

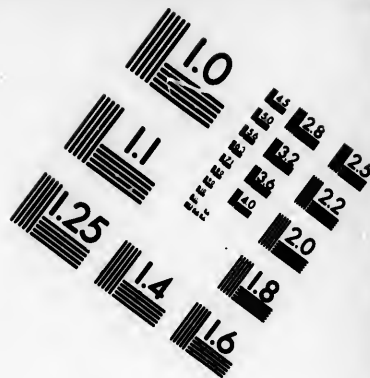
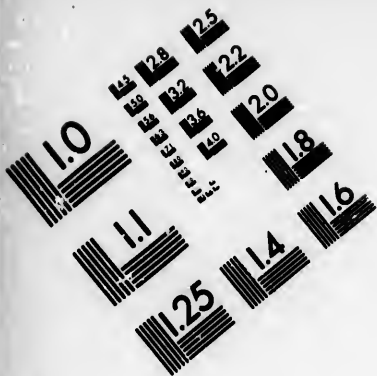
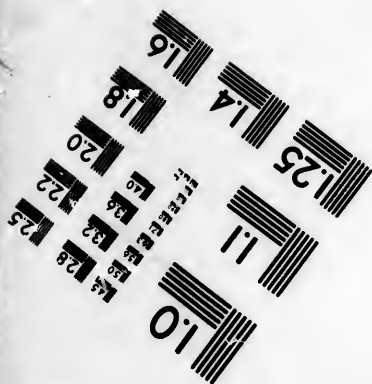
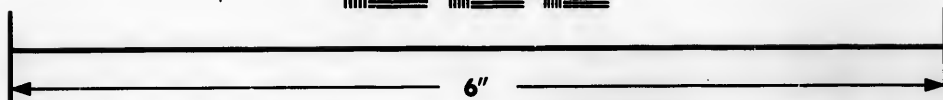
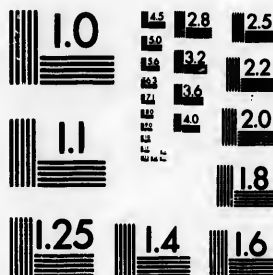


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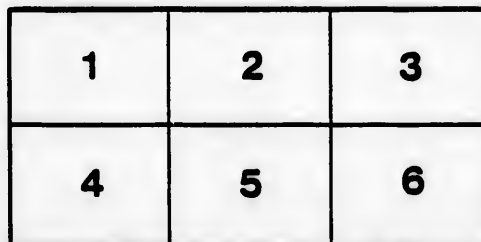
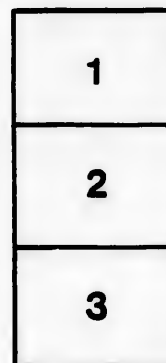
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**THE CONDITION OF TEST CULTURES ESPECIALLY
AS REGARDS TITRATION FAVOURABLE
TO CLEAR SERUM REACTIONS BY
THE DRIED BLOOD METHOD.**

BY

WYATT JOHNSTON, M.D., and D. D. McTAGGART.

[From the Laboratory of the Board of Health of the Province of Quebec.]

THIS matter was referred to in the discussion at Philadelphia on June 3rd, 1897, before the American Medical Association, by Bates Block and one of us. We found that by varying the composition of the medium and the conditions under which the culture is kept, it is possible to obtain a culture which will yield excellent results or the reverse. We can now at will obtain a bouillon culture which can be left in contact with solutions of non-typhoid blood for 24 to 48 hours without giving any reaction, and will react promptly with typhoid blood. On the other hand, we can by neglecting certain details, get a test culture which will give one of two pseudo-reactions with almost any blood solution or serum. Pseudo-reaction A is a decided clumping of over 95 per cent. of all the bacteria, but without loss of motion. Pseudo-reaction B culture with most blood solutions will show cessation of motion, with defective clumping. The former (A) we found to occur with cultures made very active by daily transplantations, and the latter (B) to growth in rather too alkaline bouillon.

Our earliest observations happened to be made with bouillon giving satisfactory results. These became unsatisfactory for a few weeks under daily transplantations and good again on returning to monthly changes of stock cultures. After a few months a change in the laboratory *personnel* with different assignment of duties led to the second class of pseudo-reactions troubling us for a few weeks. Attention to the reaction of the culture medium remedied this difficulty, which seemed entirely due to a trifling increase in the alkalinity of the laboratory bouillon. At another laboratory in charge of one of us there was still a supply of bouillon remaining which gave satisfactory results. This reacted 3.5 per cent. acid to phenolphthalein and just verged on the acid point with litmus. The adoption of bouillons having a reaction requiring 3.5 per cent. of normal alkali to restore the tint of phenolphthalein led to satisfactory results once more. The reading of the end point varies somewhat with the observer and the optimum reaction varies slightly with the particular culture and the composition of the medium, but always lies between 3 and 4 per cent.

The pseudo-reactions here described occur in bouillons giving a heavy growth and some sediment at the end of twenty-four hours at 37° C. They show a tendency to the spontaneous clumping mentioned by Widal, but this is greatly exaggerated by adding blood solution. Serum does not have the same tendency to cause pseudo-reaction Δ . Dilution alone did not prove in our hands a satisfactory remedy.

We believe that these anomalies explain the statements of some writers that all serums tend to cause clumping sooner or later. The optimum reaction depends somewhat on the temperature of the thermostat and the age of the culture. Satisfactory cultures show gentle clouding only at twenty-four hours, and have no sediment or serum. If the culture medium is made too acid it becomes insensitive, loses motility, and does not react promptly, but gives no pseudo-reaction.

We note for the first time in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* of December 4th, 1897, that Delépine had already in the *JOURNAL* on April 17th, 1897, called attention to the danger of pseudo-reactions if the bouillon is alkaline. He recommends neutral bouillon, whereas we found acid bouillon preferable. The question is one of intensity of growth rather than of pure alkalinity alone, since the pseudo-reactions can also be avoided by raising the alkalinity till the growth becomes scanty. Personally, our interest lay more in deciding the most suitable reaction for dried blood work.

