

## THE DIAGNOSIS OF CHRONIC GASTRIC AFFECTIONS.

Read at an Open Meeting of the Kingston Medical and Surgical Society,  
Jan. 25th, 1899.

**G**ENTLEMEN :—At the request of those who have had in hand the arrangements for this meeting, I shall now endeavour to illustrate the various means which we have at our disposal for the differential diagnosis of the more common chronic affections of the stomach, gastritis, ulcer, cancer. I am sure that every one of us has had under our care many patients suffering from one or other of the diseased conditions to which I am about to invite your attention ; and I am equally confident that no class of cases has given us more difficulty in making a diagnosis which perfectly satisfied ourselves. These chronic diseases of the stomach are usually insidious in their onset, and as a consequence, the sufferers do not seek our aid until such progress in the disease has been made as will perhaps render our diagnosis more easy, but at the same time lessens our hope of successful treatment and increases the gravity of our prognosis. In the interest of the patient and for the sake of our reputation the earlier a diagnosis is made the better. It is then in the earliest stages of most of these affections that we can confidently promise relief and that in only one of them that we cannot assure our patients of ultimate and permanent cure. An early and accurate diagnosis is therefore of the utmost importance in these cases.

Upon what data shall we make our diagnosis ? Upon the following :—

- I. The Subjective Symptoms.
- II. The Physical Signs.
- III. The Examination of the Stomach Contents.

**I. THE SUBJECTIVE SYMPTOMS.**—There are certain symptoms which are more or less common to all of the chronic gastric disorders, and yet those symptoms vary to a greater or less extent according to the nature of the affection from which the patient is suffering, and by noting these variations we are enabled to gain at least an inkling as to which particular disease we have to deal with in any given case. I shall refer very briefly to a few of the more prominent of those common symptoms.