

resulted from Prof. Lister's practice. In the 301st and 302nd pages of the *Journal*, he attempts to prove that the good effects arising from the use of carbolic acid, applied according to Prof. Lister's directions, can be accounted for by its caustic "apart from its antiseptic properties." He states: "Probably, I may say, the more caustic its effects the more beneficial it proves to be." The principles on which he bases this deduction are so vaguely stated that it is impossible to appreciate them. The history, however, of the application of carbolic acid on the true antiseptic principle, clearly proves that the good effects which have resulted cannot be accounted for by its caustic properties. At first, Prof. Lister applied carbolic acid, "once and for all," of full strength, but latterly diluted (1 to 20), with results, to say the least, fully as striking. In Prof. Lister's chronic wards of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, a plaster, composed of carbolic acid and emplastrum plumbi, was applied to healing ulcers, chiefly as an antiputrefactive agent. It was found that cicatrization proceeded more rapidly under it when of the strength of 1 to 100, than when of 1 to 40, or 1 to 20, in fact, the plaster of the latter strength retarded cicatrization by killing the weak, newly-formed cuticle.

Dr. Canniff, however, proceeds still further, and states that the use of carbolic acid, even as a caustic, is unnecessary, provided that certain principles, which he mentions, be faithfully practised, and relates a case in proof of this assertion. The principles which he urges regarding the treatment of wounds, are sound, and have been generally acted upon by good surgeons for many years: the results, however, have been far inferior, as has been generally conceded, to those which Prof. Lister has experienced. The excellent case of compound fracture and dislocation, which the writer has reported so briefly, proves that this system is wanting, for there was "unnatural heat," *i. e.*, local inflammation, the absence of which, and the resulting general febrile disturbance, is so striking in all Prof. Lister's cases. With regard to the case of foetid perineal abscess, I may state that it is exceedingly rare to find the contents of an abscess foetid, except when it has formed, as in this case, in the neighborhood of a mucous canal. In some similar cases, vibrios have been found in the evacuated matter, and in one, a previous connection with the mucous membrane was found after death.

When speaking of the germ theory, Prof. Canniff asks: "Why is it necessary to summon the aid of minute germs to account for degeneration and death and decomposition of organic matter in connection with bruised and lacerated tissues?" The most determined advocates of the germ theory have never summoned "the aid of minute germs" to account for degeneration and death of tissues, but only for their decomposition, which,