

bution, one has chosen only to put together a few impressions gained from a present day general review of the subject.

There is no longer the necessity for giving distinct, separate consideration to ulceration of the duodenum, which occurs much more frequently than hitherto supposed, as apart from that of the stomach, for since it is that portion of the duodenum above the common entrance of the bile and pancreatic ducts which is involved by the great majority of duodenal ulcers, and as the two conditions are so frequently associated in the same individual, they have come to be looked upon as essentially similar in nature.

The present average estimate of the relative incidence of this disease is about five per cent. Post-mortem records have shown a much greater frequency than have clinical, and it is safe to presume that if careful records of the cases that do not find their way into hospital were available there would be a noticeable increase in the estimate. Greater frequency has been reported from England and Germany than from various parts of America, and even in the latter country vast differences exist in such reports. Whether these are real or only apparent is not manifest when consideration is had for diagnostic care and ability, the frequency with which exhaustive post-mortem examinations are made, and other circumstances which determine the precise value of hospital records.

Recent observations tend to show only a slight preponderance of the disease in females, and that it is only in the acute form of gastric ulceration that such preponderance is decidedly established, since chronic gastric ulceration is probably and duodenal ulceration is certainly more common in males. The majority of cases occur in the poorer classes whose food is not always as wholesome as it ought to be, though the well-to-do are by no means exempt; and in females the disease has been especially common amongst servants.

The vast majority of cases occur between the ages of fifteen and forty-five. From twenty to thirty is the commonest age in females, and from thirty to forty in males. The disease is comparatively rare after forty-five but is more common before fifteen than is usually believed, Dr. Cutler (1) of Boston, having collected records of some twenty-nine cases of gastric ulcer occurring in children between the ages of thirty hours and fourteen years, whereas Oppenheimer, quoted by Moynihan, (2) collected records of fifteen cases of melaena neonatorum arising from duodenal ulceration.

The true pathogenesis of this disease is still overshadowed by obscurity. Apparently all are agreed that the loss of substance is the direct result of digestive processes acting upon body tissues, the vitality of which has previously been impaired or even lost owing to some cause, the precise nature of which is still undecided. The chief causative theories already advanced may be classified as vascular, nervous and muscular,