

tearing its lateral attachments, and the tear or rent in the mucous membrane is extended at each succeeding stool until the skin is reached and the further advance of the tear is checked only at the muco-cutaneous junction, due to the toughness of the skin.

Nature makes an attempt to heal this fissure when the sphincter muscle is at rest, but at each succeeding stool, the sphincter muscle, on stretching, tears open the wound and nature's attempts at healing are destroyed. This causes a smarting, burning pain at the stool, a feeling of heat about the anus, occasional bleeding after stool, and severe excruciating pain following stool, due to spasmodic contractions of the sphincter muscle catching the ulcer in its grasp and resulting in severe pain (likened by the patient to a "toothache") lasting anywhere from two to twelve hours after stool and sometimes this pain is continuous.

The patient with a fissure usually gives a history of constipation, severe straining at stool, one or two drops of blood noted after stool, pain starting almost immediately after stool, and lasting for four or five hours, this pain being situated within the anus, and radiating from this point down the thigh and upward to the sacro-iliac joint, then suddenly disappearing only to return after the next defecation.

Severe pain lasting for from two to six hours after stool is one of the characteristics and diagnostic signs of fissura ani. This pain after stool is so intense and the suffering so severe at times that the patient is actually afraid to have a passage on account of the fearful pain he anticipates. This constant pain and irritation as well as the irregular action of the bowels and the taking of insufficient food cause the patient to become emaciated and debilitated and to acquire a pale, anxious and careworn look.

The nervous system sympathizes with the local condition and very often we find irritation of the genito-urinary organs. Examination of the rectum by the finger or speculum is very painful.

The tearing of the mucous membrane caused by the forcible