

On questioning her as to the time when it first appeared in her evacuations, she was positive that it was not longer than two or three days prior to her visit to me, and as it disappeared as suddenly a few days subsequently to my visit, its total duration could not have been longer than ten or twelve days. But it is somewhat singular that in the succeeding week it again put in an appearance for two days only, and then disappeared, with no return up to the present time.

During the progress of the diarrhœa Mrs. G. lost weight rapidly, and felt very languid and debilitated, with nearly total loss of appetite; but she gained 5 lbs. in a week after its final disappearance, with a corresponding improvement in her appetite and general health. I may state that she had no great amount of pain at the time, but complained of some uneasiness and tenderness on pressure in the gastric region. The liver and spleen were not found perceptibly enlarged; and the urine was found free from albumen and sugar. I diligently questioned her as to her diet, and she stated that while at no time was she fond of fatty kinds of food, yet, during the period of the fatty discharge, she had an actual distaste and repugnance for all kinds of fat, and lived chiefly on tea and toast. If her statements be true, and I have no reason to doubt them, it would necessarily seem that the quantity of fat discharged was greater in amount than could be accounted for by the food taken. The short duration of the discharge prevented any systematic comparisons being made between the amount of fat consumed in the food and that discharged per rectum. It is unfortunate that this could not have been done, so as, if possible, to discover whether the fat discharged was simply undigested food-fat or an actual secretion at the expense of the general system. This important point has been too much neglected by most observers, and is at the present moment a subject of dispute.

It is not my intention to enter at any length into the different views held as to the sources of fat in the human economy: Whether oleaginous food is alone the source from whence the fat is derived, and which enters the system, unchanged, in the ordinary manner (this view must ignore the mechanical and physio-