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IMPORT OF RELAXED ABDOMINAL WALLS IN DISEASE OF THE DIGESTIVE ORGANS.*

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HAVING spent considerable time during the past five years in the dissection of the normal, pathological and comparative anatomy of the digestive system, together with fairly close observation of all cases of disease of these organs coming under my care during that time, I feel that the observations I shall present may be of some value as suggestions towards their more scientific treatment.

I have purposely quoted considerably from well-known authorities, in order to show by their own statements that at least the majority of diseases of these organs are dependent upon a simple mechanical derangement, the result of abnormal intra-abdominal pressure.

The natural sequence of events I shall first state in order that we may the more readily follow the developments of the pathology. We have then:—

1st. Infection, as the exciting cause of pancreatitis, pancreatic calculi, cholecystitis, gallstones, diseases of liver, gastric and duodenal catarrh and ulcers, etc.

2nd. The duodenum, as the point of origin of the infection from below. The portal vein as the source of infection from above.

3rd. An abnormal duodenum.

4th. Obstruction and stagnation, the necessary requirements for infection.

5th. The point of obstruction, being where the superior mesenteric vessels cross the third portion of the duodenum.

6th. Tension, upon vessels the cause of the obstruction, as the duodenum is thereby gripped between the vessels and the posterior abdominal walls.

7th. The intestines, supplied by these vessels as the cause of the tension, their weight, irrespective of contents, being the sole factor.

8th. Insufficient normal support, being reason for vessels having to support the weight.

9th. Abdominal walls, being the normal support, must contain the pathology, which is responsible for above conditions.

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