

obey some of nature's laws to upset the equilibrium and to fall a prey to some one of these poisons. Our Creator, however, foresaw all dangers and provided us abundantly with safeguards with which we can destroy or neutralize the poisons, on the one hand, or throw them off, on the other, as soon as they are formed.

It becomes apparent, then, that for auto-infection to take place, two things are essential :

1. There must be an impairment of physiological action somewhere.
2. That poisons are being constantly formed in us in health.

In the physical system every cell has a duty to perform, and the same can be said of those aggregations of cells which we call organs. Impair or destroy a single one and the economy suffers, and the effect is in proportion to the importance of the work normally allotted to it. Now, if from any cause the liver, the lungs, the skin, the kidneys or the blood should get out of order and fail to perform its function, what is the result? Poisons that are being constantly secreted are not being rendered harmless, on the one hand, or are not being thrown off on the other, but are allowed to accumulate and enter the circulation (possibly lymphatics), and are distributed throughout the body, causing local or systemic infection, as the case may be.

It is at times very difficult to determine, in cases of auto-infection, where health leaves off and disease begins; this is because of the fact that, on the one hand these poisons are physiological factors, and, on the other, as soon as the system becomes susceptible, they become active pathological factors.

Perhaps the most frequent and immediate cause of auto-infection is "constipation," and more especially when complicated with fecal impaction. In the latter case we have the retention of the feces for a variable length of time; as a natural sequence effete matters accumulate in the bowel and by remaining, undergo chemical changes, and poisons of the ptomaine and leucomaine classes are formed, which are as active as any poisons that could be introduced from without, as, for example, typhoid fever and cholera, wherein the bacillus runs its entire course in the intestines. This condition also favors the rapid growth of septic micro-organisms within the intestinal canal.

Next to constipation as a cause comes diarrhœa, for liquid stools render soluble and distribute the poisonous elements contained therein to any exposed points of the mucosa, thus insuring their entrance into the circulation.

As a result of the accumulation of poisons, we have systemic infection induced; it may or may not run a chronic course, depending on the removal of the offending mass. If nothing is done to prevent the formation of poisonous products, they soon manifest themselves in the clinical pictures with which we are all more or less familiar—chlorosis and anemia.

For the sake of illustration let us study the phenomena in a case of extreme intoxication from the intestinal canal to ascertain its effect upon the various systems and skin.

*The Circulatory System.*—As a result of auto-infection we have a disturbance in the circulation; the cutaneous vessels become contracted, thus