

## MEDICINE.

IN CHARGE OF

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### AUTO-INFECTION FROM THE INTESTINAL CANAL

BY S. G. GANT, M.D.

As I understand it, auto-infection from the intestinal canal means that pathological condition resulting from the absorption of poisons generated within it. It matters not whether they are the result of chemical, putrefactive or fermentative changes, or bacterial action.

That the organism might be poisoned by the products generated within it was until quite recently looked upon with skepticism. To-day we are forced to admit that such a thing is of common occurrence. Recent investigators have given abundance of proof of poisons generated within the colon, and further that the various organs of the body—the brain the liver, the lungs, the kidney, etc.—are frequently invaded by the bacillus coli communis and other micro-organisms and some pathological condition induced as a result thereof. They have gone a step further than this and demonstrated the fact that toxic substances that are disease-producing independent of bacterial action, are being constantly formed within us in health.

As regards auto-infection from the intestinal canal, we have as yet very little proof of the absorption of poisons from this source, or as to the manner in which it occurs. Many of our best clinicians express themselves as believing that the cause of many diseases, the pathology being obscure at present, will be explained when we become more familiar with the part played by the contents of the human sewer.

Bouchard well says, "The organism in its normal, as in its pathological state, is a receptacle and laboratory of poisons. Some of these are formed by the organism itself, others by microbes, which either are the guests, the normal inhabitants of the canal, or are parasites at second hand, and disease-producing."

Because of this fact we may become intoxicated on one hand from the alkaloidal poisons formed during digestion, and, on the other, as a result of unusual activity of the bacteria—the normal inhabitants of the intestinal canal—and their ptomaines. As we become more familiar with the almost innumerable poisons within us, and their effects when injected into the lower animals, we are forced to admit that we are constantly tottering on the brink of self-destruction, and that we only need to dis-