

As to the latter means, the speaker expressed the fear that there was a tendency to use the instruments too frequently. In the period from 1815 to 1821, 21,867 cases of labor were treated at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, without the forceps being used once. The present practice in this institution is such that forceps are now used on an average of 1 in 16.5 cases. The use of the forceps when the head is high up is a serious operation always and should not be undertaken lightly.

Unnecessary delay, when the head is in the pelvic cavity, is not only useless, but dangerous. By timely interference we lessen the risk to both mother and child. It is quite impossible, however, to lay down any precise rule as to when the forceps should be used in lingering labor. Every case must be treated on its merits, after a careful examination of the effect of the pains.—*Brit. Med. Jour.*

## THE TREATMENT OF HÆMORRHOIDS.

Dilatation of the sphincter may not, in a surgical sense, be worthy the name "operation." If such is the case, I advise the "family doctor" to appropriate it, for, with the multiplied and multiplying specialties devoted to diseases affecting all organs and tissue between the fields of the alienist and chiropodist, inclusive, there is very limited territory in which he may practice.

My confidence in the superiority of the treatment by dilatation was secured by the same nature of accident which convinced the French surgeons—that is, by observing the complete and permanent disappearance of a number of large internal pile tumors in the case of a gentleman who, in connection with his other trouble, developed an anal fissure, dilation for the cure of which also cured hæmorrhoids.

Dr. Brenton of this society reports similar experience, his patient being a lady who had suffered greatly from strangulation of the tumors and great loss of blood; her fear of any operation suggested for the cure of the piles was to great to be overcome, but the fortunate intervention of an anal fissure induced her to consent to the procedure of dilation, with the result of curing both fissure and hæmorrhoids and her speedy restoration to health.

I have used no other method in affecting the radical cure of piles for the past eight years, and during that time have succeeded in curing many cases of the most aggravated character. I will not now state the number of cases nor the percentage of cures, realizing that advocates of new methods too often excited distrust by alleging too much. I know of no condition that would forbid application of this treatment. I have applied it at almost every stage of pregnancy, in four hours succeeding labor, in patients suffering from cirrho-

sis of the liver far advanced, in cases complicated with enlarged and indurated prostate gland, those with urethral stricture—in fact, I know no reason, where it is demanded for relief, why it should not be resorted to. In 1888 Verneuil reported the result of his application of the treatment during the 14 years then just passed. He alleged 98% of cures. He made no distinction in the cases, "both external and internal, old and recent, large and small, those associated with relaxed sphincters and those with the opposite condition." My experience with the treatment has been no less satisfactory than that reported by Verneuil.

The dilatation is affected as follows: Hook the thumb of your left hand and the middle finger of your right hand so as to include both sphincters on opposite sides of the anus and gradually but forcibly separate your hands until all resistance ceases, the object being to paralyze the muscles completely. It is commonly advised to oppose the thumbs, but in a great many cases the resistance will be found so strong that it will be impossible to separate the thumbs a sufficient distance. I have in some cases found the sphincters from long contraction developed to such a degree as to give the impression of pulling on an iron ring. I have never known any bad results follow the procedure. No after-treatment is necessary, except in cases where there is complaint of smarting, which may be relieved promptly by the application of a pledget of cotton saturated with a 4% solution of cocaine. It is always advisable to perform dilatation under the influence of an anæsthetic, the A. C. E. mixture being the one I always use.—*Dr. Higgins in N. Y. Med. Jour.*

## WIRE-GAUZE FOR SPLINTS.

Permit me to call your attention to the zinc, wire-gauze splint. This has been for many years a great favorite with me. One who has a little ingenuity can do almost everything with this as a splint.

I consider it the splint par excellence for the country practitioner, and in fact can see no splint which would be better for any surgeon in ordinary cases.

It is made from wire  $\frac{1}{16}$  of an inch in diameter, and woven into squares of the size of  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch across, and is well zinced together.

In going into the country, it is often a matter of conjecture, and sometimes of serious study and misgiving, as to what is necessary to take for a splint. It is not at all convenient, as I have sometimes found, to take a box of felt splints, or splints of various kinds and shapes and sizes, if one is so fortunate as to be so supplied, which is not usually the case. Splints made from pasteboards or wood for the occasion are often unsat-