

## FATTY DEGENERATION OF THE INTIMA OF ARTERIES.\*

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The tendency for the arterial tissues to undergo a fatty degeneration,† and the importance of the process in the pathogenesis of arteriosclerosis, has been repeatedly commented upon, but different views have been taken on the immediate part which the degeneration plays in relation to other tissue changes of the arterial coats. Moreover, no unity of opinion has been reached as to the tissues which suffer this degeneration, or in indicating which type of cell, in the state of degeneration, is of prime importance in bringing about serious structural alteration, the end result of which is commonly discussed as atheroma. Prior to Virchow's classification of the fatty changes in the arteries, these were all discussed under steatomatosis, a term which was not alone applied to fatty degeneration of the arteries, but also to similar tissue changes of the organs. To-day in making the pathological distinction between fatty degeneration and infiltration, this term has been dropped.

Desirable as it may be to make a firm distinction between fatty degeneration and fatty infiltration of all tissues showing the accumulation of fat or lipid bodies under pathological processes, difficulty is yet encountered in differentiating a hyperphysiological process from truly pathological degeneration. All tissue cells are not equally active or sensitive in dealing with fatty materials in their nutrition, some being unusually prone to indicate a slight intra- or extra-cellular disturbance by the accumulation of granular or globular fat in their protoplasm. Such unusual overloading of their protoplasm by foreign fat may occur without any demonstrable degenerative processes in the cell structure. On the other hand, the presence of fat within a cell which otherwise also

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\* Received for publication, Oct. 14, 1914.

† The term fatty degeneration is used to indicate the abnormal accumulation of Sudan staining substances in cells and tissues.