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LACERATION OF THE CERVIX UTERI
AND THE INDICATIONS FOR
ITS RESTORATION.

BY THOS. ADDIS EMMET, M.D.

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It is now twenty-eight years since I first performed the operation for closing a lacerated cervix; seven years afterwards, for the first time, it was fully described by me in a paper read before the N.Y. County Medical Society; and in 1871 a second paper, setting forth the result of some nine years of observation, was presented to the same Society. In the discussion which followed, before an unusually large meeting, the operation received a most flattering endorsement, and without a dissenting voice.

For about fifteen years past the operation has been performed abroad, but the practice has been confined to a limited number of operators, and it has been, with but a few exceptions, favorably received by them.

After a review of all that has been advanced in favor of or against the operation, it may in truth be claimed that the necessity for it has received to a greater or lesser degree the endorsement of every operator who has fairly investigated the subject.

Whatever the incentive may have been with those who have found no place for the operation, their opinions were not based upon an unbiased personal observation, and they would

doubtless protest if a criticism on their own work was so unfairly meted out to them:

This operation has been accepted for a number of years in the United States, where it is generally practised; and I do not hesitate to say that it has been received simply on its merits, for in no portion of the world is the medical profession to-day more active and alive to progress than in my own country.

With some noted exceptions the merits of the operation have not been fairly tested abroad by the profession. To us the reason may be more apparent than to themselves, who may be unconscious of a seeming indifference among many to progress made in other countries; a feeling, I am happy to say, which has no place with us on the North American continent.

An operative procedure which has been practised by the profession for so many years, as this has been, is no longer on trial as to its necessity. The only honest difference which can arise is to determine by observation the limit of its usefulness, within which, it is claimed, more can be accomplished by it than by any other means at our command. Therefore the opinion of the man who never performs the operation is as valueless as that of another who goes to the other extreme; and both are equally censurable.

As the result of twenty-eight years of observation and close study of the subject, I now believe that it should be employed only for the relief of certain reflex symptoms accompanied by more or less impaired nutrition, and to guard