

ON

AN ADAPTATION OF THE REFLECTING MIRROR TO THE UTERINE SPECULUM.

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To see better is so frequently to know more that I do not hesitate to submit to the consideration of the profession an adaptation of the reflecting mirror to the uterine speculum, which for some time back I have found most useful.

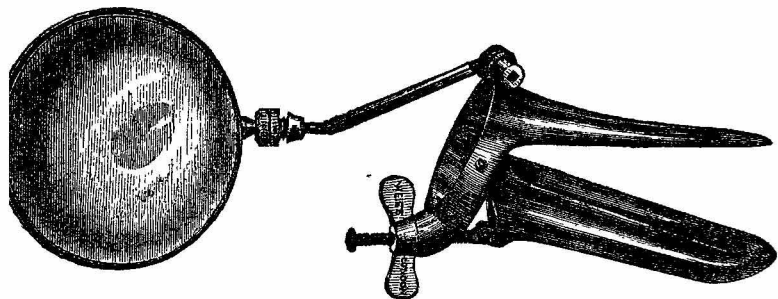
The mirror is three inches and a half in diameter, and is of five inches' focal length. Like the laryngoscope mirror, it is mounted in a light metallic back, and to its circumference a brass arm is attached by a ball-and-socket joint, which is easily tightened or slackened by a screw movement. The arm can be lengthened or shortened by a simple telescopic slide; it is bent at a somewhat obtuse angle close to the joint, and is, when closed, four inches long. At its other extremity the arm is also bent at an angle, and is square; it fits into either side of a short socket attached to the upper surface of the outer end of the speculum, and is speedily secured there by a turn or two of a screw-cap.

By this means the mirror has a firm, easily fixed attachment to the speculum; and by the aid of the ball-and-socket joint and the telescopic movement it can be placed at any angle in relation to the axis of the speculum, and at such a distance from it as may be most convenient, or may afford the best illumination.

The mirror may, of course, be adapted to any speculum. It has been made for me, with their usual success, by Messrs. Weiss and Son; and I have latterly used it attached to a speculum of their construction, which, I venture to think, is the most satisfactory instrument yet made.

The form of the speculum originated, I believe, in a suggestion of Sir James Simpson. The lower blade is of the duck-bill shape; the upper is flat, and fits on to the lower in such a manner that a small interval is left between the two, so that in closing the instrument for withdrawal no pinching of the vaginal mucous membrane can occur. The upper blade is shorter than the lower one, so that when the speculum is opened the cervix is easily received into it. The duck-bill shape of the speculum secures the very easy introduction of the instrument, and also so distends the vaginal walls as to prevent their falling in and obscuring the view of the os uteri. By this configuration the wooden plug is rendered unnecessary, and lateral blades are made useless: both very desirable arrangements; for, by the consequent simplicity of construction, thorough cleansing of the instrument is facilitated, and no absorbing surfaces or tortuous chinks are left where infecting particles may lurk or be overlooked. The dilating mechanism is Messrs.

Weiss's improvement of that of Cusco. A reference to the accompanying engraving will make this description intelligible.



By the use of the mirror thus affixed, it becomes unnecessary to alter the position of the couch or bed on which the patient is lying; for, wherever the source of light may be, the mirror can be so adjusted as to reflect it upon the cervix uteri.

There are no formidable preparations to be made; for the patient may lie in the usual obstetric position on the bed wherever it may be placed.

A better illumination is obtained by daylight, inasmuch as a larger amount of light-rays are concentrated on the spot to be examined than can be obtained by direct transmission. A better illumination is also obtained when artificial light is used; for not only does the same reflection of light occur as in daylight, but the part is relatively as well as positively brighter; for, as the lamp or candle may be placed on a table at some distance away, the great disadvantage of looking over or through a bright light at a place not so bright is avoided.

The impossibility of the occurrence of such unpleasantnesses as the dropping of grease or the singeing of bed-clothes is an additional recommendation.

In all cases one hand of the medical man is entirely set at liberty, and in many instances both are free. Where the speculum does not of itself retain its position, and both hands are needed, the finger of an assistant or of the patient herself serves to secure its steadiness.

If the mirror be on a lower level than the source of light—and this may always be managed—it does not interfere with the use of both eyes; and as it is always set at an angle, it is never in the way of any instrument which may be in use. One can thus accomplish with greater certainty many necessary mechanical interferences with the os uteri, because both hands are at liberty, and one has a clear and continuous view of all that is going on, especially if the instruments used are, as they may often be, trowel-handled.

I may add that this mirror may be used attached to the rectum speculum with advantage.

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