

## EXAMINATION.

If a patient with any of the above symptoms comes for advice, a careful visual and bi-manual examination must be made before any treatment is recommended.

Should a patient refuse to be examined—and this is exceptional when the situation is explained—the medical attendant should decline any further responsibility, and no treatment should be advised. The examination should be made, even if bleeding is present, as valuable time may be lost by postponement until the hæmorrhage has ceased.

It is most important to observe rigid aseptic precautions in all manipulations.

In the examination, the condition of the vaginal portion of the cervix and of the cervical canal should be carefully noted.

In the early stages new growth may be found on the surface of the vaginal portion of the cervix, in the lining of the cervical canal, or in the substance of the cervix. Any prominence on the surface of the vaginal portion or any ulceration, i.e., a definite loss of substance, should at once arouse suspicion. A nodule or nodules, hard, inelastic, or irregular in outline, felt in the substance of the cervix, suggest the presence of cancer. If the whole cervix be affected, the relative hardness as compared with the soft elastic body is pronounced.

The detection of high-lying cervical cancers, and cancers of the body of the uterus, is only possible after curettage or digital exploration.

The signs common to the early stages of cancer of the cervix uteri are:—

(1) The definite occurrence of new growth on the surface of the vaginal portion of the cervix, in the lining of the cervical canal, or in the substance of the cervix;

(2) Friability;

(3) Bleeding on manipulation.

(1) The definite occurrence of new growth on the *portio vaginalis* or in the cervical canal cannot fail to arouse suspicion. When, however, thickening of one lip or a portion of one lip of the cervix exists, the nature of the growth is difficult to determine if the mucous covering be still intact. It is then necessary to remove a portion of the affected tissue and examine it under the microscope.

(2) Friability is a sign of the greatest importance, and may be tested by the finger nail, curette, uterine sound, or an ordinary long probe. Degrees of friability exist in early cases, depending upon the amount of interstitial tissue contained in the growth.

(3) The occurrence of free bleeding after the slightest manipulation is, when combined with friability, a valuable diagnostic aid.