

transforms into peptones, a product eminently assimilable. These peptones still possess some of the chemical characters of albuminoids ; they give, for instance, with nitric acid, a yellow precipitate of xanthoproteic acid, but they have lost the property of coagulating under the influence of heat or acids. Besides, when an albuminoid substance is injected into the veins of an animal, it is found again in the urine, but it is not so with peptones, which are absorbed into the economy, and of which no traces are found in urine, a proof that they have been thoroughly assimilated.

So far, feculent and albuminoid compounds alone have undergone the action of digestion, fats are intact. But when once it has been expelled from the stomach, the alimentary bolus, softened, modified, reduced to the state of pulp, meets in the first parts of the small intestines, another juice supplied by a gland called the pancreas. This fluid plays in digestion a considerable role. Its ferment, "the pancreatine," possesses the property of completing the digestive action which began in the buccal and gastric cavities. It modifies not only feculent and albuminoid compounds, which escape the action of saliva and the gastric juice, but it possesses besides the exclusive power of digesting fatty substances. Defresne, who made a careful study of the properties of pancreatic juice, attributes to three distinct ferments the threefold properties I have just mentioned ; *Amylopsine* would have the charge of converting starch into sugar ; *Steapsine* would favour the emulsion of fats ; lastly, *Myapsine* would dissolve albuminoids.

After having undergone the action of pancreatic juice, the aliments start on their way through the small intestines. As they progress, their consistency increases, while in the meantime their mass diminishes, owing to the greater part of them being absorbed by the chyloferous vessels. The excrementitious portion traverses the large intestine to be evacuated *per anum* ; the absorbed portions pass through the mesenteric glands to the thoracic duct, and are finally poured into the left subclavian vein, where they are mixed with the blood. They will hereafter belong to that regenerating fluid, which enters every organ, through the circulation, distributing the nutritive principles to every texture, and becoming the source of every secretion.

Gentlemen, in my quality of physician and hygienist, I do not