

- may have covered many years or been of much shorter duration.
- (3) Those who have heretofore enjoyed the best of health, and whose present illness attacked them unawares, without the slightest previous warning.

The second type of history is by far the most common—the typical clinical condition presented by the long-standing chronic gastric ulcer. Many patients, especially in the later stages of carcinoma in this region, present a typical facial expression very significant of this disease. The presence of this dread malady may indeed be frequently foretold by this typical facial expression. Pallor about the mouth and nose, the face wan and thin, the eye anxious and penetrating in an endeavor to read the opinion of the physician, all combine to give that pinched look its chief characteristics.

The mental attitude as thus depicted in the features is one of hopelessness. The patient is apparently possessed of the idea of impending danger, and is usually resigned to his fate, presenting the appearance of calm dejection. Weight is lost rapidly, a feeling of lassitude and extreme weakness pervades, and anaemia quickly develops. There is often a sickening pain in the region of the epigastrium, or, rather, the feeling of a strange, indescribable distress, which may or may not be directly referable to meals. The fears of the patient, as portrayed by the anxious expression so frequently seen, are well grounded, for in every case when cancer has once developed in the stomach the condition is one of utter hopelessness unless relieved by early surgical intervention. In the absence of such intervention the progress is steadily downward, with seldom any recession in its progress.

The symptoms of gastric carcinoma will very frequently cover many years from the earliest commencement of the precancerous state to the fulmination of the disease, cancer itself. This early history may be conveniently divided into three separate stages. The first stage is marked by a particularly good appetite, the presence of pain from two to four hours after meals, a feeling of excessive acidity, as manifested by an increasing bitterness in the mouth, and finally an occasional belching of gas and sour eructations. These symptoms will disappear entirely, and for some time the patient will enjoy the best of health, and so complete may be the apparent cure he may even entirely forget he has had any stomach disorder at all.

After several such attacks, or perchance a period of quiescence for a longer or shorter period, the second stage is ushered in. It is practically a repetition of the first, only in a more aggravated form. The vigorous appetite so noticeable at the earlier period has somewhat disappeared, the keen relish for food is lost, and the pain, so noticeable