

ATTENDANCE IN CASES OF MIDWIFERY BY
UNQUALIFIED PUPILS.

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To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your very enemies must admit, that the cause of medical science, and, as a necessary result, that of humanity also, stand much indebted to the spirit of your widely-circulated Journal. Impressed with this fact, which can only be questioned by interested individuals, I send you the following remarks, which I am sure you will insert, if the press of other matter does not preclude its possibility. They allude to a subject which, on the score of humanity, is one of the highest importance; I mean, the practice of students attending poor lying-in women. My professional avocations necessarily call me a good deal among the lower order of persons, and I can assure you that there is, and, I am persuaded, not without just grounds, great cause of complaint. It is not requisite to particularise cases, as it would be rather uncourteous to certain lecturers, my object being rather to draw their attention to the circumstance, and to suggest to them the necessity of giving pupils a rigid examination, previous to their being admitted to practise, to ascertain whether they are competent to the management of natural labour, and whether they can expect from them an early detection of difficulty, when it really occurs. It is true, the College requires, from candidates for examination, midwifery certificates; but you, Sir, need not be told, that this is a "mere farce." In the hope that this brief notice will be sufficient to induce teachers of midwifery to pay a degree of attention to a subject which is of so much importance to the poor individuals concerned, and in which all humane persons must feel interested,

I have the honour to remain, Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
A GENERAL PRACTITIONER.

Feb. 25.

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WEISS'S URETHRA DILATOR.

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To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I take leave to send you an engraving of my newly-invented dilator for the female urethra, accompanied by a letter from Mr. Serph of Welshpool, who was so highly satisfied with it, that he allowed me to make use of his letter, in any way which I should think proper; I therefore beg you will have the goodness to insert it in your valuable publication, with the view of

making the instrument more generally known among the profession.

It is highly gratifying to my feelings, to find that it has been so successful; not only in this, but in many more instances. Sir Astley Cooper first gave me the idea of dilating the female urethra, and requested me to invent an instrument for that purpose, which succeeded most completely: since then, it has been used by Mr. Green, and several other eminent surgeons, who have given it their most unqualified approbation.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant

JOHN WEISS.

62, Strand, Monday.

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To Mr. John Weiss.

SIR,—I did not answer your last letter, because I knew I should have some further communication to make to you about your most invaluable dilator.

On the 7th of May last, I removed from the bladder of the lady, another calculus, or, rather, several pieces of stone, of a soft and friable consistency. On the 28th day of September last, another operation was performed, and a piece of bone (part of the os pubis of the left side) was removed from Mrs. A.'s bladder.

It was incrustrated, at one of its extremities, with a thick layer of the same substance as the other calculi were composed of, and the opposite extremity was a naked and sharp-pointed bone, the whole measuring $1\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch in length, and $1\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch in circumference at its larger extremity, and the substance was shaped like the tusk of a hog.

From that time, the patient has enjoyed good health; and a few days after the soreness necessarily occasioned by the dilatation, wore entirely away; the bladder never lost its retentive and expulsive powers.

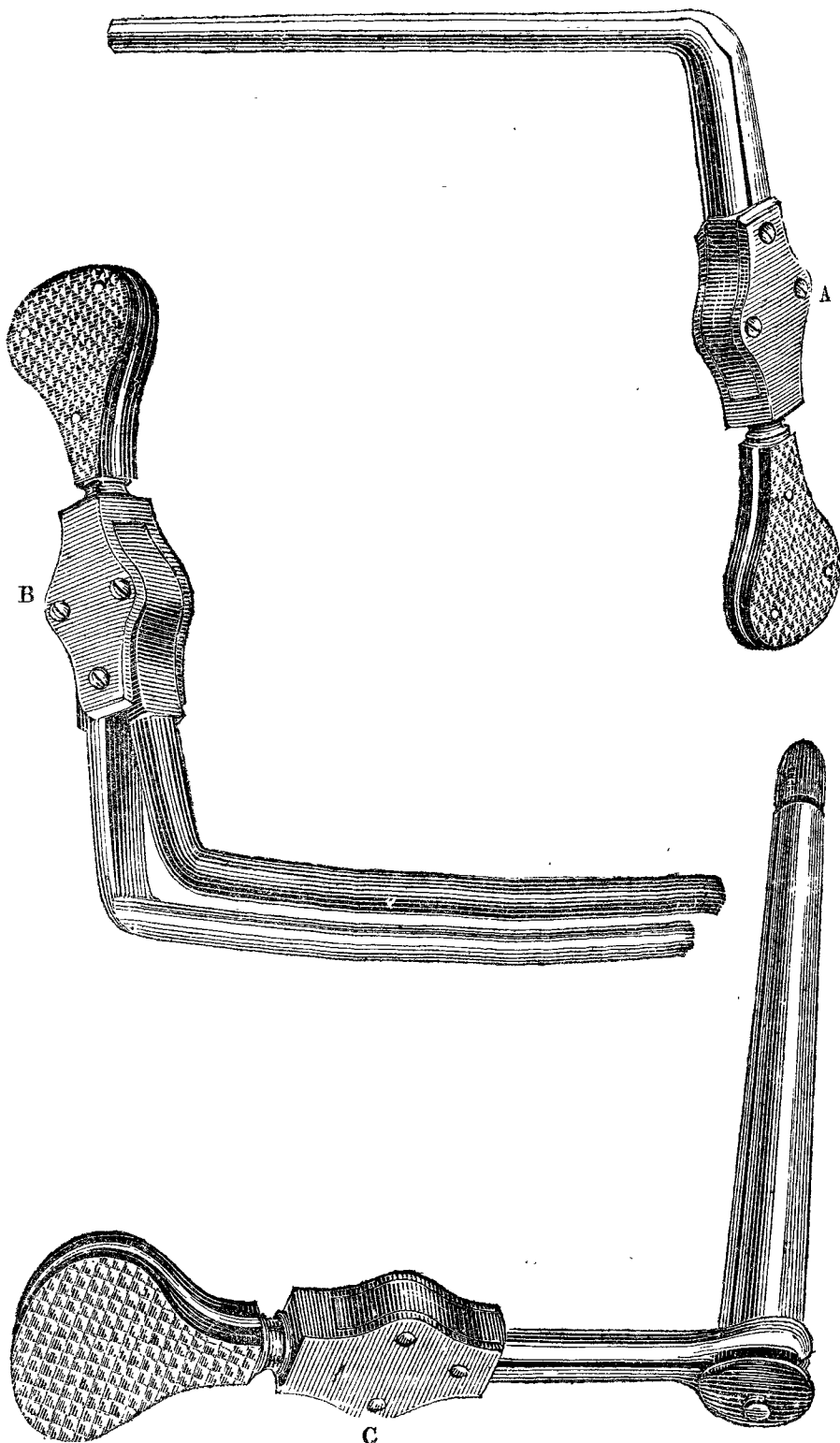
I feel great pleasure, in being able to testify to the incalculable advantage your dilator of the urethra gives to the surgeon in the removal of calculi out of the bladder of women, and the almost *certainly* that the unhappy females afflicted with stones in the bladder can be easily cured, and without any risk of life, or of the powers of the bladder.

You are at liberty to make what use you please of this communication, and I sincerely hope that your ingenuity will be amply rewarded. The instrument with one branch grooved to receive the other, is far superior to the others, as its introduction is much easier to the operator, and much less painful to the patient.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

P. L. SERPH.

Welshpool, Dec. 18, 1827.



Directions.—A., the instrument when closed, which, by turning the handle, will cause the blades to open as B.—C., a speculum ani, which is also used for dilating the female urethra; but the blades of the instrument being large, it cannot be introduced until the part has been previously extended by the smaller instrument.