

amount of gas in his peritoneum. You know quite well, when an abdomen is resonant on percussion, and you find the resonance—*i.e.*, the air within the abdomen—move as you move the patient, that, as a rule, the gas is not in the peritoneum, but in the intestines. In this case, however, the gas was in the peritoneal cavity itself. That is why there was a report when the abdominal wall gave way. The man had had an artificial opening made in his belly—as I shall tell you afterwards—for the purpose of letting out the fluid. It had healed but imperfectly, and, when the gas rapidly accumulated, the weak spot ruptured.

The real causes of the man's troubles were an impediment to the flow of blood through the portal vein, and an impediment to the escape of bile from the hepatic duct. To these two lesions all the others which I shall describe to you were secondary.

Whatever permanently impedes the flow of blood through the portal vein, must have, as its necessary results, one or more of the mechanical consequences of congestion of the part the blood from which is poured into the portal vein. The blood cannot easily escape from the portal vein; and, of course, all the tributaries of the portal vein are swollen. The consequence is, that when there is impediment to the passage of blood through the portal vein, there is enlargement of the organs, the blood from which passes into the portal vein—as the spleen and the pancreas. The same impediment to the onward flow of the blood may also cause rupture of vessels. The over-distended capillaries burst, and extravasations of blood and hæmorrhages occur. Common seats of hæmorrhage from this cause are the stomach and the rectum—bleeding piles, hæmatemesis. This man, whose trouble I told you was the impediment to the flow of blood through the portal vein, had repeated attacks of hæmatemesis. Then patients suffering from obstruction to the flow of blood through the portal vein have effusions of serosity from the congested vessels. There is effusion of serum into the cavity of the peritoneum—ascites. This