

DIGESTIVE DISORDERS

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"Excuse me!" "Pardon!"—Again and again one hears these exclamations, so often that one hardly notices them until some sufferer finds his way to the consulting room, and there unfolds his tale of woe to the sympathetic and understanding homoeopathic physician or practitioner.

The tale is usually similar. There has always been a difficulty in digesting food, there has been discomfort after meals, a full, loaded, bloated feeling even though a small meal only has been taken. Of course everything advertised for wind, indigestion and discomfort has been tried. Some tablets have been taken before meals, others after, but nothing has really cured. Some have helped for a time and then there has had to be change and now nothing does any good and the digestion is as bad as ever.

In Homœopathy, the surface complaint, uncomfortable or unpleasant as it may be, is not the first consideration. It is the person suffering the disorder that is important to the prescriber, for to him it is obvious that there is a disharmony in the whole person that prevents the normal exhibition of good health. We have been so long educated in the idea of disease by the everlasting reminders of the chemist's "cure alls", we have almost forgotten that our natural state is or should be perfect health. If we could concentrate for a while on health and well-being we should lose many of our fears and be the happier in consequence. It is because Homœopaths the world over are aware that health is the birthright of every individual that stress is laid on the person and not on the disease he happens to be suffering at any particular time. If the person be restored to complete harmony and balance within himself, the invading enemy will automatically be ejected.

Digestive disorders indicate a state of unbalance which may be centred in the nervous system, the blood stream, the liver, or in faulty evacuation of waste matter. To suck

tablets in order to decrease acidity after meals or increase the acid content of the stomach so that meals digest is no solution to a disordered digestive system. Neither was any man designed to need large quantities of Sodium-bicarbonate to help him appreciate without suffering, the joys of a well cooked meal, or even of raw fruit, for that matter. The mechanism of the body has been evolved through the centuries to enable man to live and enjoy the fruits of his labours in the earth. Man has it is true paid little attention to the intricacies of his mechanism and often subjects it to strains he would never dream of putting on either his animals or his machines. His suffering is often self-created, but that does not mean he should be left to suffer unaided. The joy of Homœopathy lies often in the fact that the effect of the treatment is to reveal the wisdom of wise living. Those who have suffered bitterly are so genuinely grateful for relief that they indeed mend their ways and fashion their lives more wisely. Of course there will always be some who revert. A lady said on one occasion "What a comfort it is, to know that Homœopathy will take care of one, whatever one does"! I am afraid there will come a day when she will be disillusioned.

So then, the practitioner studies his patient in detail and advises accordingly. The patient may be a thick, short, stout man, full of energy but obviously not one to brook interference, to be very tolerant to others opinions or to suffer fools gladly. When asked about his relationships with others, the tenor of his reply shows that he is an irritable type, who would snap his remarks if everything were not going smoothly. What of his food habits? He agrees he likes food, good food, tasty, rich food—unfortunately he suffers indigestion whether he indulges his likes or sticks to dull plain fare. You surmise he is constipated, and rather grudgingly he agrees he may be a little, unless he pays attention to it and takes a confection of senna or liquid paraffin now and again. Such a man is not easy to convince that he has brought on much of this discomfort

himself. He will dislike intensely the suggestion that he should cut down on his spicy, highly-seasoned rich food, take less salt and eat more fresh fruit and salads. Yet these are the changes that would bring the greatest benefit and put such a man into better health and temper. To help him you may prescribe *Sulphur* as a constitutional remedy, and a course of *Nux vomica* for ten days to bring him into a better state. It will then be largely in his own hands as to whether he will follow your advice and remain well or go his own sweet way and build up greater trouble for himself by continuing to maltreat his digestion.

There are of course the temporary digestive upsets. I remember visiting a friend on one occasion who had prepared an interesting supper dish of rice and mushrooms. I ate it with some misgiving for the rice was a little hard. Some two hours later I was attacked with the greatest discomfort and pain. As soon as I reached home I rushed to my medicine case for *Carbo veg.* 6. I took this at fifteen minute intervals, but in three or four doses I was completely free from trouble for the pressure of wind was relieved by loud belching. Since that experience I have never visited friends or gone out to meals without making sure a small phial of *Carbo. veg.* 6 is in my pocket or handbag, and the times I have been able to relieve others is without number. Then there is the occasion when the meal is very fat and rich. You eat it with enjoyment, but perhaps a little fearful that your digestion will rebel. If it does, and the fat begins to repeat, *Ipecacuanha* 6 will come to the rescue. This is so helpful when you have been invited out for the days and the sickness begins to worry you soon after lunch. You know you have to face tea, with the possibility of more richness, in cakes and pastries, and then supper. If you remember *Ipecac.* for this kind of disorder you need have no fear that you will have to make a hasty retirement. There is another case I remember when I was asked to find something for a young boy who had been out to lunch with his friends and had come home and been

violently sick. He seemed to be developing a temperature, and looked very seedy. I enquired re the luncheon menu and found they had had fish followed by sausages with vegetables. I am always a little suspicious of sausages, and fish often leaves much to be desired, so I prescribed *Arsenicum* 30 hourly. His mother was a little fearful for her only chick, but I assured her that in a little while all would be well. He had three doses, and went sound asleep, to awaken feeling fit and hungry again. I suggested a light meal of wholemeal bread, some cream cheese and a glass of cold milk. The *Arsenicum* was repeated at four-hourly intervals during the following day. Whether the child had been poisoned or would have developed into a serious ptomaine poisoning case one cannot say. But we do know that Homœopathy put him completely right in a few hours and he seemed better than he had been for a long long time.

I had another patient who seemed unable to digest any food at all. He was always distended, even after the lightest meal. He liked fat, drank a great deal of milk, enjoyed rich tasty food, but remained thin and haggard looking. A man full of energy, never happy unless in the open air working hard, yet subject to chills that usually affected his liver. He then became morose, weepy and fault-finding. *Lycopodium* was prescribed in the 30th potency (one dose) and *Sulphur* 6 night and morning for ten days. The improvement was quite remarkable and so no further repetition was prescribed until his general state showed deterioration. He returned to see me after some six weeks, the bloated, full feeling had again begun to trouble him and he generally did not feel so good. *Lycopodium* 30 for three consecutive doses (morning, night and morning) were taken, and I have heard nothing further except from his relatives, they have never seen this man so well, he seems to be getting younger day by day. *Lycopodium* is recorded as being "suitable for withered, shrivelled, prematurely aged persons who are full of gas". It is apparent-

ly restoring this patient to his lost youth and removing the wrinkles and withered appearance his family had grown to accept.

Can any ordinary digestive medicine restore in such a manner? Obviously it can only be a medicine that is so vital and dynamic that it will co-operative with the vital forces of the individual. The test for the accuracy of the remedy is the total restoration of the patient, not merely the abolition of the surface symptoms but the true harmonization of the whole being. The energy within all living cells, which has now been proved and acknowledged by scientific research workers, can and does affect the living cells. The choice of the remedy must be that one which is in sympathy with the patient, and this is judged by the physician after careful consideration of details that paint a picture of the individual and of the remedy.

If you have suffered with poor digestion even for years there is every possibility it can be improved by homœopathic treatment. You can take preliminary steps by paying attention to details such as constipation, avoiding highly seasoned foods, eating only wholemeal bread, and for many, especially those whose liver is inclined to be troublesome, eating a raw apple, chewing it thoroughly of course, at bed-time. Dr. Dudley Wright in his splendid book "Foods for Good Health and Healing" points out the value of apples as "detoxicators of the system", and as he was a Homœopath he knew that digestive disorders often begin by auto-intoxication. When you have done all that is possible and the discomfort still maintains, then seek the help of Homœopathy to harmonize *you*, and restore *you* to health, happiness and comfort.

Carbo. veg. 6. Eructations, fullness, tense form flatulence, with pain. Temporary relief from belching. Comes on about half an hour after eating. Tendency to bend double with cramping pains.

Arsenicum 6. For discomfort after suspected bad fish, sausages. Burning feeling with pain. Thirsty but only a

little at a time. Stomach feels raw. Heartburn, acids gulped up are acrid and burn the throat. Faintness and exhaustion—fear and coldness.

Ipecacuhana 6. Nausea from fat, rich food. Much saliva. Tongue clean. Inclined to be irritable.

Lycopodium 6. For shrivelled types, who feel distended after every meal however small. Generally worse between 4 and 8 p.m. A deep acting remedy, better taken on skilled advice.

Pulsatilla 6. Aversion to fat food and warm food and drink. Eructations; taste of food remains a long time. Bitter taste. Flatulence. Better in open air. Must loosen clothes after a meal. Pain an hour after eating.

These remedies are always helpful, each one according to its particular symptoms. They can be repeated half-hourly, the period being lengthened between each dose as improvement sets in. Where disorders are longstanding there may not be permanent cure until the constitutional remedy is taken, and that is for *you* to seek from physician or practitioner.

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EPIGASTRIC PAIN AND ITS HOMOEOPATHIC TREATMENT

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From the aggregate of symptoms and lesions, from the functional and and psychical states of the patient, the clinician deduces his pathological diagnosis and his therapeutic indications.—DR. HIGENIO G. PEREZ: *Clinical Propedeutics*, 1916.

Epigastric pain is a symptom of the highest importance in gastric semeiology which appears in different diseases of the digestive apparatus and annexes. It is a viscerosensory reflex with characteristics and radiations, timing,