

Boston Med Surg J 1869 V-79

A MODIFICATION OF CUSCO'S SPECULUM,
BY WHICH IT BECOMES ALSO
A RETRACTOR.

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It is thought by some practitioners that there exists an undue disposition on the part of other gentlemen to differentiate too closely the diseases that come under observation, and the instruments by which they are to be treated. As an instance in point, it has been asserted that every accoucheur feels it incumbent upon him to invent a new midwifery forceps, and every gynæcologist a speculum. The charge has to a certain extent been well founded. Fully aware, however, of the fact, I yet venture to describe a new competitor for professional favor, confident that others will obtain the same satisfaction from it that I have myself done.

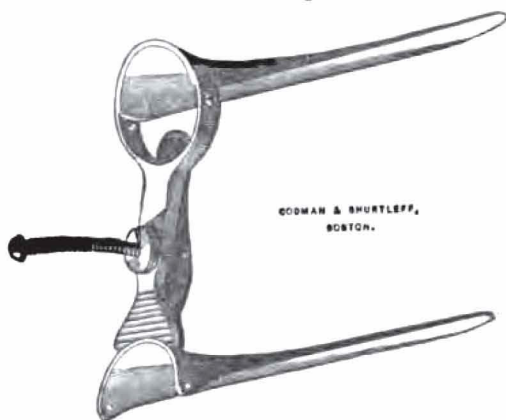
The great variety of specula now in use subdivide themselves into two classes, specula proper and retractors; each useful for certain purposes, and, for some of these, indispensable. Of the several forms, cylindrical, bivalve and multivalve, almost every physician has his own favorite instrument, which he endeavors, often without avail, to make answer diverse purposes. Till now, so far as I am aware, no attempt has been made to combine these two principles, separating the speculum as such from the retractor, in a single instrument.

A year ago, I was discussing with my assistant, Dr. Stone, the features of Dr.

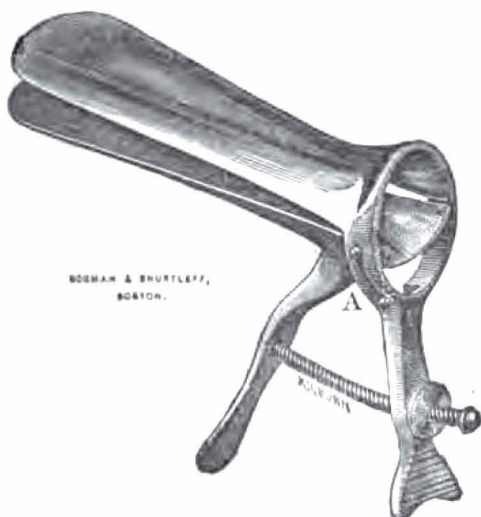
Thomas's telescopic speculum, and remarked to him that while I was averse to the unnecessary multiplication of instruments, I thought it possible to improve upon the best yet in use, which I considered Cusco's to be; that is, the straight handled form of it, for the lateral screw connecting the blades where they are made to fold, is almost sure to become entangled in the hair upon the vulva, and thus annoy one's patient. Some six months afterwards I had occasion to remove stitches from the anterior vaginal wall, after an operation for vesical fistula, and happened to have no retractor with me, I therefore directed Dr. Stone to remove the screws connecting together the blades of Cusco's instrument, and by reversing their relative position I had at once the retractor that I desired. By subsequently attaching a movable spring peg in place of one of the screws, and rendering the other one a fixed point, immediate change from the speculum to the retractor, and back again, became possible by a slight touch of the finger.

By this simple spring attachment at the side of the Cusco bivalve, as shown in the cut below, the blades may at once be dis-

sent, that its expansibility is greatest at the uterine extremity of the vagina and least at its outlet, that it at once receives the cervix without having to search for it, and that it is self-retaining.



If it is as appropriate for an inventor as for a naturalist to attach to a novelty its specific name, I would request that my instrument should be known as the Boston speculum, as I am anxious to do what little I can for the credit of my native city.



jointed, swung around back to back, and there fixed by a turn of the nut already existing upon the screw traversing the handles, with the effect of giving a retractor equal in working facilities to that of Sims, as made evident by the second wood-cut.

The simplicity of this instrument, which is made to do the work of two, its portability as compared with the usual retractors, its ease in use, and its moderate cost, are all strong arguments in its favor, while as a speculum it preserves the great merits too little understood, of the Cusco instru-