

## ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

## A STUDY OF SOME OF THE UNSATISFACTORY RESULTS FOLLOWING OPERATIONS UPON THE BILIARY TRACT.\*

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IT has happened every now and then that a patient upon whom I have operated for some affection of the biliary tract would return with the statement that she (for they are usually women) had been a good deal relieved, perhaps entirely so for a time, of the symptoms for which she had previously consulted me and for the relief of which I had operated upon her; but that for some time past she had observed a recurrence, in greater or less degree, of the same or similar symptoms to those for which she had sought relief. Occasionally the patient will state that she had been entirely relieved of her original trouble, but that since the operation she had suffered from conditions which, while somewhat different, are possibly even more annoying, or at least fully as much so, as her original trouble. In other words, it has been my experience to have had a not inconsiderable percentage of recurrences, indeed a greater proportion of unsatisfactory results following operations upon the biliary tract than from any other class of abdominal operations, except possibly gastro-enterostomy. Malignant disease, of course, is excluded. In the term "unsatisfactory results" I mean to include that group of cases in which one has for some reason or other failed to do what he has set out to do. The patient may be fairly well satisfied, indeed not infrequently is, he does not know any better, but, nevertheless, from the surgeon's standpoint, the result remains imperfect. In attempting to find an explanation for this unsatisfactory condition of affairs, I have, with the assistance of my associate, Dr. B. M. Bernheim, undertaken a study of all of the cases of gall-bladder disease that have been operated upon in the Johns Hopkins Hospital up to January 1st, 1914. For permission to use this material, comprising the work of the entire surgical staff of the hospital, I am indebted to Professor W. S. Halsted. This study also includes all similar cases that have been operated upon at the Union Protestant Infirmary, Baltimore, the majority of which occurred in my service.

Total cases, 572.

Total cases cured at time of discharge from hospital, 426—74.4%.

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