

Diphtheria bacilli have been found in the saliva of healthy people, thus proving that the saliva is not inimical to the life of this dread germ. Mild and even advanced cases of diphtheria and the various forms of tonsillitis are not unfrequently found in patients occupying the dentist's chair.

The pneumonia coccus is also found in the mouths of healthy people, while a primary tuberculosis of the mouth seems to indicate that the tubercle bacillus occasionally finds a favorable abode in the fluids of the mouth.

The mouths of consumptives, too, who are expectorating much, are peculiarly prone to contain immense numbers of these germs, and dental instruments may easily be the means of transferring the germs to the mouths of healthy persons.

In regard to syphilis, leaving out sexual intercourse, the great majority of infections from this disease take place from the oral cavity. The oral fluids seem not only to be non-destructive to the syphilitic germs, but to serve as carriers of the poison.

Many cases are recorded of syphilis being transmitted by dental instruments. L. Duncan Bulkley (on "The Dangers Arising from Syphilis in the Practice of Dentistry") has enumerated many such cases. Dalles, Otis, Lancereaux, Giovanni and others have recorded cases where chancre of the lip occurred two or three weeks after dental operations. Lydston, Roddick and Parker have recorded cases of syphilis following tooth extraction.

Dentists and physicians themselves have been inoculated by scratching their fingers on a patient's tooth. Bulkley relates thirty cases where syphilis was caused by tooth-wounds, by bites and blows on the teeth. Veritable epidemics have occurred by infection with saliva of syphilitic patients. In several cases recorded a large number of persons have been inoculated by tattooing, the instrument used having been moistened with the saliva of a syphilitic person.

In view of these facts, it is of the utmost importance that dentists should exercise greater cleanliness in their instruments, and should be more practically experienced in reference to the manifestations of disease in the human mouth.

And now, let us consider some of the more common diseases of the oral mucous membrane :

*Stomatitis*, inflammation of the mouth, is due to mechanical, chemical and bacterial causes. As mechanical causes are the sharp edges of broken and carious teeth and ill-fitting dentures, etc., chemical irritation may come from highly-spiced foods, alcoholics, tobacco chewing and excessive smoking, or from acids or alkalies, etc., taken