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Selections: Medicine.

SOME FORMS OF DYSPEPSIA.*

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GENTLEMEN:—We see during every year at the College Clinique, a considerable number of patients suffering from dyspepsia. In other words, they are patients suffering from a number of unpleasant symptoms, and these symptoms are due to the fact that their food is not properly digested.

In treating these patients, we can sometimes determine which of the viscera concerned in the digestive process is in fault. You know that the digestion and absorption of our food is effected by the physiological action of the stomach, the small and large intestine, and the liver. You will find, in practice, that you can distinguish cases of dyspepsia dependent upon diseased function of the stomach, others due to the condition of the small intestine, others to that of the large intestine, others to that of the liver. Of the pancreas, our knowledge does not enable us to speak.

It is not by any means always, however, that you can make the diagnosis of stomach dyspepsia, intestinal dyspepsia, liver dyspepsia, as the case may be; you will find some patients in whom none of the viscera act normally, and other patients in whom the symptoms do not enable you to locate the disease.

* [Indigestion is so productive of bowel affections during the hot season, that we feel quite warranted to occupy the space required to give Prof. Delafield's novel ideas on the subject to our readers, as being suggestive if they cannot be followed literally.]

After excluding all these cases, however, you will still find many persons in whom only one of the digestive organs is at fault.

Now let us see what are the characteristic symptoms of the different anatomical varieties of dyspepsia, and first, what are the symptoms of dyspepsia dependent on an abnormal state of the stomach.

The symptoms are nausea and vomiting, pain, loss of appetite, eructations of gas and of sour fluid.

The nausea and vomiting follow the ingestion of food, and seem to be directly due to the presence of the food. There may be only slight nausea after each meal, or every meal may be followed by vomiting. Both the nausea and vomiting may follow every meal, or they may select some part of the day—morning, noon, or evening—and only occur after the meal taken at that time. In some patients, such a condition of nausea and vomiting will continue for years. The vomited matters consist only of food, or of food mixed with a sour fluid; of this, the patient may vomit several quarts during each attack.

The pain also follows eating: it varies from a mere feeling of oppression to the most intense agony. The pain, like the vomiting, seems to be due to the presence of food in the stomach, and is usually relieved if the stomach is emptied. The pain is regularly followed by a desire to vomit, and after this is done the pain ceases. A fragment of bread not larger than a chestnut, remaining in the stomach, is sometimes sufficient to keep up the pain and retching for hours, until it is expelled. The appetite is usually small, capricious, and unnatural. The patients