

patient succumbed. As Richardson said such a case was "too late for the early and too early for the late operation."

After reading a paper by Ochsner, in 1901, I was lead to believe that perhaps many of these cases might be saved by waiting and assisting nature to combat and perhaps localize the disease. As pointed out in that paper, if the small intestines are kept in a condition of absolute rest, the spread of the infection is retarded, if not arrested, giving time for peritoneal reaction and allowing the omentum to exercise its well known function of crowding around the diseased area, thus forming a barrier to the progress of the infection, in other words, localizing it. Now the cause of peristalsis and meteorism in the small intestine being the presence of food or the administration of cathartics or large high enemata, obviously one's first duty was to eliminate these factors. Since that time I have treated many of these cases by first washing out the stomach, then by absolutely abstaining from the giving of food or cathartics by the mouth. Not even sips of water are allowed to enter the stomach and the results have been most satisfactory. The pain, tenderness and rigidity disappear, the temperature becomes normal in about 48 hours, the pulse becomes slow and the respirations normal and at the end of 3 or 4 days the patient is apparently well. What has happened has been that nature's forces have had a chance to work and have localized what was rapidly becoming a general septic condition. In the meantime, the patient's strength has been maintained by judicious rectal feeding as follows:—The lower bowel is washed out by a small soap enema every 24 hours and a nutrient enema is thrown in to the rectum. In quantity this enema consists of four ounces every four hours or six ounces every six hours according to conditions. The enema contains three to five ounces of normal saline with one or more ounces of panopepton or predigested beef-juice or peptonized milk or any other of the many excellent prepared foods now manufactured. It is only fair, however, to acknowledge that the extremes of life do not take kindly to rectal feeding.