

or of Solomon may be of aid in clearing up the subject, but in some cases it cannot be done without an exploratory incision.

Again, in some cases of pyloric obstruction due to cancer, sarcinae without the Boas-Oppler bacilli may be present in the gastric contents. Moreover, this may occur in the absence or presence of free hydrochloric acid. It is probable in most of these cases that a simple ulcer existed prior to the cancer. This sequence does not exist in all, for it is not rare to find cases in which the previous history does not even suggest the presence of peptic ulcer.

As stated above, sarcinae in the gastric contents occur only in a high degree of stagnation of food. This fact may aid in the diagnosis of a gastric disease of short duration, because it is to be expected that a rapidly developing pyloric obstruction is more likely to be malignant than benign. This, however, is not always true. At least three cases of pyloric obstruction of a high degree, caused by peptic ulcer, with a history of gastric symptoms of a duration of about three months, have come under personal observation. In all these cases the ulcer was situated in the pylorus, which would explain the rapidity of the development of the obstruction. If a peptic ulcer were situated only adjacent to the pylorus, a high degree of stagnation of food would not likely result in a few months.

SUMMARY.

1. Sarcinae in gastric contents indicate, as a rule, a high degree of stagnation of food in the stomach.

2. The presence of sarcinae in cases characterized by normal or excessive acidity of the gastric juice is, in most cases, due to a benign disease.

3. The presence of sarcinae alone or sarcinae along with Boas-Oppler bacilli, in cases of gastric disease of a few months' duration, is frequently due to a malignant process.

4. The finding of both sarcinae and Boas-Oppler bacilli in the gastric contents, characterized by the absence or presence of free hydrochloric acid, may be either due to cancer or peptic ulcer, but is more likely to be the result of the former than the latter disease.