

agree with the view that the bacteria are predisposed by these means and that sudden changes take place. It is a gradual alteration. He also shows that the variations are not necessarily of any benefit to the bacteria but take place irregularly and almost by chance. An attempt is made to correlate these findings with the general problem of heredity and he discusses the use of such terms as mutation, modification and variety and points out that they can only be used in a relative sense.

The Widespread Distribution of Diphtheroids and Their Occurrence in Various Lesions of Human Tissues.—Considerable confusion has been brought to the minds of many investigators by the finding of diphtheroid organisms in a great variety of human tissues. At times, an important relation is suggested between the organism and the diseased tissue; as in Hodgkin's disease and leprosy. Much difficulty is also experienced in designating the limits of the group. In one direction they advance closely to the true diphtheria bacillus, while in the other, transition forms closely approach the streptothrix group. HARRIS and WADE (*Jour. Exper. Med.*, 1915, xxi, 493) have pointed out the wide distribution of this group of organisms in the human body. Under normal conditions it has been shown to be present in the eye, brain and cerebrospinal fluid and blood cultures. The authors have obtained them from lymph glands in simple hyperplasia while others have laid much stress upon the importance of finding the diphtheroids in the lymphatic system. Moreover, similar organisms were obtained from benign and malignant tumors of various kinds, but in no instance could any etiological importance be laid to them. Diphtheroid forms are also not uncommon upon the skin and in the air. The various diphtheroid organisms which have been isolated may to a certain extent be differentiated but up to the present no accurate procedure has been developed, whereby a suitable classification may be employed.

On the Mechanism of Pneumococcus Immunity.—BOEHNCKE and MOURIZ-RIESGO (*Ztschr. f. Hyg. u. Infektionskrankh.*, 1915, lxxix, 355) believe that the promotion of phagocytosis is a more important function of pneumococcus sera than the antitoxic activity. From the experiments these authors, along with other investigators, have shown that pneumococcus sera possess a very definite antitoxic principle but that the animals are not cured by its use. The time of death is, however, definitely delayed. These sera promote phagocytosis and by this means exhibit their most important function in curing cases of pneumococcus infection.

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