

there is free drainage in such cases irrigation is not required. From this point of view it seems fair to assume that, if we could have free drainage in cases of peritonitis, irrigation would not be required, and therefore should not be done. From another point of view, it seems at least equally fair to assume that drainage is not always required because a large proportion of patients recover after irrigation without drainage. Such being the case we surely must admit that thorough irrigation, as carried out by Ross and others, is beneficial in some cases at least. Would it not be better, then, to try to discover why and when it is beneficial instead of endeavoring to prove that it is always wrong?

A certain well-known surgeon of Toronto published a report of a case of general septic peritonitis, following perforation of the bowel in typhoid fever, in which the patient's life was saved by operation seven years ago. It seems somewhat remarkable that while in that case he "flushed out the peritoneal cavity with hot salt solution," with apparently good effect, he should now conclude that such irrigation is never justifiable.

It will, of course, be admitted that the layer of endothelial cells lining the peritonæum is very important as a defense against the entrance of septic organisms, and that injury or destruction of these cells is dangerous in a high degree. Do the men, who (quite correctly) attach so much importance to this fact, think a hot salt solution in itself will destroy, or even injure these cells? Sure it has been demonstrated that it will not.

It is presumed that irrigation is decidedly dangerous in certain cases of more or less circumscribed septic peritonitis because of the possibility or probability, of disseminating the poison. This is true especially in certain cases of appendicitis, a fact which even the most ardent irrigationists are rapidly learning.

*Drainage.*—The present methods of promoting free drainage from the peritoneal cavity are a wondrous improvement on those employed a few years ago. The evidence as to the remarkably good results following these improved methods is so strong that