

eye attended with unhealthy secretion. They soon found, too, that some of the so-called germicidal substances could be applied in efficient strength to the eyelids and conjunctiva not only without danger but with palpable advantage in the presence of certain morbid conditions. Such drugs as boracic acid, carbolic acid, and solutions of perchloride of mercury were used on account of their reputed germicidal properties, not only in purulent affections of the cornea and conjunctiva, but as a preventive of suppuration in all major operations on the eye.

Antiseptic eye surgery in its widest sense includes—1st, the treatment of all inflammatory affections of the eye of a presumably septic character or in which the tissues or secretions or both contain micro-organisms supposed to be active agents in the inflammatory process. 2nd. The use of antiseptic precautions before, during and after operations on the eye for the purpose of preventing suppurative inflammatory action. I do not intend to speak of the first-class of cases except to state in a general way that I am fully convinced by my own experience in the treatment of this class of eye diseases that many eyes can be saved by strict attention and the free use of antiseptic remedies that would perish if left to nature, or such routine treatment as the text-books of a few years ago contain.

Everyone who has had much experience in operating on the eye must have observed that suppurative and ulcerative complications nearly always occur if they are going to take place at all, within a comparatively short time after the operative interference. In operations which involve penetrating wounds of the eyeball, such as the extraction of cataract, the formation of pus is sometimes noticed within a few hours after the operation, and I may say as far as my own observation goes, I believe this complication seldom, if ever, occurs later than twenty-four hours after the operation.

Another striking fact is the promptness with which union of the cut surfaces takes place when the eye is in a healthy condition. This, too, is, as a rule, a matter of only a few hours. In addition to this we have the unquestionable and no less important fact that the more recent the wound the more favourable are the conditions for septic action.