

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

Indigestion

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BY

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To
Professors
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and
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This
dissertation is most
respectfully
inscribed
by the
author

Indigestion

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, sexes, and conditions of life. though some persons are more subject to it than others yet some 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, that we will be called to administer medicine, which if properly done may break from their check the hand of disease.

and restore them any more to health.
This should fill our bosom with interest
to know that a female possessed of
refined sensibility and whose happiness in
some degree at least depends on personal
charms. it is peculiarly mortifying to
them to have the beauty of youth
crushed 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 labouring under
this disease when it will be a difficult
matter to make out a correct diagnosis.
as a simple derangement of the biliary
function will cause a derangement
of the digestive organs. and we may
mistake this for dyspepsia.
It is usually the 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 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 may be is about to go too long without taking nourishment. And there is indisposition to active exercise. Muscular weakness. paleness. or sallowness of the complexion. And frequently diminished appetite. but this is not a general thing. It is often the case that the patient's appetite is keener 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 the stomach. And in this way the patient often renders them self very unpleasant by eating a few mouthfuls more than is necessary.

for day 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, or Eructation, which
will sometimes excoriate the mouth
and fauces. The eructation is generally
of a sour, acid taste. The mouth is
clammy, and the tongue more or less
furred, 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 con-
tinues, 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
perplexing dreams. and sometimes by
fits of night sweats. If the disease
continues the stomach, and bowels, become
more deranged, and less capable of perform-
ing their functions. And the alvine
discharges begin to deviate from a
healthy type, and the patient frequen-
tly has Diarrhea. They sometimes
contain but very little bile, and at
other times they look as if the Liver,
was doing too much, it is irregular in
its action. The discharges are often very dark

and sometimes it has a greenish hue
and at other quite white. and small
particles of undigested food will
pass 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 apt to be
a sense of oppression in that region.
The Epigastrium becomes 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 disposed to view every thing in
a state of gloom. The patient will
often complain of soreness 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 shoul-
ders elevated. The pulse is hard and
quick. but will vary much in this
disease. It is seldom 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 sometimes there is a very

Copious flow which is caused by a failure in the action of the skin. The skin and kidneys are for the purpose of separating impurities from the blood, and a failure of one to act its part will cause an over action in the other. The sweat often cold and clammy. The hands and feet are often cold, and the patient will complain of rigors. He will find it a very difficult matter to keep warm especially in the cold seasons of the year, on account of the emaciated condition of the system. The organs being no longer in a proper state for due nourishment. The body becomes weak, and the strength greatly depressed, so much so, that the patient can not 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 (pyrosis) commonly
called heart burn. it will come at
intervals and the patient will spit
large mouthfuls of slimy saliva.
and will hawk up large quantities
of phlegm.

Its causes

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 injuri-
ous to the stomach. The completely

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 cause of Dyspepsia. The food should be well masticated, and well mixed with the juices 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 stomachs will hold any. Too much

food taken in the stomach often causes the patient to suffer much uneasiness in that region. as the stomach not being able to act upon it, will often leave a large quantity of it indigested, and the patient will frequently have violent attacks of spasms of the stomach 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 a 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 accustom ourselves to eating large quantities until we are not satisfied with just what would be required for due nourishment,

thus it is that persons so often complain of uneasiness in the region of the stomach. It is not the quality of food every time that causes pain, but the quantity, and when the stomach is over-lodged, as 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 coats of the stomach as some sur-
pose. like the saliva it is forced in
to the stomach only when it is excited
by some stimulating kind of food. or
such food as is necessary for the stom-
ach. 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.
66 it is thought by Dr. Beaumont
that the distention of the follicles
with the secreted fluid is the proxim-
ate cause of hunger. 33

And if this be a correct idea in regard

To the cause of hunger. vomiting may put
a stop to hunger by exciting the follicles
to throw off their load.

As our subject does not come under this
head. and feeling incapable of writing
any thing new on the subject. I will
leave it for the more learned to theo-
rize 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 supply 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 dram drinking. There are some persons that are given to imbibition, and seem to enjoy good health, but if continued their digestive organs will soon take on the languid state.

The fat meats are appropriate to the Dyspeptic stomachs, and should be avoided. The use of all oily articles of food are decidedly injurious to the dyspeptic stomachs. And especially in the latter part of the day at supper, or if the patient is living a sedentary life it will be injurious at any time. Confinement is a very good cause, by its self. Thus it is that you see so many of our professional

men subject to Dyspepsia: The syst
em becomes warm by the confine
ment, 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 diff-
erent 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 harmonious 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.
Fried meats. are more difficult to digest
than when boiled. 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 dyspep-
tic persons are very apt to do. They
will drink large quantities of water.
and will soon have to drink more & soon

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 drunk 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 articles 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 kind 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 Pyrosis, and sometimes Cardialgia.

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 the erect posture, and they will go nursing a bout, and will often discharge by eructation large quantities of a thin watery fluid, which, has generally and

acid. Tart. Cabbage are of very
difficult to digest. Cucumbers are
poisonous to the Dyspeptic Stomach.
Fruits of all kinds, are injurious to
the patient, unless perfectly ripe,
and often hurtful then,

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.

Those articles of food that are of a
difficult digestion such as hard
unripe fruit, and should avoid
all kinds of culinary vegetation.
Pickles. 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 bare any kind of food.
That is of Oliginous character. such
as Bacon. all smoked meats are inju-
rious to most Dyspeptic stomachs.

fresh meats. are generally of difficult digestion such as Pork.

All stimulating articles should be disposed of. such as Pepper. Opium, These articles of food. That are adapted to most stomachs. 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 dyspeptic stomach. Tomatoes. well prepared suit most stomachs. 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 without them.

The crust of corn bread. and sweet

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.

The too frequent bath 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 Thus 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 re-
freshing 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 the 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 alkalins, 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 presence of wind in the stomach, a dose of Purgative, and if a cold surface, and a depressed state, Carbonate of ammonia. The best and if the bowels are inactive, a dose of oil, will answer, and when diarrhoea

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 mucil-
age 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 par-
ticles of undigested food. is evacuated
the patient may take a pill. com-
posed of nitrate of silver gr $\frac{1}{2}$. morphia
gr $\frac{1}{2}$. 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.

Tonic Medicines will impart vigor and tone to the system, and will invigorate the digestive power by giving tone to the digestive organs, and there by 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,