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A CLASSIFICATION OF THE COMMONER DISEASES OF THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM OF INFANTS.

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Many classifications of the commoner diseases of the digestive system in infants have been made. Some of these classifications may seem complete at first sight, leaving little to be desired, but on reading further the definition and discussion of the different classes, there come to our minds many cases which would puzzle us as to which class they should belong. We have felt the need of a simpler classification at the hospital, and one in which each type was well defined, so that each term might call to our mind a definite disorder.

From the commencement of the last hospital year the cases were classified by me as they were discharged, but by the end of the year my own ideas had so changed, what with the result of post-mortem findings and the great increase in the number of patients admitted, that it was necessary to make a complete tabulation of all cases of digestive disturbance and attempt to re-classify them. This paper may then be taken as an interim report and purely clinical in character.

The cases were divided into four groups: entero-colitis, gastrointestinal indigestion, malnutrition and marasmus. The following were briefly the limitations of each group:

In entero-colitis the onset was always acute, the patient being taken suddenly but a few days before admission to the hospital. As a rule there was marked increase in the temperature, except in those few who had been suffering from chronic digestive dis-