

DOMINION MEDICAL MONTHLY

AND ONTARIO MEDICAL JOURNAL

VOL. XVI.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1901.

No. 1.

Original Articles

NOTES ON GASTROPTOSIS, WITH REPORTS OF CASES.*

BY GRAHAM CHAMBERS, B.A., M.B., TORONTO.

Gastroptosis, or falling of the stomach, is a fairly common disease, and is generally associated with ptosis of one or more other abdominal organs. The most frequent combination is gastroptosis with movable right kidney. The name gastroptosis would appear to imply a falling of the entire stomach, but such is not the case as the cardiac end is attached to the esophagus and cannot alter its position. However, the pylorus and both the greater and lesser curvatures may be lowered, and it is to this displacement of the stomach to which the name gastroptosis is applied. The causes of gastroptosis are very variable. Heredity plays an important part. General muscle and nerve weakness, narrow chests, tight lacing, emaciation, are important factors in the development of the disease; but according to the writer's experience diminished intra-abdominal tension is the most active causative agent. The stomach is held in position by its ligaments, and by the pressure exerted by the elasticity of the abdominal muscles. The ligamentous attachments are probably of sufficient strength to hold the stomach with an ordinary load in its normal position. But the intra-abdominal tension protects the ligaments themselves by giving support to their vessels, and if the load of the stomach should become abnormally large, either by excessive eating or drinking, or by retention of food, then it will, by means of a cushion of intestines, prevent an undue weight from being put upon these suspensory bands. This, then, is what I believe

* Read before Toronto Medical Society.