

gist who is not mindful of this fact may obtain very misleading results.

Without entering upon a discussion of the theories of the action of sunlight it may be briefly stated that it is probably due to two influences: one a change in the culture media and the second due to the formation of hydrogen peroxide.

*Mercuric Chloride.*—The suitability or unsuitability of corrosive sublimate for certain disinfecting purposes is a question which has been widely discussed.

The inability of 1:1,000 solution to destroy *Staphylococcus aureus* in less than twenty-three hours is very unfavorable evidence against the sublimate.

McClintock, after a series of experiments is forced to the conclusion that the germicidal power of solutions of sublimate has been enormously over-estimated. He closes with the following summary:

1. The high rank heretofore given corrosive sublimate as a germicide is without warrant and was based upon faulty experiments.

2. Sublimate forms with cellulose, milk, albuminous bodies, with some part of bacteria probably the envelope a chemical compound that cannot be removed by any amount of washing with water. This sublimate when acting on a germ forms a capsule around it, which for a time protects the germ from the further action of the sublimate.

Three objections exist to mercuric chloride being considered an ideal antiseptic in surgical work. Its great toxicity which requires the greatest care in its use; its precipitation of albuminous material; the tarnishing of instruments. A fourth may be added, that of roughening the hands.

*Antiseptic Soap.*—To Dr. Charles T. McClintock we are indebted for the results of thousands of experiments performed, to make antiseptic soap in which mercurial salts remain in an active form and undecomposed.

A solution of the double salt of mercury and potassium iodide was found to permit the presence of a weak alkali without the precipitation of albumen. If too little alkali is used the metals are attacked, if too much, the mercury is precipitated.

The following conclusions express well the merits of antiseptic soap:

1. In proportion to the amount of antiseptics contained, this soap is at least four times stronger than any known germicide. A 1 per cent. solution of the soap 1:5,000 of mercuric iodide, is at least equal to 1:1,000 of mercuric chloride.

2. It does not coagulate albumens or attack nicked or steeled instruments.

3. It does not attack lead pipes nor silver and aluminum instruments.