

would probably be better not to include the peritoneum at all, as it unites very quickly, simply by falling together.

Another cause which, however, is well recognized is failing to take in the bight of the stitches sufficient of the middle layer. This is due to the retraction of the middle layer back between the outer and inner layers. In order to avoid this mishap the skin should be pushed back above and the peritonium below so that the muscles will be the most prominent part instead of the most retracted.

The drainage tube is the greatest cause of hernia because it most effectually prevents primary union of the raw surfaces. Not only does it prevent the surfaces from coming in contact at that point, but it very often infects them, causing suppuration and closure by granulation. Ten years ago the writer drained with a glass tube all pus cases and those in which there were many adhesions, even if there were no pus, but he abandoned this procedure some three years ago with the result that no hernia has occurred among his cases since then.

If drainage must be used it would be much better to drain by gravity through an opening in Douglas' cul de sac, through which a T shaped rubber tube has been passed, into the aseptic vagina. But the most common cause of ventral hernia is the custom of removing the stitches far too early. Ten years ago when the writer succeeded the late Professor Trenholme in the chair of Gynecology, it was the practice to remove the stitches on the sixth day, and this was the usual custom throughout America. Whether this was also the practice in Great Britain and Ireland at that time the writer is not sure, but judging from the recent book of Dr. Webster, of Montreal, in which he advises the removal of the stitches on the ninth day, and as Dr. Webster was until recently, Assistant to the Professor of Gynecology at Edinburgh, it would appear that such was the time at which it was customary to remove them in Scotland. Six days or even nine days the author of this paper considers far too early a date on which to remove them.

In a paper read before the American Gynecological Society in 1893 the author expressed his views on this point in the following terms: "When the edges of the abdominal