

Chapter Five

The Unity of Acute Diseases



In the last chapter I endeavored to explain the three primary causes of disease, namely: (1) lowered vitality, (2) abnormal composition of blood and lymph, (3) accumulation of waste, morbid matter, and poisons in the system.

We shall now consider some of the secondary manifestations resulting from these primary causes. Consulting the table on page 18, we find mentioned as the first one of the secondary causes or manifestations of disease, hereditary and constitutional taints.

On first impression, it might be thought that heredity is a primary cause of disease; but on further consideration it becomes apparent that it is an effect and not a primary cause. If the parents possess good vitality and pure, normal blood and tissues, and if they apply in the prenatal and postnatal treatment of the child the necessary insight and foresight, there cannot be disease heredity. In order to create abnormal hereditary tendencies, the parents, or earlier ancestors, must have ignorantly or wantonly violated Nature's Laws, such violation resulting in lowered vitality and in deterioration of blood and tissues.

The female and male germinal cells unite and form the primitive reproductive cell—the prototype of marriage. The human body with its millions of cells and cell colonies is developed by the multiplication, with gradual differentiation, of the reproductive cell. Its abnormalities of structure, of cell materials and of functional tendencies are reproduced just as surely as its normal constituents. Herein lies the simple explanation of heredity which is proved to be an actual fact, not only by common experience and scientific

observation but also in a more definite way by Nature's records in the iris of the eye.

The iris of the newborn child reveals in its diagnostic details not only, in a general way, hereditary taints, lowered resistance, and deterioration of vital fluids, but frequently special weakness and deterioration in those organs which were weak or diseased in the parents. Under the conventional (unnatural) management of the infant, these hereditary tendencies to weakness and disease and their corresponding signs in the iris become more and more pronounced, proceeding through the various stages of incumbrance from acute, infantile diseases through chronic catarrhal conditions to the final destructive stages.

In the face of the well-established facts of disease heredity we have, however, this consolation: If the child be treated in accordance with the teachings of Nature Cure philosophy, the abnormal hereditary encumbrances and tendencies can be overcome and eliminated within a few years. If we place the infant organism under the right conditions of living and of treatment, in harmony with the laws of its being, the Life Principle within will approach ever nearer to the establishment of the perfect type. Hundreds of "Nature Cure" babies all over this country are living proofs of this gladsome message to all those who have assumed or intend to assume the responsibilities of parenthood.

Natural Immunity

Under the second of the secondary causes or manifestations of disease we find mentioned germs, bacteria, parasites, inflammations, fevers, skin eruptions, chronic sinus discharges, ulcers, etc. (See page 18).

Modern medical science is built up upon the germ theory of disease and treatment. Since the microscope has revealed the presence and seemingly entirely pernicious activity of certain microorganisms in connection with certain diseases, it has been assumed that bacteria are the direct, primary causes of most diseases. Therefore, the slogan now is: "Kill the bacteria (by poisonous antiseptics, serums and antitoxins) and you will cure the disease."

The Nature Cure philosophy takes a different view of the problem. Germs cannot be the cause of disease, because disease

germs are also found in healthy bodies. The real cause must be something else. We claim that it is the waste and morbid matter in the system which afford the microorganisms of disease the opportunity to breed and multiply.

We regard microorganisms as secondary manifestations of disease, and maintain that bacteria and parasites live, thrive and multiply to the danger point in a weakened and diseased organism only. If it were not so, the human family would be extinct within a few months' time.

The fear instilled by the bacterial theory of disease is frequently more destructive than the microorganisms themselves. We have had under observation and treatment a number of insane patients whose peculiar delusion or monomania was an exaggerated fear of germs, a genuine bacteriophobia.

Keep yourself clean and vigorous from within, and you cannot be affected by disease taints and germs from without.

Bacteria are practically omnipresent. We absorb them in food and drink, we inhale them in the air we breathe. Our bodies are literally alive with them. The last stages of the digestive processes depend upon the activity of millions of bacteria in the intestinal tract.

The proper thing to do, therefore, is not to try and kill the germs, but to remove the morbid matter and disease taints in which they live.

Instead of concentrating its energies upon killing the germs, whose presence we cannot escape, Nature Cure endeavors to invigorate the system, to build up blood and lymph on a normal basis and to purify the tissues of their morbid encumbrances in such a way as to establish natural immunity to destructive germ activity. Everything that tends to accomplish this without injuring the system by poisonous drugs or surgical operations is good Nature Cure treatment.

To adopt the germ-killing process without purifying and invigorating the organism would be like trying to keep a house free from fungi and vermin by sprinkling it daily with carbolic acid and other germ killers, instead of keeping it pure and sweet by flooding it with fresh air and sunshine and applying freely and vigorously broom, brush and plenty of soap and water. Instead of purifying it,

the antiseptics and germ killers would only add to the filth in the house.¹

All bacteriologists are unanimous in declaring that the various disease germs are found not only in the bodies of the sick, but also in seemingly healthy persons.

A celebrated French bacteriologist reports that in the mouth of a healthy infant, two months old, he found almost all the disease germs known to medical science. Only lately, a celebrated physician, appointed by the French government to investigate the causes of tuberculosis, declared before a meeting of the International Tuberculosis Congress in Rome that he found the bacilli of tuberculosis in ninety-five percent of all the school children he had examined.

Dr. Osler, one of the greatest living medical authorities, mentions repeatedly in his works that the bacilli of diphtheria, pneumonia and of many other virulent diseases are found in the bodies of healthy persons.

The inability of bacteria, by themselves, to create diseases is further confirmed by the well-known facts of natural immunity to specific infection or contagion. All mankind is more or less affected by hereditary and acquired disease taints, morbid encumbrances and drug poisoning, resulting from age-long violation of Nature's Laws and from the suppression of acute diseases; but even under the almost universal present conditions of lowered vitality, morbid heredity and physical and mental degeneration it is found that under identical conditions of exposure to drafts or infection, a certain percentage of individuals only will take the cold or catch the disease. The fact of natural immunity is constantly confirmed by common experience as well as in the clinics and laboratories of our medical schools and research institutes. Of a specific number of mice or rabbits inoculated with particles of cancer, only a small percentage develops the malignant growth and succumbs to its ravages.

The development of infectious and contagious diseases neces-

¹All this was written before the introduction of antibiotics. The modern theory is still the same, however: "kill the bug" and the disease goes away. This only happens if the body's vitality is strong enough to finish off the germs that are left after the antibiotic has done its work. If it is not, the condition will return again and again. The most common example of this is the reoccurring upper respiratory and ear infections in children raised on antibiotic therapy.

sitates a certain predisposition, or, as medical science calls it, "disease diathesis." This predisposition to infection and contagion consists in the primary causes of disease, which we have designated as lowered vitality, abnormal composition of blood and lymph, and the accumulation of waste, morbid matter and poisons in the system.

Bacteria: Secondary, Not Primary, Manifestations of Disease

In a previous chapter we learned how lowered vitality weakens the resistance of the system to the attacks and inroads of disease germs and poisons. The growth and multiplication of microorganisms depend furthermore upon a congenial, morbid soil. Just as the ordinary yeast germ multiplies in a sugar solution only, so the various microorganisms of disease thrive and multiply to the danger point only in their own peculiar and congenial kind of morbid matter. Thus, the typhoid fever bacillus thrives in a certain kind of effete matter which accumulates in the intestines; the pneumonia bacilli flourish best in the catarrhal secretions of the lungs, and meningitis bacilli in the diseased meninges of the brain and spinal cord.

Dr. Pettenkofer, a celebrated physician and professor of the University of Vienna, also arrived at the conclusion that bacteria, by themselves, cannot create disease, and for years he defended his opinion from the lecture platform and in his writings against the practically solid phalanx of the medical profession. One day he backed his theory by a practical test. While instructing his class in the bacteriological laboratory of the university, he picked up a glass which contained millions of live cholera germs and swallowed its contents before the eyes of the students. The seemingly dangerous experiment was followed only by a slight nausea. Lately I have heard repeatedly of persons in this country who subjected themselves in similar manner to infection, inoculation and contagion with the most virulent kinds of bacteria and disease taints without developing the corresponding diseases.

A few years ago Dr. Rodermund, a physician in the State of Wisconsin, created a sensation all over this country when he smeared his body with the exudate of smallpox sores in order to demonstrate

to his medical colleagues that a healthy body could not be infected with the disease. He was arrested and quarantined in jail, but not before he had come in contact with many people. Neither he nor anyone else exposed by him developed smallpox.

During the ten years that I have been connected with sanitarium work, my workers and myself, in giving the various forms of manipulative treatment, have handled intimately thousands of cases of infectious and contagious diseases, and I do not remember a single instance where any one of us was in the least affected by such contact. Ordinary cleanliness, good vitality, clean blood and tissues, the organs of elimination in good, active condition and, last but not least, a positive, fearless attitude of mind will practically establish natural immunity to the inroads and ravages of bacteria and disease taints. If infection takes place, the organism reacts to it through inflammatory processes, and by means of these endeavors to overcome and eliminate microorganisms and poisons from the system.

In this connection it is of interest to learn that the danger to life from bites and stings of poisonous reptiles and insects has been greatly exaggerated. According to popular opinion, anyone bitten by a rattlesnake, gila monster or tarantula is doomed to die, while as a matter of fact the statistics show that only from two to seven percent succumb to the effects of the wounds inflicted by the bites of poisonous reptiles.²

In this, as in many other instances, popular opinion should rather be called "popular superstition."

In the open discussions following my public lectures, I am often asked: "What is the right thing to do in case of snakebite? Would you not give plenty of whiskey to save the victim's life?"

It is my belief that of the seven percent who die after being bitten by rattlesnakes or other poisonous snakes, a goodly proportion give up the ghost because of the effects of the enormous doses of strong whiskey that are poured into them under the mistaken idea that the whiskey is an efficient antidote to the snake poison.

People do not know that the death rate from snakebite is so very

²There are poisonous critters whose bite or sting can be nearly universally fatal so it is a good idea to take measures to avoid such exposure whenever possible. The better the vitality as defined by Dr. Lindlahr, however, the better chance you have of surviving such an attack, even with the use of antitoxins.

low, and therefore they attribute the recoveries to the whiskey, just as recoveries from other diseases under medical or metaphysical treatment are attributed to the virtues of the particular medicine or method of treatment instead of to the real healer, the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, the healing power of Nature, which in ninety-three cases in a hundred eliminates the rattlesnake venom without injury to the organism.

To recapitulate: Just as yeast cells are not only the cause but also the product of sugar fermentation, so disease germs are not only a cause (secondary) but also a product of morbid fermentation in the system. Furthermore, just as yeast germs live on and decompose sugar, so disease germs live on and decompose morbid matter and systemic poisons.

In a way, therefore, microorganisms are just as much the product as the cause of disease and act as scavengers or eliminators of morbid matter. In order to hold in check the destructive activity of bacteria and to prevent their multiplication beyond the danger point, Nature resorts to inflammation and manufactures her own antitoxins.

On the other hand, whatever tends to build up the blood on a natural basis, to promote elimination of morbid matter and thereby to limit the activity of destructive microorganisms without injuring the body or depressing its vital functions, is good Nature Cure practice. The first consideration, therefore, in the treatment of inflammation must be to not interfere with its natural course.

By the various statements and claims made in this chapter, I do not wish to convey the idea that I am opposed to scrupulous cleanliness or surgical asepsis. Far from it! These are dictates of common sense. But I do affirm that the danger from germ and other infectious diseases lies just as much or more so in internal filth as in external uncleanness. Cleanliness and asepsis must go hand in hand with the purification of the inner man in order to insure natural immunity.



