INaugural dissertation

on

Indigestion

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by

John O. Johnson

of

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To
W. E. Bowling, M.D.
and
A. H. Buchanan, M.D.
This
dissertation is most
respectfully
inscribed
by the
author
Indiscution
This is a subject of great interest
and one of the most common of all
diseases. and there is reason to believe
that it often occurs without
being recognized, and frequently
never attracting serious attention.
It occurs among all ages, classes, and
conditions of life. Though some persons
are more subject to it than others
yet none are entirely exempt from
it. It is mostly confined to those who
live a sedentary life. Women are more
subject to it than men, on account
of their confinement. and it is to
them, and not only them. what
we will be called to administer medicine.
which if properly done may benefit from
their truth. No kind of disease.
and restore them any way to health. This should fill our bosom with interest to know that a female, subjected of refined sensibility, are what happens in some degree at least depends on personal charm. It is particularly mortifying to them to have the beauty of youth. May be84 from their cheeks. I do not consider this a fatal disease. It will present itself to us in various forms and stages. We will frequently be called to see patients that are laboring under this disease when it will be a difficult matter to make out a correct diagnosis. As a simple derangement of the biliary apparatus will cause a derangement of the digestive organs, and we may unmistakably see this for days of seasia. It is usually this case that
we are not called in to see patients subject to this disease until it has run its course. and when called in even at that late hour, we will generally find the patient under the treatment of some old lady, or some other good friend that knows about as much about the treatment, it is a disease that every body pretends to know every thing about, and we will find doctors a plenty to treat it.

the symptoms

in the advanced stage of this disease there is a number of symptoms to which the physician's attention is directed indicative of deranged health. such as languor, uneasiness in the region of the stomach, a sense of weight especially after eating. if the
Patient eats too much. And there is also a heavy feeling in that region. If he or she as case away be is about to go too long without taking nourishment. And there is indisposition to active exercise. Muscular weakness. Paleness or pallorness of the complexion. And frequently diminished appetite. But this is not a general thing. It is often the case that the patients appetite is greater than it is at any other time. And will frequently eat too much. They will often eat with such rapidity that they are not conscious of the task which they are imposing on their stomach. And in this way the patient often render them self very uncomfortable by eating a few more tisputs more than is necessary.
for dry nourishment of the system and they will frequently say to you after they have eaten that they have taken too much. The patient will throw up his food by vomiting, in eructation, which will sometimes excoriate the mouth and face. The eructation is generally of a sour, acid taste. The mouth is clammy and the tongue moist or lisp, especially in the morning and the patient finds his mouth dry when rising from the bed. and he is generally thirsty, especially after eating and will drink large quantities of water at that time, which is very injurious to him. The mind, if the disease continues, partakes of this languid state. And the patient will often find it
Difficult at Times. To command his attention. He is not capable of his usual mental efforts. He is restless at night, and will frequently find it very difficult to sleep. And if the patient passes a night in sleep, he will frequently be disturbed by foreboding dreams, and sometimes by fits of night mare. If the disease continues the stomach and bowels become more deranged and less capable of performing their functions. And the alpin discharge begins to deviate from a healthy type, and the patient frequently has diarrhea. They sometime contain but very little bile, and at other times they look as if the liver was being too much. It is irregular in its action. The discharges are often very dark.
and sometimes it has a greenish hue and at others quite white, and small particles of undigested food will fall off by the stools, and with mucous discharges streaked with blood, which is very annoying to the patient. The patient generally feels a bearing down when called to evacuate and often leaves a sense of uneasiness as though they had not completely evacuated and there is a felt to be a sense of oppression in that region. The epigastrium become very tender, sometimes amounting to pain. The appetite is much impaired. The tongue slightly furred near the root. The stool is light coloured for a want of a due action of the liver. The mind is depressed and...
wandering, and it is a difficult matter to keep it on any one thing, and it is difficult to view every thing in a state of gloom. The patient will often complain of sounds in the region of the stomach. It sometimes becomes so very tender that he cannot bear his clothes to press against that part. The patient generally lies on his back with his head and shoulders elevated. The pulse is hard and quick, but will vary much in this disease. It is seldom in the case that you will find different patients presenting the same symptoms. The urine is high coloured on account of the acid which it contains, and is very scanty at times, but this is not always the case. For some times there is a very
Copious flow which is caused by a failure in the action of the skin. The skin and feedings are for the purpose of separating impurities from the blood; and a failure of me to act its part will cause an over action in the other. The sweat of the cold and clammy. The hands and feet are often cold, and the patient will complain of rigor, he will find it a very difficult matter to keep warm especially in the cold seasons of the year, in account of the unedited condition of the system. The organs being no longer in a proper state for dry nourishment. The body becomes weak and the strength greatly depressed so much so, that the patient cannot take exercise without feeling very much fatigued. Another very
annoying symptom to the patient. and one that we can rely on to some degree is a burning sensation in the region of the stomach (hypogastrium), commonly called heart burn. it will come at intervals, and the patient will spit large mouthfuls of slimy saliva and will haw large quantities of phlegm.

The Cause

In considering the causes of this disease we will first notice the manner of preparing the food for digestion. the food introduced into the mouth is subjected to mastication, and this is an operation of great importance and should be closely attended to which if neglected will prove injurious to the stomach. the complexly
Masticated food is of great consequence and if imperfectly done the subsequent process which it undergoes will be equally bad. This is perhaps one of the most frequent causes of dyspepsia. The food should be well masticated and well mixed with the juice of the mouth. For the saliva is an important constituent in the digestion of food and it cannot be well digested without it. The quantity of food required for the support of the body varies in different persons. The appetite is the only sure standard by which we are governed and this should be attended to. To eat when we are hungry is common to all but we should not always eat as long as our stomach will hold any. Too much
food taken in the stomach often causes the patient to suffer much uneasiness in that region. The stomach, not being able to act upon it, will often leave a large quantity of undigested, and the patient will frequently have violent attacks of a form of the stomach's arising from the presence of indigested food. The feeling of hunger does not always depend on the emptiness of the stomach, for we may eat plenty and yet feel like eating more and when we have eaten just what is required for the nourishment of the body, more food is not only useless but injurious. we can scotter ourselves to eating large quantities until we are not satisfied with just what would be required for our nourishment.
Thus it is that persons so often complain of uneasiness in the region of the stomach. It is not the quantity of food every time that causes pain, but the quantity, and when the stomach is overloaded and it were it is not able to act on it and consequently it becomes as a foreign body, and often it is evacuated without the direct action of the stomach on it. Every person knows that a few mouthfuls of something will put a stop to hunger. The gastric juice of the stomach has combined with the food. Thus we see that little food will do as well as large quantities, and the patient will feel much better after taking his meal. If he will be prudent in
this manner of eating. I do not believe the sense of hunger is due as much to the action of the gastric juice upon the cells of the stomach as some suppose, like the saliva it is secreted in the stomach only when it is excited by some stimulating kind of food or such food as is necessary for the stomach. There have been various experiments made to prove this the contrary. Some experimenters have pretended to have put a stop to hunger by exciting vomiting upon the supposition that the stomach was freed of its irritating matter.

It is thought by Dr. Beaumont that the retention of the bile and the secretion of fluid is the proximate cause of hunger.

And if this be a correct idea in regard
To the cause of hunger, awaiting may put a stop. To hunger by exciting the palate
To throw off their load.
As our subject does not come under this
head, and feeling incapable of writing
anything new on this subject, I will
leave it for the more learned to pursue
on.
There are various other causes which deserve
our attention, such as the use of
Tobacco. This article so much used in
its various ways, has a very deleterious
effect upon the system, and although
a very active poison, yet such is the
fascinating influence of this weed.
That mankind will resort to it in
different ways to gain its poisonous
effect. The severe Dyspeptic symptoms
and various other diseases are caused by
The use of this noxious weed.

The use of alcoholic drinks, in their various forms, is injurious. It acts not only on the stomach, but also on the cerebral organ, and any thing that will have a tendency to disturb the brain will help to develop this disease. The use of alcoholic liquors cannot satisfy any thing that is essential to the nutrition of the system. The action of alcohol upon the body is essentially that of a stimulus increasing for a time like all others. The action of the nervous system exciting the stomach to too great action so that a serious effect may often be produced by its use.

The use of this kind of drinks is followed by depression of power, so nothing in the end is gained by the use of them.
A healthy stomach needs no stimulant and every time it is administered. The stomach is injured that much. I have no doubt but Dyspepsia has been the result of dran drinking. There are some persons that are given to inebriation, and seem to enjoy good health, but if continued their digestive organs will soon take on the languid state.

Meat, especially fat meats are oppressive to the Dyspeptic stomach, and should be avoided. The use of all oily articles of food are decidedly injurious to the dyspeptic stomach. And especially in the latter part of the day at dinner, or if the patient is living a sedentary life it will be injurious at any time. Confinement is a very good cure by its self. Thus it is that you see so many of our professional
men subject to dyspepsia. The system becomes worn out by the confinement and error of diet.

A certain amount of exercise is required for all persons and for different parts of the body, and a failure on the part of the patient to attend to this. The seed of the disease will germinate and spread their influence through different parts of the system, we may feel assured that there is some great cause for this deranged state of health. For the Creator in his wisdom formed man a perfect being, and so formed the frame that every part of the body would work harmoniously with each other, and when it is out of order there must be some cause for it. And this disorder is often caused by indulging too freely
The gratification of the appetite, which we have so often spoken of in the primary part of the cause, among the articles of indigestible food, old butter is one of difficult digestion. All oily substances are injurious to the dyspeptic stomach.

Fish meat are more difficult to digest than when baked. All kinds of gross meats should be avoided if the patient finds that it does not agree with his stomach.

But very little fluid is required in the digestion of food, and it is very injurious to drink much, especially after eating which too often persons are very apt to do. They will drink large quantities of water, and will soon have to drink more and more.
as the irritating matter is increased again it is by drinking like it is by eating. The patient may drink too fast when if he would drink slower he would not want half the quantity. Tea and Coffee are injurious to the dyspeptic patient and should be avoided. If drank at supper will prevent the patient from sleep and any thing that will act so directly on the nervous system is injurious. The eating and drinking very warm article of food have done much in advancing this disease. Persons will often eat hot bread and take a drink of cold water immediately afterwards. This is injurious to the stomach. The patient should not eat or drink any articles of food above or below the temperature of
The stomach. And highly seasoned articles of food are injurious. Such as pepper, spices, and all kinds of stimulating food. The use of alkaline substances such as soda is injurious to the stomach.

Saccharine substances are unhealthy to the dyspeptic person. It often causes Pepsitis, and sometimes Cardial gas. The patient will often suffer great pain from the use of such articles of food, which is a sense of constriction and pain at the pit of the stomach. They experience more pain when they attempt to assume an erect posture and will go vomiting a bowl and will often discharge by eructation large quantities of a thin watery fluid which has generally un
acid tart. Cabbage are of very
difficult to digest. Cucumbers are
poisons to the Dyspeptic stomach.
Fruits of all kinds are injurious to
the patient. unless perfectly ripe.
and often hurtful to them,
The patient should abstain from
the use of any thing that will have
a tendency to call off the energies
of the stomach.
The Malarial fevers. such as common
intermittent fever will help to
develop. This disease especially if it
is allowed to run too long without
being checked.

Treatment

In relation to the Treatment of Indigestion
we will find it a point of great interest.
and one which must engage an early attention.
various plans of treatment have been employed, but all with such doubtful success that we cannot rely on any one remedy. For a remedy that would be beneficial in one case would prove injurious in another, so we cannot rely on any one remedy. But we must be governed by the symptoms as they present themselves to us, and by them alone will we be able to treat this disease. The patient should be very careful about his diet for this I consider the whole of the treatment based on. It is generally the cause and thus far it should be removed. The patient should avoid the use of all articles of food that are of difficult digestion. The patient generally knows best
what kind of food agrees with him best, and such as seems to be of difficult digestion they should abstain from the use of, and this is a very difficult matter with some.

These articles of food that are of a difficult digestion such as hard unripe fruit, and should avoid all kinds of culinary vegetation. Sickly and preserves of any kind are injurious. All sweetening such as sugar, molasses. The patient will often suffer greatly from the use of such articles of food. Some persons cannot bear any kind of food that is of gelatinous character, such as bacon. All smoked meats are injurious to most dyspeptic stomachs.
Fresh meats are generally of difficult digestion such as pork. All stimulating articles should be disposed of, such as pepper, coffee, those articles of food that are adapted to most stomachers, some of which are of a vegetable origin. Wheat bread, which should always be prepared in the lightest way. Crackers are very easily digested. Well boiled rice is good food for the diabetic stomach. Sometimes well prepared soft Irish potatoes if mealy are good. Very ripe fruit if prudently eaten are not apt to hurt the patient, but if hard the patient will be better off with and them. The crust of corn bread and sauce...
Cream are good in most cases, but it should be well masticated. The allowable meats are such as beef and venison, mutton, oysters. Wild meats are preferred to domestic ones. These articles of food are innocent if properly used, soft boiled eggs are good. The yolk should be raw. The patient should attend to personal cleanliness, such as cold bath. They should take a bath every day. Too frequent baths especially the warm bath is injurious if the patient is not able to stand the cold bath. They may take a bath in tepid water, every day. This is troublesome to the patient, and unpleasant in the cold season of the year, but nevertheless it should
be attended to immediately after
the bath. The patient should rub
the surface with a coarse towel.

Exercise. This the patient should
attend promptly to, such as riding
horse back, or in carriages. They
should walk often, and at certain
times in the day, and be careful that
they do not take too much exercise
at a time. They should not take
too much exercise just before or
after eating, for the stomach will
partake of the languid state of
the system. The patient will
find railroad traveling very refres-
hing to him. It possesses many
advantages over the common mode of
traveling. The velocity with which
the train moves is very refreshing
To weak and nervous patients, riding on steam boats is also a pleasant mode of conveyance. The beautiful scenery on the banks of the river, and the easy gliding motion of the vessel, all will tend to draw the mind of the person off from his worldly affairs, and invigorate the nervous system.

Medical Treatment.

In the medical treatment of this disease we should first learn the condition of the stomach and bowels, and if we find them loaded it is necessary for us to relieve them in some degree at least of its load, and to do this we generally find it advisable to commence the treatment with an emetic, and then to put the...
patient on some proper diet to prevent the necessity of repeating my emetic. For continual vomiting is injurious, and if there is pain in the stomach after the use of the emetic, as if an acid matter were present. The alkalines may be used, magnesia, lime water, or prepared chalk. The patient may take a soda powder two or three times a day in water. This will correct the sourness of the stomach, and if the bowels once or twice a day, and if pain from the present of wind in the stomach, a dose of phlegoric, and if a cold surface and a defused state. Carbonate of ammonia. The best and if the bowels are inactive, a dose of oil will answer, and when diarrhea
prevails, which is very common in this disease. The use of prepared chalk will prove beneficial. If there is reason to think diarrhea is caused by the irritating matter of the bowels, when the derangement of the bowels are continued after the cause is removed. The administration of milkage of gum arabic, with small doses of opium, and if this be not sufficient to check it, and the discharges are of a mucous character, streaked with blood, and small particles of undigested food, is evacuated. The patient may take a pill composed of nitrate of silver grs. morphia grs. and enough of gentian. To make a pill, given three times a day.
The use of strong medicines should be avoided as much as possible. After the stomach is fully prepared, the use of Tonics will prove beneficial. They will give tone to the stomach and excite a healthy action.

Tonics will invigorate the system, and will invigorate the digestive organs. They will give rise to more and healthier secretion of Chyle. And by bringing on a more healthy action of these parts, a similar action is propagated to the whole system.