

tractility that interests all the molecules of the parts, it is partially so, but is mostly effected by a folding of the fibres one against another; in this corrugation the vessels and nerves participate, bending into numerous flexuosities, a condition that not only retards but obstructs the passage of blood through them, a state ill adapted to furnish that supply of blood which is *one* of the essentials of acute inflammation. Hence it is, that gastrotomy, for the removal of large tumors, is followed by very trifling inflammation, when the operation has been well performed, and the case well managed subsequently.

On the other hand, an abdomen that has not suffered the extension mentioned resembles other parts of the body as regards the inflammation that follows injuries, since the tissues are actively contractile like elsewhere; the vessels are short and round, with a full calibre instead of long, and in the case of the veins flat without capacity and contractility; the nerves also have been stretched and proportionally paralyzed.

Having hastily noticed the difference existing between idiopathic and traumatic inflammation, and the reasons why the latter is less to be dreaded than the former, especially in gastrotomy when performed on a stretched abdomen, I now proceed to examine the question of

TEMPERATURE OF THE APARTMENT

in which the operation is to be performed. The early operators, anxious for success, but having no facts to rely on, theorized in advance as to what might interfere with, or favor, the result; and, among other ideas, imagined that inasmuch as the temperature of the viscera was constantly near 100° Fahr., the room in which the operation was to take place ought to be heated to that degree, lest a colder atmosphere should provoke great irritation on the exposed parts. Had these practitioners called to mind the numerous cases of wounds through which the bowels have escaped, and been exposed for some length of time, and which subsequently did well, they might have banished the fear of cool air, and have saved themselves and their patient from the oppression of a torrid atmosphere. The length of time necessary to complete a well-conducted operation is so short, that a moderately cool air (between 50 and 60 degrees) has not time to act injuriously, while the heated room will prove far from beneficial. I operated on a patient living in a temporary house—a mere shanty—where there was no means of heating it, on a dark, rainy day in the month of December, while the temperature was so low as 46 deg. Fahr.—so low that our breath was visible, as was the steaming hillatus from the open abdomen of the patient. Not one anxious symptom followed, the patient recovered perfectly in twenty days, and has since become the mother of two children.