

it then collects in the gall bladder, where it lies till the next period of active digestion to be again expelled, partly by the peristaltic movements of the intestines pressing upon it, but probably in great part by peristaltic movements in its own walls.

The pressure at which the bile is secreted is very low, so that the rapidity with which it flows is greatly influenced by outside influences, notably two:—1. The amount of resistance it meets with in the long line of narrow bile passages through which it passes. So that an increase of mucus hardly appreciable in itself may nevertheless considerably retard the flow of bile. 2. The freedom of movement of the diaphragm. Free movement of the diaphragm by compressing the liver is probably one of the most important factors in promoting expulsion of bile from the bile passages and from the gall bladder, and any cause which interferes with such movement, for example, tight lacing, pregnancy, sluggish habits of life, will correspondingly tend to retard proper expulsion of bile from the gall bladder.

GENERAL ETIOLOGY.

Age.—The most recent information is that given by Schröder of Strassburg, 1,150 cases examined, of which 141 (12.25 per cent.) showed gall stones, and Brockbank of Manchester, 742 cases, 49 of which (6.6 per cent.) showed gall stones.

<i>Table Showing Influence of Age.</i>		
Age.	Schröder.	Brockbank.
0—20	2.4	2.9
21—30	3.2	5.3
31—40	11.5	3.3
41—50	11.1	7.4
51—60	9.9	9.3
61 and over	25.2	13.6

The increase with advancing years, especially after the age of 60 is well seen in both tables, especially those of Schröder (over 25 per cent. of cases).

The relatively larger percentage of cases (over 8 per cent.) observed by Brockbank below the age of 30 is probably connected with the fact noted by him that all his cases below 30 were the subject of heart disease; in which condition there seems to be a special tendency to the formation of gall stones.