

The most suitable diet is a mixed one containing plenty of proteid, not too scanty, so that abundant quantity of bile acids is produced, and so that the flow of bile may be stimulated. Abundance of fluid should be taken, for while water in excess does not stimulate the flow of bile, too little water causes thickening of the bile.

Having diagnosed the presence of gall stones, can we hope to bring these away by medicinal means? Only if the stone is small enough in calibre to pass through the ducts. I think, with our present knowledge, we must confess to having no remedy by which we can hope to bring about a solution of the stones within the bile passages. Olive oil and almond oil were at one time, and even yet are, advocated with this object in view; it is claimed as well that the oil has a cholagogue action. This is, however, not correct. I have given the oil treatment a fair trial on a number of cases, but have had no success with it. Durande's remedy, which consists of three parts of ether and two of turpentine, was claimed to be a solvent, especially as the ether and turpentine were found to be excreted in part by the bile; but the quantities so excreted are so small that they could not possibly exert any action on the stones. Chloroform and glycerine have been recommended, but I think must be regarded as useless. A course of alkaline saline mineral waters, such as Carlsbad or Vichy, undoubtedly brings about the expulsion of gall stones in many cases. The water of Carlsbad is both purgative and cholagogue, and this tends to relax the walls of the bile ducts and at the same time increase the flow of bile. No doubt the successful management of these cases, at such places as Carlsbad, is largely contributed to by reason of the attention given to the diet and exercises (factors in reducing catarrhal conditions and in promoting flow of bile). The Carlsbad physicians recommend the taking of two tumblerfuls of Carlsbad water in the morning before breakfast, at intervals of fifteen minutes, warmed to a temperature of 150° F., and one in the evening at bed time taken cold. This treatment can, of course, be carried out anywhere, provided the patient will lend himself to it, and it is this method of treatment that has given me the best results. The Carlsbad water can be obtained here, or the Carlsbad salts may be used. In using the salts I have found it necessary usually to have the patient take a heaping teaspoonful in a tumblerful of warm water in the morning and again at night, in order to bring about the desired effect on the bowels. In addition to this I would, of course, enforce the directions as to exercise and diet. Carlsbad salts as you know consists of sodium sulphate, sodium bicarbonate and sodium chloride. I do not know that the natural salts have any advantage over those artificially prepared.