

derived from the air and from damp, moldy surroundings. The finding of so many molds *leptothrix* and *myxomycetes* is very unusual in any series of cultures." This leads him to believe that the source given (damp mold) is correct.

It must be remembered that the instruments were cleaned and put away the night before. They were taken direct from their respective places in the dental cabinet the following morning, care being taken that they came in contact with nothing to contaminate, and that whatever cultures were obtained from them had been communicated either from the air or picked up from contact with the lining of the drawer or tray in which they rested. With this borne in mind, the series appeals to me altogether most interesting and instructive.

Does it prove that methods in vogue for the care of our scaling instruments are inadequate.

Every set *except the one where the whole case was fumigated* over night produced some cultures, but not one set developed a culture of pathogenic organisms.

The interesting question *now* becomes, Does the possibility of inoculation seem great enough to demand the fumigation of scalers just previous to their using, or would it be preferable in future to provide for cabinet fumigation, or can we feel warranted in going on "in the same old way?"

Of one thing my investigations have made me confident: Of all known methods for sterilizing instruments, fumigation with *dry formaldehyd* gas is most easy of accomplishment and altogether certain.

Dr. Barrows reports the following case of the use of formalin cataphorically:

This was a case of "blind" abscess, the most difficult to treat, perhaps, of all the various pathological conditions coming under the dentist's care. The tooth presenting was the left upper first molar, and was under treatment by the usual methods for about four months—that is, intermittently—and every time that an attempt was made to fill roots and seal up cavity, all the symptoms of previous trouble returned. In desperation I decided to try formaldehyd cataphorically.

I first adjusted rubber dam and thoroughly dried root-canals by hot air. Then I wound a few strands of cotton around a probe electrode, dipped it in formalin—full strength—inserted in one of the root-canals and turned on the current for five minutes. I treated remaining canals same way and filled the cavity. This was done in February last, and everything has been quiet since.