of the fabric. But how can we explain this dye. in the minute quantity in which we use it, answering the same purpose? I have here some gentian violet dissolved in 50,000 parts of water, and you see the great coloring power that this dye possesses. If I take a piece of gauze and dip it into the solution up to a certain point, you will see the gauze colored up to that point, but the part that is moistened above by capillary attraction is colorless, showing the avidity with which the fabric seizes the dye. The dye has a remarkable fondness for the fabric; at the same time it is attached to the cyanide, for it is precipitated by it. We can thus understand that the dye may act as a go-between, attaching the cyanide to the fabric by virtue of its affinity for the fabric on the one hand and for the particles of the cyanide on the other. The mode of attachment is altogether different from that by starch, but the thing is done nevertheless. It seems to me astonishing that the dye should have this power. The quantity of gentian violet used is exceedingly small. We take, say, twenty grains of the salt, and diffuse it in sixteen ounces of a liquid containing only jounth part of the dye, draw a piece of the fabric through it, and so charge it with the requisite amount of the cyanide. If now we consider what proportion the gentian violet bears to the