

## ON BEING "OUT OF ORDER."

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



IT is some time now since my readers and I have had a quiet and friendly chat about indigestion—several years, I believe. Well, the lapse of time will make what I have now to say seem all the fresher, for I do not remember what I have written before on the subject, and I dare say you too have forgotten.

"Can you give me a cure for biliousness, doctor?" an individual said to me the other day.

I suppose he expected I would reply, "Oh, yes; here you are," write a prescription in my note-book, tear out the leaf, and thrust it into his hand. But I neither did nor said anything of the sort. My answer was somewhat as follows:—

"My dear sir, biliousness depends on one or more of a dozen different causes, and the cause in your case I must find out before it is possible for me to do you an atom of good or write a single prescription."

And so it is with dyspepsia, reader. You cannot go to a doctor and order cures just as you order a new coat from your tailor. The physician must probe and probe until he makes himself acquainted with the cause of disturbance; then out will come his note-book quickly enough, and if you follow his advice and take his medicine, in nine cases out of ten you will find yourself a new being in less than a month.

Now, it cannot be said that in the columns of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE we are much in the habit of recommending self-doctoring. On the contrary, we as a rule condemn the practice, and invariably advise our readers to consult the family physician in all cases of illness. But our well-known MAGAZINE is often to be found in places from which doctors are very far away indeed: on board ships at sea, for instance, where no surgeon is carried, in distant lands, in the backwoods of Canada, Australia, and Africa itself, in China, Java, and, to come nearer home, in the outlying and wilder districts of our own country.

In prescribing, there are two things we endeavour to keep in mind: namely, to have the medicines we recommend simple and safe, and to make sure they will do good.

A somewhat curious and gratifying incident occurred to me some little time ago while touring. I had entered a druggist's shop to make some little purchase, when I found the proprietor strongly recommending some new nostrum to a gentleman. "No," was the sturdy reply. "I've stuck by 'Cassell's Family Doctor' for ten long years, and mean to for many a year to come."

Well, concerning the causes of indigestion, the sufferer himself must find those out, but I beg to

assure him that if he resolves to remove them, and abides by that resolution, he has made one giant stride towards the recovery of his health.

Ill-health from indigestion creeps on most insidiously. From day to day, or even from week to week, you can hardly tell any difference in your state, but you can from month to month. You find after a time that you are not exactly what you used to be. Probably you are not forty years of age, and still you feel getting old, as it were. You have less ambition, less ability to do hard work, whether mental or bodily; you feel half inclined "to let things slide," as the saying is. The world and its ways and works have not the same interest for you as in the days of yore—perhaps only six months ago. There seems to be a weight on your brain, a load on your mind, and as likely as not a weight and load at the pit of the stomach also. You are drowsy when you should not be, and when you ought to go off to sleep the probability is you cannot. You may be nervous and fidgety, too, worrying about business matters, afraid of evil happening to you, spiritless in your labour, easily put out about trifles, irritable without cause, and unable to obtain sufficient rest at night, awakening in the morning only half-refreshed to begin the battle of life again, although you feel yourself to be only half-armed for the combat.

In addition to these disagreeablenesses, you may suffer from constipation, from flatulence, and from occasional headaches.

One thing which all dyspeptics should bear in mind is this: without strong, healthy, wholesome blood in their veins they cannot be either well or happy, and it is from the *food* we eat that blood is made. About the most that medicine can do for you is to regulate the bowels and secretions, increase the appetite, and supply any constituent that may be absent from the blood, such as iron, &c.

I have but mentioned a few of the symptoms of indigestion of a chronic character. Unhappily, many of my readers are but too well acquainted with others, so I need not name them. The *causes* of this indigestion are important to know, and these I must but skim lightly over. Over-eating is *the* most fruitful source of the dreadful mischief. Young growing people need substantial diet to build up their frames; hard out-door workers require good and abundant food; middle-aged people who do not work should eat most sparingly, and of a diet not too much mixed; the old need still less to sustain the system.

Over-eating in some makes fat. This weakens and wearies the muscles, and really attenuates them; and, worse than all, it interferes with the action of the heart, and often induces a suddenly fatal issue. In others over-eating produces a constant nervous fever, and though no fat is formed, the person loses actual flesh, and that which he has is flabby and poor. The abuse

of stimulants is another cause of the complaint ; and remember, when I say "stimulants," I include rich sauces and peppers, tea, coffee, and cocoa. Tobacco counts its victims on its finger-ends, and it is a fiend with a thousand fingers.

Drinking fluid *with* instead of after meals is injurious. An injudicious mixture of diet, indigestible food, badly-timed meals, want of exercise, want of proper ablution and the bath, sleeping in badly-ventilated rooms, hard work, worry, anxiety, want of sleep : all these are liable to induce the ailment ; and once begun, it has a terribly disagreeable tendency to go on to the bitter end. It is for all the world like a ball or piece of rock started down-hill. The farther it goes the worse it gets, and the greater difficulty there is in stopping it, and if it is not stopped it is dashed to pieces at the foot.

Now for my remedies. To begin with, I do *not* wish you to look upon yourself as an invalid. Because if you do, you will become nervous, and things will become worse. There are no bounds to the imagination of a nervous invalid. A patient of mine came to me the other day with a pimple on the side of his nose.

"Tell me the truth now, doctor," he said, "that I may be prepared. This"—he referred to the pimple—"is the beginning of the end, is it not?"

Do not look upon yourself as an invalid, but resolve to live by rule, all the same. If you are a society man, better keep out of it for a few months. Go and travel, or tramp, or camp, or anything to keep you away from

the demoralising vice of over-eating. I am *not* using too strong language, for over-eating is quite as dangerous as over-drinking ; but woe is me, or woe is *he*, if the two should go together !

Well, you have, let us hope, regulated and reduced your diet, then as accessories you have pleasant exercise, fresh air, the matutinal tub, rising betimes, ventilation of your bedroom, and good sleep procured naturally.

If you feel really very dyspeptic, weak, and poorly, go to a hydropathic establishment, where you will have your diet regulated for you, and come back a new man. But not to begin old ways : you may re-enter society, but live abstemiously at table, and if you do so you will feel so full of life and spirit that you will think the tide of time is being rolled back, and you are getting young again.

If you do not go into society, but live at home, you will be able more easily to regulate your diet, both as to quantity, change, and time. Do not fast very long. Do not go to bed hungry. Do not eat *after* exertion : I mean when tired. Do not eat immediately before exertion : as, for instance, before going out for a spin on your cycle. Take no food at all if not hungry, and be regular with your meal-hours. Never eat tough meat. Take tea, coffee, and cocoa in moderation, and never any meat with it ; an egg at most. Take bread and butter or toast with these beverages. Do not drink fluid till you have eaten. Never touch alcohol in any form unless your doctor bids you.

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## ENGLAND'S TREASURE-ISLAND IN THE WEST.

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OLD BASTION—FORMERLY BELONGING TO THE HUDSON BAY COMPANY.

IT is nearly three hundred years since an English merchant at Venice met Juan de Fuca, an old Greek pilot, who had been in the service of Spain, and who, if his story were true, had done great things for his employers ; for he said that, after the scare given to the Spaniards by the appearance of Francis Drake in the

northward, to see whether any North-West Passage from the Atlantic did really exist, and, if so, what measures could be taken to prevent the English from coming through it. He said, further, that in the latitude of  $47^{\circ}$  he had found the entrance to such a passage, and sailed in it for many days, describing the strait, and giving reasons for his certainty that it would be found to reach from one ocean to the other. Such a passage, corresponding to the Strait of Magellan at the other end of the Western Continent, was exactly what the English of that day were constantly hoping, though repeatedly failing, to find ; and Lock, the English merchant, lost no time in laying Juan's offer to show them the way before Sir Walter Raleigh and other leading spirits of that adventurous age. But whether it was that they thought the old pilot's undertaking to make the whole passage in thirty days a little too confident, as undoubtedly it was, or for some other reason, his services were not accepted by the English ; and, while Juan died in obscurity, his story met the fate of many better stories, and was disbelieved long before it had been disproved, just as Baffin's discovery of Baffin's Bay was for two centuries regarded by every one as a fiction merely

Pacific, he had sailed on an expedition past California and up the western coasts of America to the