

microbe gaining entrance into the system, does not usually set up disease. Save when we are dealing with the most virulent forms of pathogenetic micro-organisms and with animals which are peculiarly susceptible, it requires numerous bacteria entering at the same time to so lower the resisting powers of the tissues as to there survive and proliferate. Even with the tubercle bacillus it has been calculated that, in the very susceptible rabbit, at least from twenty to thirty have to be inoculated subcutaneously before the disease can surely be set up; any lesser number is destroyed. If, therefore, in the intestine, here and there at scattered points, individual bacteria are being introduced into the system from time to time, that does not necessitate proliferation and consequent infection; we can easily understand that if the tissues there possess their normal powers, isolated bacteria tend to be destroyed by the cells or the containing leucocytes at the immediate point of entry; and, as a matter of fact, study of the mesenteric glands and the difficulty in obtaining cultures from these, even when sections of the same show relatively abundant bacteria, is clear evidence that this is the case.

#### ON CERTAIN CASES OF SURGICAL INFECTION.

Only the other evening I was talking over these matters with my colleague, Dr. Armstrong, surgeon to the Montreal General Hospital, and he put to me certain very pertinent questions. "Why," said he, "do we surgeons dread operating upon the robust city man apparently full of health and vigor, who wants to rush in upon us on the Friday or even upon the Saturday afternoon, to have some such small operation performed upon him as, for example; the removal of hemorrhoids, in order that he may be back again at his business on the Monday morning? Why is it that the chances are so greatly against such operation being safe? Why, on the other hand, if we coop up that man for two or three days previously and thoroughly purge him, is the operation a trifle, and we can be practically sure that there will be no complications? The sudden change in his diet and habits can scarce improve the vitality and resisting