

tended. Mucosa, normal in appearance, and a few drops of thin straw colored fluid present. This was a good example of appendicitis obliterans, and I think in time would have undoubtedly ceased to give any further trouble. But until operation, we could not judge of condition except by symptoms; and these were such as to be a cause of pain and anxiety to the patient, as well as a bar to life insurance in an otherwise perfectly healthy man.

These cases demonstrate as fully as a few cases can (and they are fairly representative of nearly all cases of appendicitis) when we should operate and why we should operate.

When to operate.—Just as soon as a diagnosis of appendicitis can possibly be made with certainty.

Dr. J. B. Murphy (see paper read before Pan-American Medical Congress), says: Operate when we have present these cardinal symptoms:

1. Sudden attack of pain over appendix.
2. Local tenderness in position of appendix.
3. Always nausea and sometimes vomiting.
4. Elevation of temperature.

Wyeth says it would be better for exploratory laparotomy to be done in every instance within the first twenty-four hours of the disease—provided a good clean surgeon is procurable.

Why operate?—Because thereby many lives are saved that would otherwise be lost. It is estimated by the best authorities that from 27 per cent. to 30 per cent. of cases treated expectantly die sooner or later of this disease. It is as yet impossible to give the mortality in operated cases, except for individual operators. Mortality in Dr. Murphy's 141 cases was 11 per cent. Some operators report a lower death rate, others much higher. Statistics in operated cases are as yet of little value, as in so many cases, operation is resorted to only when the trust-in-Providence treatment has already placed the case beyond hope. They, however, prove that even now the operative treatment is much the more successful. And granting the advisability of operating early and given a competent operator, the mortality should be as low, as, or lower, than for any other