

and powdered and kept in dry and sealed containers they lost very little of their efficiency, was confirmed by the author's researches, but he found that leaves which were kept in the ordinary manner rapidly deteriorated. Thus those gathered in 1903 had lost one-half of their strength as contrasted with those gathered in 1905. Inasmuch as the leaves of digitalis are highly hygroscopic, enzymes that break down the glucosides act very readily on those exposed to the air and its moisture. It is not at all improbable that many tablet triturates of digitalis, which are notoriously untrustworthy, deteriorate by reason of precisely the same enzyme reduction.—*New York Medical Journal*.

### The Value of the Opsonic Index.

During the past year a number of laboratories in this country, under the stimulus received from Sir Almroth Wright at the time of his visit, have been investigating the opsonic index in various conditions. These workers have engaged in this study with an enthusiasm born of the magnetic personality of Wright and the numerous reports of the brilliant results obtained from vaccine therapy when guided by estimations of the opsonic index. This enthusiasm has been tempered by the calm judgment and critical spirit inculcated in these workers by their previous extensive experience in laboratory investigation. It was, therefore, with particular interest that the symposium on the opsonic index was listened to, at the meeting in Washington of the Association of American Physicians, since it presented the results obtained during the past year by these different laboratories.

The combined judgment of the American investigators represented at this meeting seems to have considerably discredited the importance of the opsonic index. Speaker after speaker expressed the view that there were many possibilities of error inherent in the method, and that the variations that resulted might be great. Under these circumstances the results of estimates of the opsonic index should be interpreted with great caution. Some even went so far as to state that they believed that a determination of the opsonic index was of very little value. A few favored opsonic estimates, but the mass of opinion was far more against than in favor of the index. Possibly the pendulum has swung too far, but these opinions coming from such sources cannot be neglected. The future may give us a better method of estimating body resistance than that of determining the opsonic index as now practised. This will probably be the case for, notwithstanding unfavorable criticisms of the