

removal or avoidance of all causes, as well those which give rise to the disease as all others, will very materially assist in restoring health. There is in our bodies a tendency toward perfection ; a tendency to set matters right when they have gone wrong ; in disease, a natural inclination to health. Hygienic remedies assist this natural effort, and are sometimes sufficient to restore health.

False ideas regarding disease have in times past proved unfavourable to hygienic effort, and operated against the employment of means to prevent disease. In early ages diseases were believed to be due to evil spirits which in some mysterious manner found their way into the system. Many now regard them as things having an independent existence, to be removed or thrust out of the system by medicines, as things that come arbitrarily, or are 'sent' by Divine Providence as punishments for sins committed. Many of the semi-religious story books now in the libraries for the young, at least convey these erroneous ideas. True, diseases come only because of our transgressions, not of the moral laws exactly, but rather of the simple physical laws of health. We bring them upon ourselves, for the most part, by our own acts or neglects. Since more enlightened views have somewhat prevailed, there have been numerous proofs of the great benefits to health and vitality from giving practical attention to the laws of health, to the condition of the essentials or agencies of life,—air, water, food, etc.

It must be borne in mind that the injurious effects on the organism of any of these causes of disease are not always, or even usually, immediately perceivable, but are frequently slow and cumulative, and not noticeable until much mischief has been done. The breathing of air contaminated by the products of respiration, as in unventilated rooms, is believed to be a most common cause of that most fatal of all diseases, consumption ; yet, frequently, this disease arises and increases so imperceptibly, that it is not manifested until too late to be remedied. So, intemperance, in both drinking and eating, is a very common cause of disease. Yet the diseases arising therefrom do not commonly attract attention until the intemperate habits have been indulged in for a long time, perhaps not until serious organic disease has been produced.

Pain, in some form or degree, whether severe or only amounting to slight uneasiness, is the most common symptom of disease, and not unfrequently acts as a kindly monitor to warn us that something is going wrong in our body, or that we have committed some error. But we are not always thus warned. Causes of diseases may continue to act, and produce effects of a more or less serious or permanent character, without causing pain or giving us any warning whatever.

One thing is certain, that is, causes always produce effects ; and this ought never to be forgotten. If we breathe foul air, or use bad water or improper food, some ill effect is certain to follow ; though it may not be appreciable to our senses, or possibly not of a permanent character.