

While an antiseptic agent is not necessarily a disinfectant, all disinfectants are antiseptics ; for putrefactive decomposition is due to the development of a 'germ' of the same class as that to which disease germs belong, and the agents which destroy the latter also destroy the bacteria of putrefaction, when brought in contact with them in sufficient quantity, or restrain their development when present in smaller amounts.

A large number of the proprietary 'disinfectants,' so-called, which are in the market, are simply deodorizers or antiseptics, of greater or less value, and are entirely untrustworthy for disinfecting purposes.

Antiseptics are to be used at all times when it is impracticable to remove filth from the vicinity of human habitations, but they are a poor substitute for cleanliness.

During the prevalence of epidemic diseases, such as yellow fever, typhoid fever, and cholera, it is better to use, in privy-vaults, cess-pools, etc., those antiseptics which are also disinfectants—i. e., germicides ; and when the contents of such receptacles are known to be infected this becomes imperative.

Still more important is the destruction at our seaport quarantine stations of infectious material which had its origin outside of the boundaries of the country, and the destruction, within our boundaries, of infectious material given off from the persons of those attacked with any infectious disease, whether imported or of indigenous origin.

In the sick-room we have disease germs at an advantage, for we know where to find them as well as how to kill them.

Having this knowledge, not to apply it would be criminal negligence, for our efforts to restrict the extension of infectious diseases must depend largely upon the proper use of disinfectants in the sick-room."