

GASTRO-ENTEROSTOMY, WITH REPORT OF CASES.

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During the last few years, the surgery of the stomach has made such rapid strides in advance that the literature of the subject has become very voluminous. It is not in my power, I fear, to add anything of importance to your knowledge of the subject, yet every case operated on should, I believe, be reported. It is by the failures, as well as the successes, that we learn.

It is now ten years since Doyen introduced the operation of gastro-enterostomy for the relief of ulcer of the stomach, and the successes attending this procedure have been of such a universal nature that it is now almost generally adopted by surgeons for the relief of this condition. For old chronic ulcer of the pylorus, it is almost an ideal operation, causing, as it does, a relief of the symptoms and healing of the ulcer.

Since the improvement in the technique of gastro-enterostomy the mortality of this operation has been reduced to a minimum. Robson¹ says in his address on surgery at the last meeting of the British Medical Association: "So recently as 1900, when I gave the Hunterian lectures on the stomach, of the 1,878 cases of gastro-enterostomy that I was able to collect from all sources, the mortality was 36.4 per cent.; but since that time the surgery of the stomach has made such rapid progress that in 103 posterior gastro-enterostomies which I myself performed up to December, 1902, for various diseases, including cancer, there was a mortality of only 3.8 per cent." "Until quite recently gastric ulcer, except for one or two of its complications, has been considered to be a subject for medical treatment from first to last. The profession is, however, becoming awakened to the fact that it is not the trifling ailment that it was once considered to be." "Leube, one of the greatest medical authorities, says that one-half or three-fourths of all cases will be cured by four or five weeks of treatment; but if not better in that time, they will never be cured by medical treatment alone." The views here expressed are those generally held by the physicians of to-day, and when one considers that from 90 to 95 per cent. of those obstinate cases can be cured by operation, the argument is a strong one indeed for such treatment. Gastro-enterostomy is the operation to be relied on. It drains the stomach perfectly, relieves the hyperacidity, produces rest of the organ, with the healing of the ulcer.

When one remembers the frequency with which cancer is engrafted on the base of an old ulcer, it seems wise to submit the patient to an operation, with a mortality of from 4 to 10