

**INDIGESTION: WHAT IT IS;
WHAT IT
LEADS TO; AND A NEW
METHOD OF TREATING IT**

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Indigestion: What It Is; What It Leads To; And a New Method of Treating It by John Beadnell Gill

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INDIGESTION

WHAT IT IS; WHAT IT LEADS TO;

AND

A NEW METHOD OF TREATING IT

BY

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ANEMIA AND GOITR," ETC. ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.



I MAKE no apology for placing the third edition of "Indigestion" before the public, as I trust that such a course is unnecessary.

I invite the reader to bear in mind that *true feeding* consists in taking *the exact amount* of nourishment that can be *assimilated*, without the generation of the poisonous products of indigestion.

I ask him furthermore, to endeavour to carry out the instructions that I put forth, to the very letter—*e.g.*, when I order *lemon-juice* as a beverage, I mean *lemon-juice*—not water poured on to lemon-peel. Again, when I direct a sufferer to sponge from head to foot, I mean *from head to foot*, not *from foot to head*.

The few who attain to extreme longevity are, commonly, those who possess faultless digestive organs. Canon Beadon, who in July, 1879, died at the age of 102, was a member of the small but happy band just mentioned. Beadonism is, however, by no means a Utopian vision to him who will obey natural laws.

Occasionally the physician is told a tale something like the following :—

“ When I was a young man I could eat a horse ; now, thanks to past indulgence, I have a crib-biter installed in my inside. 'Tis unendurable ! A stable, not a stomach, is the appropriate receptacle for a vicious quadruped.”

I commend this pithy oration to the notice of those individuals who love indulgence in good cheer.

J. B. G.

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INDIGESTION.



CHAPTER I.

ON INDIGESTION.

EVEN as I take pen in hand, I am almost tempted to lay it aside again—my subject is so vast, the organs that it more particularly deals with are so complex in structure, their mode of action is so imperfectly understood, their functions are so easily deranged, that the physician can scarcely hope to secure an *adequate* victory whilst doing battle with indigestion.

We speak of indigestion as if it were a disease *per se*, yet, as a fact, it is a symptom of almost every disease. *It covers the whole domain of medicine.* Beyond question every disease from which man suffers is either directly dependent upon, or materially influenced by, the condition of the digestive tract. The stomach is the feeder of the

whole body. The blood, which nourishes every organ and tissue thereof, is elaborated from its contents. How, then, can the body be healthy if its larder be diseased ?

No subject, in the practice of medicine, is more worthy of the study of the practitioner than that, the consideration of which I am about to enter upon. One does not overstep the bounds of truth whilst affirming that it enters into every relation of life ; that it destroys the happiness of the wife, the welfare of the children ; that it covers the land with strife ; that it fills the jail with occupants ; that it feeds the divorce-court ; nay, that it even decides the fate of empires !

The infant that should hang at its mother's breast is fed upon bread ; the father seeks refuge from its screeches in the public-house or the club-room ; he loses his love for home, and gradually becomes a drunkard ! The youth becomes incapacitated from learning his tasks ; his master inflicts corporal punishment upon him. The poor lad—keenly sensitive, as all dyspeptics are, and cowering under the disgrace inflicted—dips his hand into his father's cash-box and rushes from home to return no more. The clergyman ascends his pulpit feeling dissatisfied with his congregation, and his congregation leave his church