

material for the purpose of destroying fermentation, and had found that solutions of phenol, carbolic acid, were very effective. Inferentially, it seemed probable that carbolic acid solutions would serve this purpose, and, after a variety of investigations, the result was demonstrated, that cat-gut, immersed for a considerable time in a 10 per cent. solution of carbolic acid crystals in linseed oil, gave, as a resultant product, a strong supple ligature material which was trustworthy. With this, in 1869 and 1870, Mr. Lister was ligating arteries. He was also using it for the through-and-through suturing of wounds, as a substitute for silk, and often called our attention to the fact that the absorption of the cat-gut went on much more rapidly at the contact point with the deeper layer of skin. These sutures were always interrupted, and at varying periods after the operation, were cut and removed. At this period, his wound dressing consisted of a narrow strip of oil silk, taken from a solution of carbolic acid and placed immediately over the edge of the wound, which he called a *protective*. All wounds of any considerable size were drained with comparatively small tubes of rubber, and the external dressing consisted of his so-called lac plaster, a composition of gums containing 10 per cent. admixture of carbolic acid, which was spread upon cotton cloth, making a rather stiff plaster. The primal purpose of this was the destruction of any germs which might gain access to the wound. This material was non-absorbent, and the secretion more or less abundant, until the removal of the drainage tubes about the third day, was absorbed by a large extraneous dressing held in place by the usual method of bandaging.

As all know, the teaching of Mr. Lister met with more, rather than less, favorable reception, although far from being, even in a limited way, adopted. The entire profession has long since been willing to accord him every possible honor, and it belongs to no other surgeon in the history of the entire profession to have lived to receive such universal acknowledgement of merit. The summer spent in his service revolutionized my professional life. In a certain sense, however, this teaching was not altogether new, although there is every reason to believe that with Mr. Lister it was entirely original.

Investigations upon the origin of means adapted to a given end clearly teach that active minds had already subjected its chief factors to careful analytical study, although certain phases of the problem are ever presenting themselves under new aspects. Dominated by such thought, Solomon taught that "there