

please. The after-dinner speeches on this occasion were remarkably good, being, as a rule, bright, witty, and brief. Among those who shone in this particular line were the genial and popular President; two of the most gifted sons of the sunny south, Dr. McMurtry, of Louisville, Kentucky, and Dr. Davis, of Birmingham, Alabama; Dr. St. John Roosa, of New York; Dr. Reed, of Cincinnati; and representatives of the local clergy.

The members extended to their guests a generous hospitality. The visitors from Canada, Drs. J. F. W. Ross and A. H. Wright, of Toronto, were entertained in royal style by the President and the good people of Albany.

#### FORCIBLE DILATATION OF THE CERVIX UTERI.

We had occasion to refer to the dangers connected with this operation a short time ago, in commenting on a paper written by Dr. Joseph Price, of Philadelphia, on the subject of minor gynecological operations. We have recently received from Dr. Howard Kelly, of Johns Hopkins University, an article reprinted from the *American Journal of Obstetrics*, which gives a report of a death caused by a uterine dilator. Dr. Kelly was called in consultation to see a case in which a uterine dilator had been introduced four days before. The patient had all the symptoms of septic peritonitis. A laparotomy was proposed, but the attending physician objected, because he thought the patient's condition could not be very serious, as she was suffering so little pain.

Five days afterwards the abdomen was opened, when the prospects of recovery were almost nil. Fluid gushed out when the opening was made—about one quart of foetid bloody serum mixed with flakes of lymph. There was extensive peritonitis, involving all of the smaller intestines. Death ensued in a few hours. The uterus was found slightly enlarged from a pregnancy in the third month; it was acutely anteverted, and the dilator had been pushed through the posterior wall of the cervix into the peritoneal cavity.

Dr. Kelly says, in commenting on this case: "He who runs may read. The lesson taught by this awful tragedy is a plain one. The first

objection is manifestly not against dilators in general, but against those dilators which end in a sharp point, and are strongly curved in the dilating blades. The liability to perforate an anteverted uterus with such an instrument is so manifest, that I cannot help thinking that this accident has occurred more than once. A further objection is against the manner of inserting the dilator—*force should never be employed.*"

The doctor then goes on to describe the proper methods of using this modern abomination. His directions are good in a way, but we think that suffering humanity would lose but little if the dilator were calmly consigned to oblivion. In skilled hands the instrument may do good in a few cases, but the dangers connected with its use are so serious at all times, that the novice should consider that he is assuming an awful responsibility in employing it in any case.

#### KOCH'S LYMPH IN TORONTO.

Experiments with Koch's lymph, in the treatment of tuberculosis, are being conducted with much care in the General Hospital, and in the Hospital for Sick Children, in Toronto. The results will be published shortly, but are not very pronounced up to the present time, excepting in a limited number of cases. In a general way we may say that lupus, when not too far advanced, is much benefited by the injections. The prospects are fairly good in the treatment of tubercular glands and joints. Pulmonary phthisis appears to be the least amenable to the treatment, but it is hoped that a few cases, where the disease is in the first, or early part of the second stage, are showing gradual but certain signs of improvement.

We are pleased to know that great care is being exercised in the proper selection of cases, and extreme caution is being observed in the dosage, especially where the lungs are involved. It will require months to fully investigate the results, but we feel confident that they will prove favorable in certain varieties of tuberculosis. The authorities of the University of Toronto are still sending supplies to various parts of the province, but the use of the lymph is still confined exclusively to hospital practice.