

carcinoma is removed and subsequently the adjacent glands become enlarged: the patient is then handed over at this late stage to a surgeon who has to perform an operation which was plainly indicated at the beginning.

How frequently a tuberculous abscess is merely incised, with the result that mixed infection from staphylo- and streptococci arises. The prognosis is now fundamentally altered and only at this late period is the surgeon called upon to remove the disease from its foundation.

In order to participate fully in the benefits of surgical therapy, doctors and surgeons must regard the smallest operation as an important matter, and must give it the most careful consideration. There is no objection to a general practitioner performing an operation himself, but if he is not quite clear as to the possible results his conscience ought to lead him to consult any experienced surgeon in order to gain a clear idea of the indications, dangers, and technique of the operation. Young general practitioners who are fresh from the examination room undertake cheerfully quite big operations simply because in the clinic, they have seen the largest wounds heal uninterruptedly under aseptic treatment, and because they have observed how regularly a simple abdominal or appendix case, or even one of goitre, can be dismissed after eight days. They have had too little opportunity of realising that such an uninterrupted recovery is dependent on certain definite rules which must on no account be broken.

It is the aim of this work on operative surgery to bring these fundamental principles to the knowledge of the medical profession: physicians and surgeons must, however, co-operate if the best results are to be obtained. In our opinion, the doctor is most to be commended who establishes a correct diagnosis at once, and, regardless of other considerations, sends his patients for early operation to the place where there is the best prospect of a permanently successful result; he can then consider that he has been the chief cause of the success, and he is certainly much more to be congratulated than the man who cannot resist the temptation of trying to prove his ability as an operator under conditions where the requisites for success are unattainable.