

# **INDIGESTION AND DIET**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649326303

Indigestion and diet by John Dewar

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**JOHN DEWAR**

**INDIGESTION  
AND DIET**



LONDON  
PRINTED BY RANKIN AND CO., DRURY HOUSE,  
ST. MARY-LE-STRAND W.C.

## P R E F A C E.

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THE following pages are written for the use of my patients who may be suffering from indigestion in any of its various forms, in order to avoid the necessity of lengthened verbal or written directions at the time of consultation. At the same time it is hoped, that the general reader will find a more extensive knowledge of the laws that regulate digestion, the symptoms indicative of indigestion, and the proper diet to be used, helpful in preventing, as well as curing indigestion, when it occurs.

132, SLOANS STREET, S.W.



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## ON INDIGESTION AND DIET.

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### INTRODUCTION.

INDIGESTION, or *dyspepsia*, is a much more common complaint than is generally believed. I suppose everyone suffers from it at one time or other in some form, though many who suffer from it are ignorant of the fact, and attribute their ailment to something else. A knowledge, therefore, of all the symptoms by which indigestion shows itself, will prevent much anxiety as to whether the heart or liver is affected, and, by drawing attention to the real source of the disease, lead to more abstemious living. A healthy man does not know that he has a stomach, and but for the feeling of hunger would not know that there was such an organ in the body. Practically, if the digestive apparatus is in good working order, the man may be said to be in perfect health. Food taken at regular times, its quantity being sufficient, and its quality good, the stomach and its absorbing apparatus being in perfect working order, thus enabling the food to be assimilated, one would, mentally and bodily, enjoy a perfect Elysium of health. But what with the adulterations of food, the unwholesome food taken, and, altogether, our artificial mode of living, the picture that can be usually drawn of the average individual is one very different from an Elysium of health. But things being as they are, our duty is to make the best of them, and, by more enlightened views being held, to some extent improve matters.

"Eat to live, not live to eat," is an axiom that it would be well for all who suffer from any form of dyspepsia to remember. The foundation of most dyspeptic symptoms is laid by excessive eating and drinking. We all eat more than is absolutely necessary for the wants of the system—supplying the loss resulting from the mere wear and tear; whatever is

eaten in excess, if not laid up in store in the form of fat, is wasted; worse than that, if the food be of an indigestible nature, or very excessive in quantity, it is not only not assimilated, but, by its irritant effects, prevents the ordinary digestible quantity from being absorbed, and thus one may get thin by excessive eating. This is seen every day in children who, in spite of the large quantity of food they have given them, waste to a skeleton, and actually die of starvation. One mother, I remember, was very indignant with me for saying that her child (about a year old) was dying of starvation, though a day or two before its death I had seen it eating beef and potatoes with French beans. It had for some time previously been suffering from sickness and diarrhoea (caused by injudicious feeding); and though I repeatedly warned her of the danger, the mother persisted in giving similar food to that mentioned. From lack of food, then, this child actually died. In children, from their more delicate organism, the deleterious effects of over-feeding are more patent to observation, but not much more injurious, than to adults. In the latter, if not so fatal, over-feeding is more painful and chronic in its effects, Nature not relieving itself by vomiting so easily as in children; hence the train of irritant symptoms that exhibit themselves.

Coleridge says, "Excessive eating or drinking both makes the body sickly and lazy, fit for nothing but sleep, and besots the mind, as it clogs up with crudities the way through which the spirits should pass, bemiring them, and making them move heavily, as a coach in a deep way."