

# ACUTE PANCREATITIS, WITH HEMORRHAGE AND FAT NECROSIS.

BY JOHN CAVEN, B.A., M.D., L.R.C.P. Lond.,  
Professor of Pathology, University of Toronto,

AND

WM. OLDRIGHT, M.A., M.D.,  
Professor of Hygiene, University of Toronto.

So little, comparatively speaking, is generally known, as yet, of the morbid conditions occurring in the pancreas that no excuse seems necessary when recording cases observed.

Amongst recognized diseases of the pancreas, apart from neoplasms, hemorrhage and inflammation are perhaps the most important.

Hemorrhage into the pancreas is, on all hands, admitted to be the cause of death in a series of cases, in some of which the end of life comes suddenly, almost instantly, whilst in others the patient succumbs after an illness of, at longest, a few hours' duration. A satisfactory explanation of the occurrence of pancreatic hemorrhage, unaccompanied by inflammation, has not yet been brought forward. Vascular changes have been spoken of, but not proven; aneurysm, whilst naturally suggesting itself, has not been shown to exist. Fatty changes in the gland itself and a nervous origin have also been suggested.

Pancreatitis may be primary or secondary, the latter variety occurring in the course of pyemia when it is suppurative, or, as the result of a new growth, carcinoma most commonly, or calculus.

Instances of primary pancreatitis are so rare, or, at any rate, so infrequently recognized during life and proven by *post-mortem* examination, that the number of them throws but little obstacle in the path of the student; on the other hand, the paucity of reliable and complete records renders accurate study and classification a matter of considerable difficulty.

The most exhaustive analysis of such cases that has yet been brought before the medical profession is to be found in the monograph on acute pancreatitis, by Dr. Fitz, of Harvard University, being the Middleton-Goldsmith lecture for 1889.

Dr. Fitz, as a result of his investigations, not only of all recorded cases which he has been able to find, but of the relatively large number which he has been fortunate enough to have seen, classifies those showing inflammation under the heads: hemorrhagic pancreatitis, suppurative pancreatitis, and gangrenous pancreatitis. Any one of these forms may be accompanied by fat necrosis, in which disseminated nodules of necrosed fat, varying in size, are to be found scattered through the fatty deposits in the omentum, mesentery, subperitoneal tissue, and around and within the pancreas itself.

Acute pancreatitis is to be described anatomically as consisting in "degenerative changes in the parenchymatous cells, or exudation in the interstitial tissue, or both these factors" (Fitz).