

## SEPTICEMIA AND THE CURETTE.

---

**T**O attempt to break up an old established custom in any line of life is at best, a thankless job, and one likely to call down harsh criticism upon the head of the daring iconoclast.

To attempt to uproot old prejudices existing in favor of a certain line of practice in surgery, and diametrically oppose such practice, is to invite from some, adverse criticism of the harshest kind. The only recompense for this is a logical refutation of, or concurrence in the argument advanced, on the part of other members of the profession.

This latter is what I hope for, and if I provoke a discussion, or start a line of thought in the minds of half of the readers of this article, I shall have achieved all I started out to do.

Curetting the uterus to remove fragments of after-birth or other debris has been taught in our Medical Schools from time immemorial, and it is firmly fixed in the receptive and retentive mind of every Medical Student that the first move following any such abnormal uterine condition, is to cleanse the uterus by means of the curette.

That the organ should be thoroughly and aseptically cleansed admits of no argument, but that the work should be done with the curetting, I deny most emphatically.

The majority of cases of death following the decomposition of foetus or placenta in utero, are caused by the use of the curette, and I hold that septicemia may be avoided if a more rational procedure be resorted to.

The condition of the uterus containing septic matter is one of great congestion; the thickened walls being coated internally and over the os with a thick, brown, tenacious mucus.

The congestion is active, and therefore the more dangerous in the event of the admission of septic matter into the circulation.

If the curette is used, denuding the walls of their protective covering, an immediate vaccination takes place with a septic virus, septicemia following in an incredibly short space of time (chemical metamorphosis is marvelously rapid in the circulatory system) and death quickly ensues.