We hear wonderful things in medicine nowadays.

But yesterday I heard a man make a speech, in which he said that "it was impossible for any one who ate flesh to arrive at the full use of his faculties; he must ever remain stunted in growth, deficient in intellect and incapable of bearing hardships.

If a man were only a vegetarian, look what he might be!"

Yes. Look and see—a man making the statement that I have given above, trying to instil into us—we who pride ourselves on being the greatest nation in the world (as we are likewise among the greatest flesh-eaters), that it is impossible for us to arrive at the full use of our intellects unless we follow his example. And he be like him—never! Never was there a stronger argument against vegetarianism than the statement that we have just heard.

We hear the same on all sides. The possessor of one "crotchet" is just as illogical as his opponent. But what is going to be the outcome of all these furious battles of theory? Well, if I am not very much mistaken, its influence will be nothing. We see for ourselves that he who upholds one theory is just as illogical and impossible as his most formidable adversary. No compromise can ever be arrived at in a case of this kind.

The partisans of various faiths who uphold minor doctrines agree on one point only, that is, they are all medicine demagogues. The validity of their arguments! Poor medicine, it has a hard task to perform to throw the weight of its teaching into two diametrically opposed propositions! I could never see how medicine could favour any violent measure, it certainly has never done so in my time.

One of the most extraordinary ideas ever held was that a person was responsible for the diseases with which he is afflicted. This doctrine is as false as it is inexact, even, that it is not a common cause, but I do say that it is not the chief cause. I have been told that everybody overeats. Great authorities have said that such is the case. Everybody does not suffer from indigestion, so that overeating cannot be the chief cause of indigestion, if it be true that everyone overeats.

We do not go to medicine to dictate to us how much we should eat. We are all en- dorved with an intelligence and with a special appetite which tells us how much to eat, and I feel confident that nature is the best guide. Of course you can disobey Nature and eat more than you require but do you not disobey your doctor? I am afraid that most of you do.

Indigestion does undoubtedly arise from indigestion in diet as regards the quantity eaten, but very much more from the quality of the food and the way it is eaten.

Some people cannot digest certain articles of food, and these they rightly avoid. In certain individuals the slightest indiscretion produces great discomfort, with others the stomach will stand great abuse without retaliating. Thus we speak of strong or weak stomachs.

Indigestion is a disease that affects any number of varieties, and contrary to what is usual in such cases, the majority of these classifications are based upon sound principles. But of all the dyspepsias which dyspepsia has been classified none do I like better than the following division into three main groups: "irritable," "acids," "nervous."" There are many kinds of dyspepsia that lie on the borderline between two or all of these classes; but, as a rough classification I have found it exceedingly useful. It was the first I learnt, it is the simplest and I have found it the most convenient.

Let us talk about irritable dyspepsia first. This, as its name tells you, is due to irritation of the stomach. We have all heard of this condition and most of us have suffered from it. It is a very common complaint in England. Both sexes and all ages suffer from it though perhaps not to the same extent. Does it occur in infancy? most certainly it does. Let us go to the children's department and see for ourselves.

As we pass the patients we see that the majority of them are very young children, some merely babies, all accompanied by their mothers or other relatives. We go into the consulting-room and ring the bell. A woman appears with an infant of eight months' old in her arms. Immediately she enters the room her child is sick. The poor child has been sick already four times to-day and has been ill for a fortnight. She is quite wasted. Her poor little limbs are nothing but skin and bone, and her face wears that singular look, like a very ancient man, that is so constantly present in ill-fed children. We hear from the mother, as indeed we can see for ourselves, that when the child is sick she brings up large curds of milk.

We know at once what is the cause of this child's illness—the feeding. The curds of milk tell us this plainly. Wrong feeding—it is this that causes all the gastric troubles of infants and most of those of adults—but more of that later on, let us return to the case before us.

We ask the mother how she feeds the child. She tells us how she feeds it. We ask her what she puts into the bottle. She answers "cow's milk," and this is what we expected. We then ask "do you use pure cow's milk?" She answers "yes." Anything else?"

"No." "Do you give the child any other food?" "Now and then a biscuit." The next question one feels inclined to ask is "have you any notion how to feed an infant?"

And if she told the truth she would answer emphatically, "No; I have no idea how to feed a child." And so it is with most mothers. They do not know how to feed their infants, especially between the ages of eight and sixteen months old.

For the first months of life milk should be the only food. Solids. A little later some other form of nourishment is required. Gravy with bread or potato is best to begin with. After that the child will she may have much the same food as an adult.

I said milk is to be the only food of infants during the first months of life. There is rarely any necessity when many motherless can be unable to nurse their babies, it often becomes an exceedingly important and difficult question how to feed the children. To rear children with artificial food is a most laborious task, and if it is not done correctly they are almost certain to die.

The best artificial food for infants is undoubtedly asses' milk, but the very great expense of this prevents it from being used, except by the very wealthy. For those that cannot afford ass's milk cow's milk must be used. It is very valuable. It is not too rich and not quite sweet enough. It also clots in the stomach in large flakes causing, as in the instance before us, sickness and sickness and never the catching.

We must mix the milk with something that will prevent it from clotting and that will dilute it. No substance fulfils these conditions better than barley-water.

Until the child is three months old, one part of milk to two of barley-water is the right proportion. As the child grows older the quantity of the barley-water may be reduced.

Barley-water should be made in the following way. Boil a tablespoonful of pearl-barley in a pint of water for half-an-hour and strain it. It will not keep overnight, so it must be made fresh every day. If it is kept long it sometimes develops a very poisonous substance which may cause great deaths.

There is absolutely no difficulty in making barley-water, and there is no excuse for a person serving up a thick gruel and calling it barley-water. This I have myself seen done.

You may perhaps think that I have exaggerated the importance of infant feeding, but look at the death-rate of infants. Is it not terrible? And instead of diminishing I am sorry to say that it is on the increase. The majority of deaths under a year old is due to wrong feeding.

We shall not have to wait long to see some cases of irritative dyspepsia. First we see a school-boy, looking very green and ill. He has been indulging in a hamper and is now suffering from atonement for his goodness. Let us ask him what was the contents of the basket. "Oh there was a big cake, then there was a ham and a pot of marmalade, four bottles of sweets, a vase of ham pie, three tins each of sherbet, biscuit and anchovy paste and three pots of jam."

We do not wonder that the boy has indigestion—neither does he. A hamper is necessarily followed by dyspepsia and he is quite resigned to bear the consequences of the feast.

We see the next patient whom we investigate is a girl of sixteen, suffering from the effects of eating "twenty-two green apples and a pound of pasties" yesterday.

She was pallid after partaking of all ages and both sexes enter the room complaining of gastric pain or vomiting, and on inquiry we get a history of various mistakes in diet. One of my patients is a young woman with hiccoughs, which had gone bad—not at all an uncommon event among out-patients. A family of father, mother and four children
come suffering agenies, the result of having patent a of mouth rabbit-fruit, Unripe fruit, over-ripe fruit, too much alcohol, mus- cles, crabs, etc., are all common causes of irritation and dyspepsia.

It is not only in hospital patients that we see the irritative form of indigestion. It oc- curs among all classes, and is indeed more common among the ill and bedridden, among the poorer members of the community.

All the causes of irritative dyspepsia may be grouped into three classes: indigestion in the quantity of food taken; indigestion of food that is wholesome, and indigestion of food that is unwholesome, and insufficient mastication.

There is little to be said under these head- ings, but I will make one or two remarks about each.

I have already shown you that improper food is a great cause of indigestion. Any substance that is not thoroughly chewed or that is not well cooked is likely to cause indigestion in those partaking of it. As I wrote about for some time short time back it is unnecessary to enter into the question of feeding here.

Insufficient mastication is a very important cause of dyspepsia, a piece of meat, for instance, that has been well chewed can be digested in about one-fourth of the time that the same piece of meat would take if swallowed whole. Always chew your food well and you will remove one of the greatest causes of difficult digestion.

The treatment for this condition is to give a diet of easily digested food, if the patient is a child; and a dose of calomel or blue pill, if in the case of an adult. Attention to the feeding is of paramount importance. With adults it is best to withhold food for any kind for twenty- four hours, and after that to eat sparingly and only of very digestible food.

While on this subject, I should like to mention the case of the patient "attack" though differ- ing considerably from the affection we have just described is to be treated in the same manner as irritative indigestion.

The second great variety of indigestion is an "atonic" dyspepsia, that is the condition when the stomach is out of "tone" and does not properly perform its functions.

Unilateral dyspepsia is the condition in which the stomach is only just depressed, atonic dyspepsia is a very chronic malady, and instead of lasting a day or two often drags on for months or years. It also differs from the irritative form of dyspepsia, in that diet is by no means the chief difficulty; in fact, the patient reports he is gaining weight, and in addition that it does not attack all ages and both sexes indiscriminately.

One of its chief causes is anemia, and therefore it should be expected to find it more common in young women. This is indeed the case, the great majority of sufferers being girls between fifteen and twenty-five years of age. The common complaint of hospitals gives some relief to more of these cases than to any other form of illness, they are so common. The symptoms are pain after food; pain in the chest; hematemesis; palpitation; water-brash; nausea; loss of appetite and sometimes vomiting. Anemia is almost always present. Not by any means rare this condition terminates in ulceration of the stomach, and then, in addition to the above symptoms another is added which is most alarming— that is, vomiting blood.

The treatment of this condition is exceedingly important, because, if it is treated properly and at once, the danger of gastric ulcer is greatly diminished. There are various ways by which this condition is treated, for its manifestations are of most diverse characters, and the patients are very, very capable of taking drugs. As it is an "atonic" affection a tonic treatment is, as a rule, better than any other. A mixture containing iron with possibly arsenic of no particular good. But as you cannot give either of these drugs to a patient with a weak stomach, it is necessary to get the stomach well as soon as possible. Nothing will do this better than bismuth and soda. An occasional pill of aloe and belladonna is also very useful.

The last form of dyspepsia is the "nervous" or "nervous stomach," the mention of the word "nervous" should at once suggest that the condition is almost exclusively con- fined to women. But, for once, this is not the case; by far the larger number of sufferers from this complaint being business men. And the reason for this is not far to seek.

A city man gets up, let us say at half-past seven. He goes down to breakfast. Having swallowed his meal with lighting rapidity, he rushes off to catch his train. At lunch time he has his meal and plays a game of checkers or a game of chess, or they go out to dinner. This he eats more or less in a "physiological" manner, and rests after it.

Can anyone expect his poor stomach to stand such insults as these? During digestion the majority of the food that is in the body is required by the digestive organs, and exactly ret after meals is essential so that no more blood than is absolutely necessary should be required for circulation. But here, a man "gallops" through one meal (this of itself would give anyone indig- estion) and runs off immediately afterwards, and over another meal he plays chess and then talks about his "hard luck" because he suffers from indigestion!

The treatment for this condition is as simple a thing as it is difficult to carry out in practice. It is— Do not hurry over your meals, and always rest both body and mind afterwards.

There are other varieties of true nervous dyspepsia—such as that which occurs in people who are overburdened with cares; the gastric-pain, hysteria and some spinal com- plaints and possibly that obscure condition "migraine." These are all very serious affec- tions and most difficult to cure, as the cure is to take care that you are not removeable.

Before I leave you I will give the following maxims to everybody suffering from indigestion or dyspepsia of any kind—

1. A diet that is very hot or very cold, especially ice.
2. Avoid potatoes, cheese, pastry, and take farinaceous foods in great moderation. Do not eat them after dinner. In preference to white; it is less nutritious, in every way inferior and far more indigestible.
3. Avoid tea, coffee, and alcohol in all forms—beer, wine, or spirits.
4. Never take any drugs if you can possibly help it. Above all, never take "pepsin," unless under the immediate supervision of a physician.
5. Masticate your food thoroughly. Eat slowly and rest half-hour after each meal.
6. Do not take one big meal in the day, but have five, or even six small ones.
7. Always have your meals at the same hour every day.
8. Take a walk every day, rain or shine.
9. Avoid anything that disagrees with you, and never again be tempted to touch that particular article of food.
10. Never eat anything that has not been thoroughly cooked; or drink anything that has not been boiled.

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