

had not been adopted by other practitioners. He could claim the merit of having introduced it to the profession here, and of having greatly simplified its action and use by running it into free cylinders, which could be used as easily as those of nitrate of silver, and with nearly as little risk. He had used it in scores of cases, for fourteen years, without accident, and did not consider there was any reason for apprehension, provided the operation was skilful and cautious. At the same time he never applied it to *destroy* indurated tissues, but merely to set up eliminatory inflammation, under the influence of which the indurated parts softened and melted. When applied to the os, care ought to be taken that the orifice of the cervical canal did not subsequently close too much. He had had several cases from the country, treated by other practitioners, in which the os uteri was all but closed, for want of these precautions.—He had never found any difficulty in redilating the narrowed os; but it was better to prevent such a result occurring than to remedy it when produced.

Dr. BECK spoke at great length on the subject of the paper. He denied many of the statements of the author. First, he said that the mucous membrane of the cervical neck was not highly vascular. He denied that the uterus was connected by the sympathetic nerve with most of the other organs of the body. He declared that cellular tissue did exist in the uterus. He denied that ulceration of the uterine neck frequently existed in virgins, and declared that the use of the speculum was not warranted in some of the cases mentioned by Dr. Bennet, in which a single symptom was persistent. He then ridiculed the notion that severe disease of the womb could exist for a long time in connection with a state of "robust health" as had been stated in one of Dr. Bennet's cases. He called into question the accuracy of the definition of ulceration, as given by Dr. Bennet, and denied that an open state of the os uteri was necessarily pathognomonic of inflammation. He denounced the potassa fusa as a dangerous remedy, and related a case in point, in which this remedy, with a series of what appeared to be barbarous operations, had been performed upon a young woman, who it was said had closure of the os uteri. Dr.

Beck, however, refused to furnish the society with such information as was thought necessary by the President and some of the fellows to substantiate the case.

Dr. TILT spoke of the difficulty of diagnosing between mere erosion and ulceration, and mentioned a case in point; but in practice the distinction is not so important, as they required the same kind of treatment. With respect to a patulous condition of the os uteri, it at all events indicated that something was wrong. He agreed in the main with all that had been advanced by Dr. Bennet.

Dr. BARNES, in relation to the open state of the os uteri, did not regard it as necessarily pathognomonic of inflammation; it might exist as the consequence of fibrous tumors spreading into the cervix, and opening the os by mere mechanical pressure, or the open state might be the result of previous inflammation. He agreed, however, with the proposition of Dr. Bennet, that when it did exist local treatment would be required. He was surprised to hear Dr. Beck speak against examination of the virgin uterus when certain symptoms were present, seeing that he (Dr. Beck) had resorted to the practice in a case lately related to the society. He (Dr. Barnes) had used the potassa fusa in four cases with the best results. He had followed Dr. Bennet in the Western Dispensary, and had therefore seen the same class of cases as those referred to by that gentleman in his work; and candour compelled him to bear his testimony that his observations carried out the correctness of those of Dr. Bennet in the main.

Dr. HENRY BENNET, in reply, stated that Dr. Beck seemed so thoroughly to disagree with him in all his views on uterine pathology, that he thought it best to leave the questions raised in the hands of the members and of the profession. He would merely correct two or three of the many misrepresentations and inaccuracies into which Dr. Beck had fallen in the course of his criticisms. He would first, however, remind the society that the anatomical details which he had given respecting the uterus was given on the authority of the first classical writers of the day, and represented the present state of science. If Dr. Beck, or any other anatomist,