which some form of continuous irrigation has been employed with success. There is great need of further studies along these lines, as the treatment of septic peritonitis, from the operative standpoint, does not form a brilliant chapter in the mortality records.—*Medicine.*

A NEW AND SIMPLE METHOD OF STERILIZING SPONGE.

Elsberg comments on the fact that while sea sponges are by far the best agent for absorbing fluids from wounds their use has been largely done away with for the lack of reliable methods for their sterilization, since boiling spoiled their consistence and absorbing power.

After much experimentation the author now proposes a method similar to a method of catgut sterilization previously proposed by him, viz., 1. The sponges are first immersed for twenty-four hours in an 8 per cent. hydrochloric-acid solution to free them from chalk and dirt, and then washed out in water. 2. Boil for from five to twenty minutes in the following solution: Caustic potash, 10; tannic acid, 20; water, 1000. 3. Wash out in sterile water or a carbolic or sublimate solution until they are freed from the dark-brown color given by the potash-tannic-acid solution. 4. Preserve in 2 to 5 per cent. carbolic solution. Through these procedures sponges lose none of their physical characteristics, size, porosity, elasticity, softness, etc., even when boiled for an hour.

The potash-tannic-acid solution can be used again, it being necessary only to replace the water which has boiled away. Culture experiments showed that large sponges previously infected with various bacteria, including anthrax spores, were rendered sterile after less than five minutes' boiling in the potash tannic-acid mixture, followed by rinsing with sterile water.

The author thinks this simple and sure method should inaugurate a return to the use of sea sponges in surgery.—Elsberg, *Centralbl. f. Chir.*