

results, which proves that the danger of contagion from a person suffering with erysipelas is not very great. The bacteria, which have entered the body, disappear almost as quickly as they multiply, without ever reaching the surface, and thus having opportunity to act as the means of secondary infections. The micrococci of erysipelas would then very speedily disappear altogether were there not some soil in which they might develop, other than the human body. As pointing to such a conclusion, there may be cited the fact that in artificial cultures they multiply when cultivated upon potatoes, as well as upon coagulated blood serum or gelatin.

Another interesting feature of the experiments bears upon the question of immunity from second attacks. After a primary inoculation, seven persons were vaccinated; six were affected with erysipelas; the seventh patient had frequently been affected and had passed through his last attack a few months prior to the experiment. Of the six other successful vaccinations, two were repeated several times. The third case, successfully, on the 7th of October; subsequently on the 1st and 9th of November, unsuccessfully. In case No. 5 patient had erysipelas in December, 1881; on the 7th of October, 1882, she was successfully vaccinated with the culture virus; on the 9th of November, thirty-three days after this, the vaccination was unsuccessful. We may conclude from this that one attack of erysipelas confers an immunity of short duration from later attacks.

The author concludes his paper by reporting some experiments made with a view of testing the effect of two antiseptic agents upon the disease germs. The two agents were those used for the dressing of wounds in Bergmann's clinic, a one-per-cent. solution of corrosive sublimate and a three-per-cent. solution of carbolic acid. After exposing the germs on a platinum wire to the action of the carbolic acid for twenty seconds, no apparent effect was produced, for the artificial cultures developed as rapidly and extensively as before. An exposure of thirty seconds caused an imperfect and retarded development of the cultures; and an exposure of forty-five seconds destroyed them altogether. The solution of corrosive sublimate destroyed them much more quickly, an exposure of ten to fifteen seconds being sufficient to prevent their development on gelatin. As showing the value of antiseptic dressings, suggested by these experiments, the author cites the statistics of the surgical clinic of Bergmann, where, during a period of four and a half years, erysipelas occurred only in two cases treated with the antiseptic dressing, and he adds, this very limited number may be ascribed to some slight defect in the dressings; and, when it is remembered that erysipelas is of very frequent occurrence in Wurzburg, these figures show decidedly in favor of the antiseptic method. When it is further remembered that many cases of operations about the face and head, where the antiseptic dressing was not applic-

able, were, during the same time attacked with erysipelas, any additional proof seems unnecessary. The antiseptic dressing will, however, only prove efficient when its application has been preceded by careful disinfection of the wound and of surrounding parts; for this purpose strong solutions of carbolic acid answer best, as they penetrate somewhat into the tissues around the wound, without, at the same time, coagulating the albumen of these tissues; an objection which militates against the employment of corrosive sublimate.

As far as erysipelas is concerned, the labors of Fehleisen seem to decide conclusively a great deal that has hitherto been only speculation and surmise; and, with reference to completeness, are really more satisfactory than the valuable discovery of Koch which they so briefly follow. How far the future physician is to benefit by this work in the field of therapeutics it were possible to conjecture. It is the first time that artificial culture fluids have been successfully used for the production of disease in man, and the very success which has crowned these efforts will probably serve as an encouragement to many to follow in the path which the author has so brilliantly indicated. We can only hope for the sake of humanity and of our science, that those who may come after shall, like Fehleisen, bring to their work scientific acumen, clear observation, and, above all, over all, a sincere desire to relieve suffering and ameliorate distress.

—*The Medical Age.*

## THE HUMORS OF EXAMINATIONS.

(*From Chambers' Journal.*)

It is related of a rough-and-ready examiner in medicine, that, on one occasion, having failed to elicit satisfactory replies from a student regarding the muscular arrangements of the arm and leg, he somewhat brusquely said, "Ah! perhaps, sir, you could tell me the names of the muscles I would put in action were I to kick you!" "Certainly, sir," replied the candidate; "you would put in motion the flexors and extensors of my arm, for I should use them to knock you down!" History is silent, and perhaps wisely so, concerning the fate of this particular student. The story is told of a witty-Irish student, who, once upon a time, appeared before an Examining Board to undergo an examination in medical jurisprudence. The subject of examination was poisons, and the examiner had selected that deadly poison, prussic acid, as the subject of his questions. "Pray, sir," said he to the candidate, "what is a poisonous dose of prussic acid?" After cogitating for a moment, the student, replied, with promptitude, "Half an ounce, sir!" Horrified at the extreme ignorance of the candidate, the examiner exclaimed, "Half an ounce! Why, sir, you must be dreaming! That is an amount which would poison a community, sir, not to speak of an individual!" "Well, sir," replied the Hibernian. "I only thought