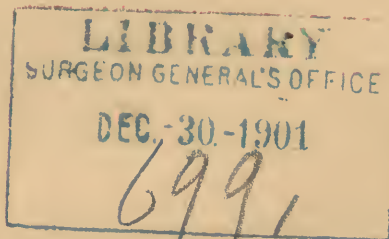


Kelly (H. A.)

A curette for cervical
cancer -



A CURETTE FOR CERVICAL CANCER.

BY

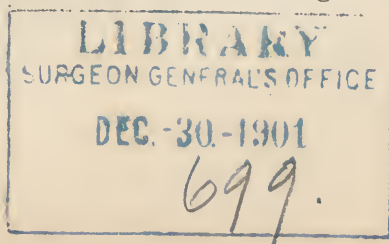
HOWARD A. KELLY, M.D.,
Baltimore, Md.

(With illustration.)

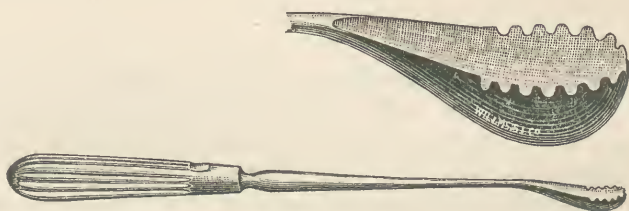
No curette in my possession has proved perfectly satisfactory in the removal of the redundant carcinomatous tissue in cases of cancer of the cervix. As a rule, after a thorough curettage with any of the dull or sharp scoops, I still find that I can remove more tissue with the nails of my index and middle fingers.

I have, therefore, devised the following curette, which serves my purpose better, removing all available tissue with a minimum risk to the adjacent structures. The instrument may be described as made up of three parts, a large, stout handle affording a comfortable grasp for the entire hand, and a stout shank which tapers to a long and rather deep bowl. This bowl, which is the curette proper, is ovoid in form with a blunt margin, surrounded by crenations a little coarser than shown in the figure.

I use the curette by grasping the handle firmly with the right hand, while the left index finger, introduced into the vagina, serves to control the crenated bowl, which is then vigorously employed to remove—that is to say, to tear away—the diseased tissues. The crenations, which form the essential feature of the instrument, take hold of the tissue in a way no other blunt instrument will do, and if the force is exerted with good judgment there is no risk of thrusting the bowl beyond the limits of the disease. It is my practice to proceed quite rapidly in scooping out and breaking down the more superficial portions of the disease, and then to advance with greater caution in the direction of the peritoneum, rectum, or bladder, repeatedly endeavoring to ascertain by means of the index finger the exact thickness of the tissues remaining in the septum.



The only other instrument to which I am aware the curette bears the slightest resemblance is Thomas' spoon saw, used at one time by that eminent gynecologist in the enucleation of fibroid tumors; the resemblance here is, however, only superficial, for the differences could scarcely be greater. The spoon saw is a shallower, broader instrument, with sharp recurved teeth; its margins are not sinuous or crenated as in my curette. The spoon saw, in other words, is a cutting instrument designed to work in sound tissues, while the curette is a tearing, scooping instrument for diseased cancerous tissues.



The measurements of the larger instrument are as follows: total length, 25 centimetres; handle, $9\frac{1}{2}$ centimetres; shank, $11\frac{1}{2}$ centimetres; bowl, 4 centimetres. The width of the bowl is 17 millimetres, and the depth 14 millimetres. There are ten crenations, 2 millimetres in height and $2\frac{1}{2}$ millimetres in width at the base. The upper figure shows the size of the bowl of the larger curette; the lower figure gives the general appearance and proportions on a scale about one-third. The measurements of a smaller curette, which is sometimes used, are two-thirds those of the larger curette.

