

New York Medical Journal, has made a report, of which the chief conclusion is that these are distinct diseases, and not the same disorder, as has been maintained by some physicians. The Commission, composed of Dr. E. O. Shakespeare, of Philadelphia, chairman, and Dr. Meade Bolton and Dr. T. J. Burrill, journeyed far and wide and experimented diligently in order to settle the points in dispute. Their report is provisional and introductory to further and closer laboratory work. One important observation made by the Commission is worthy of mention, as having an application to human infective diseases since it recognizes a principle of cumulation in infection which explains what is called the alleged deficiencies of vaccination and other protective agencies. To quote from the report briefly: "There is no known infectious disease, either of man or beast, capable of producing by one attack a degree of protection which is surely and absolutely effective against a second attack. Experience has abundantly shown that animals which are naturally or artificially protected can be *practically overwhelmed* by enormous doses of the germs of the disease and thus be made to suffer a recurrent attack which may even be fatal." Thus it is that we not infrequently observe a second attack of small-pox in a person who, having "no fear of the disease," as it is often expressed by some such thoughtless person, so comports himself that a needless and wanton degree of exposure is incurred. That such an exposure does not engender the second attack oftener than is the case is surprising. In other words, the antidote being limited in its supply or potency, there ought to be nothing surprising, or, indeed, contrary to a rational expectation, in the recurrent attack as a result of an excessive exposure to the germs of infecting diseases. In such instances it is not the correct view to ascribe them to the "failure" of the protective agency applicable to each respective case: They are simply cases where the doses of poison have been so great as to overwhelm the protection.

THE DANGER IN TINNED FOODS:—Captain Segrave, the British Consul at Baltimore, the British Medical Journal says, has sent a report to the Foreign Office upon the provisions preserved in tins for export from the United States. Warnings as to the risks which may attend the use of tinned foods have appeared at rare intervals in professional papers, and have

ultimately found their way into the daily press; but beyond a passing reference to the sluggishness of "the authorities" who do not "do their duty" by taking steps to protect the public from peril, little, if anything, has been done to call general attention to this matter. Captain Segrave points out that a serious danger lies in the use of certain materials for soldering the tin cans and making them air-tight. There have been serious cases of poisoning which have been attributed to the use of certain tinned foods, and which have been placed upon record by those who were concerned in their treatment. It is not unreasonable to suppose that there has been many cases of this kind—probably of a mild description—which have never found their way into print; but, apart from this, the peril to the public is sufficiently obvious, and, having regard to the well-known cumulative effect of continued small doses of the salts of tin, lead, and zinc, it must not be thought that the absence of numerous and startling cases of metallic poisoning is a proof of the generally innocuous nature of canned goods. The outer layers of substances preserved in tins have occasionally been found, on analysis, to contain metallic salts, obviously derived from the containing vessel. It is suggested that a law should be passed rendering it compulsory to solder cans of provisions on the outside only. Whilst this might be useful, such matters cannot be adequately dealt with by piecemeal legislation. To deal properly with the impurities and adulteration to which our food supplies are liable, far more comprehensive laws than those at present in existence are required.

PURE GELATINE.—No food probably is more liable to change, and become in fact dangerous, than gelatine, and many warnings have been sounded. Its purity may be easily tested thus: Pour upon dry gelatine a quantity of boiling water; if pure it will form a thick, gluey, colorless solution, free from smell; but if made of impure materials it will be a very offensive odor and have a yellow, gluey consistence. No article manufactured requires such careful selection of material and such nice and cleanly manipulation to insure a good marketable character; and those anxious for purity should avoid all artificially-colored varieties, however temptingly got up, unless they are required for merely decorative purposes and not for food.