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**RECENT ADVANCES MADE IN THE
THERAPEUTICS OF DERMATOLOGY.**

BY J. E. GRAHAM, M.D.

My object in reading this paper is to bring before the notice of members of the society some of the more important discoveries and improvements made in the treatment of skin diseases.

It is not my intention to give a list of all the suggestions in treatment, and I may perhaps omit some of its more important ones. I will dwell more particularly upon those of which I have had some experience. For the sake of convenience I will divide the remedies and appliances under three heads.

(1.) Instruments and appliances of a mechanical nature.

(2.) New remedies, vegetable and mineral.

(3.) New methods of applying various remedies to the skin.

(1.) The first and most important discovery which I shall mention under the head of instruments, is the method of removing superfluous hairs by electrolysis. This was first introduced by Dr. Hardaway, of St. Louis, and taken up by Dr. G. H. Fox, of New York. It is the only reliable method of permanently removing hairs. The former means employed, such as depilatories, the use of the triangular-shaped needle of Bulkley, etc., were found of little use. The

needles and holder, which I can show you, are similar to those used by Dr. Fox. The operation is performed as follows:—The operator with a forceps seizes the hair, and with the other hand passes the needle, which is attached to the negative pole of a galvanic battery, down into the hair follicle until the point reaches the papilla. The circuit is then completed by the patient seizing the sponge attached to the positive electrode. At the same time the operator retains hold of the hair with the forceps, and gently withdraws it as it is loosened by the electrolytic action. The operation is a tedious one, and is often very painful. The operator, however, acquires a great amount of skill in the use of the needle, so that the process is rendered much simpler. Even after this method, about twenty-five per cent. of the hairs grow again, and require a second operation. The credit of this discovery belongs entirely to America. The English and Continental dermatologists are very slow to acknowledge its value.

The next instrument of which I shall speak is the dermal curette. It was introduced some ten or twelve years ago, principally for the treatment of lupus and psoriasis. It has since been used in other diseases. In psoriasis, when the accumulation of epidermis is excessive, the crusts are removed mechanically by the curette, thus saving much time, as their removal by maceration would be a matter of some days. In lupus the softened diseased tissue is removed by the curette before caustic is applied.

In rodent ulcer I have found it of great service. The diseased tissue is first thoroughly