DISINFECTION AND DISINFECTANTS

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Disinfection and Disinfectants by H. M. Bracken

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H. M. BRACKEN

DISINFECTION AND DISINFECTANTS



Disinfection and Disinfectants.

A TREATISE UPON THE BEST KNOWN DISINFECTANTS,
THEIR USE IN THE DESTRUCTION OF DISBASE GERMS,
WITH SPECIAL INSTRUCTION FOR THEIR APPLICATION IN THE COMMONLY RECOGNIZED
INPECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS
DISEASES.

BY

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PREFACE.

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Progress has been made in the process of disinfection during recent years. We are coming to understand more and more every day the germ theory, or the science of bacteriology, and to appreciate that a great deal of disease is preventable because its cause may be eradicated by the proper use of disinfectants the properties of which are fully understood.

So far as the publishers are aware, however, there is at this time no concise work treating of the modern methods of disinfection which have been brought intovery common usage since the introduction of formaldehyde in its various forms. To meet this want the little book which follows was suggested and the author, who had enjoyed ample opportunity for practical tests and wide observation and study of the best methods employed, was selected to prepare this volume. How well he has done his work the reader is left to judge. It may be added that in its compilation he has been guided by a desire to give all who may be called upon to do disinfecting under the direction of village and town boards of health, and to the embalmer especially who is more and more being called upon to perform this important duty for the living while caring for the dead, a concise, readily understood and at the same time comprehensive and reliable guide.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Chicago, August, 1900.

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INTRODUCTION.

There is often confusion in the use of the terms deodorizer, antiseptic, disinfectant and germicide.

A Germicide is an agent capable of destroying germs or their spores.

A Disinfectant has practically the same properties, for it must be capable of the same action, or otherwise the part to which it is applied is not disinfected.

An Antiseptic is not necessarily a germicide or disinfectant. It may be much weaker in action. It is an agent sufficiently active to prevent the growth of germs, but not necessarily to destroy them.

A Deodorizer or deodorant may be still weaker in action than an antiseptic. It may destroy or mask disagreeable odors without of necessity having any influence upon germs or their spores. Deodorizers are worse than useless in dealing with the infections of disease, for by removing disagreeable odors they often give to the uninitiated a feeling of safety which does not exist, the cause of infection not having been removed.

A germicide or disinfectant is of necessity an antiseptic and may be a deodorizer. An antiseptic is not necessarily a disinfectant; it may be a deodorizer. A deodorizer is not necessarily a disinfectant or an antiseptic, but it may be both. £:

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Disinfection and Disinfectants.

CHAPTER I.

THE USE OF DISINFECTANTS.

I. Among the Living.

Disinfectants are used among the living-

- (a) To prevent further infection of the diseased individuals.
- (b) To protect those who have been exposed to infection;
- (c) To prevent the further spread of infection.

The first, (a), is well illustrated in surgery, where the surgeon cleans out and thoroughly disinfects an infected wound and expects the healing process, after such action on his part, to go on as rapidly as though infection of the part had never existed. Had he left such an infected wound uncleaned the local infection might easily have caused general infection, which would end only with the loss of a part, or even of the life, of the patient.

It is also well illustrated in daily life, where evil effects that might naturally follow the prick of a poisoned needle or the scratch or abrasion from other