

A NEW TONSILLECTOMY MOUTH-GAG

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Tonsillectomy is one of the commonest and most universal of all operations in surgery and yet little or no improvements have been made in the instruments used for this operation. The universally popular Boyle-Davis gag has stood the test of time and few if any have superseded it. Perhaps custom also dies hard.

I wish to describe a gag in which the ratchet portion is unchanged, but the oral portion has been completely redesigned, to give the following advantages.

1. Elimination of dental trauma.
2. Improved accesibility to both sides.
3. Resilience to absorb the shock of any forceful manipulations.
4. One standard size for all ages.
5. Improved tongue blades.

Elimination of Dental Trauma is almost complete; the curvature of the gag enables it to engage on the molars and at the same time the swept-back curves

lying on the cheek and beneath the malar bones help to distribute the necessary pressure to keep the mouth open. There is no danger of injury to exposed front teeth that may be loose or fitted with gold inlays or bands etc.—an accident that anaesthetists and E.N.T. surgeons sometimes encounter, with subsequent cosmetic disfigurement. In edentulous patients the central curve of the gag engages on the hard palate and its application is equally satisfactory. The dental portion is covered with rubber and is bound down by thin stainless-steel wire.

Accessibility. The swept-back curves permit complete and equal accessibility to both sides, thus easing the process of dissection and ligation. The narrow curved thick arm in the Boyle-Davis gag limits access to one side only. This is avoided completely.

One size only. Owing to lightness in construction and the basic design, only one size is necessary for almost every age. Tongue blades for different ages are necessary, though.

Resilience. The instrument is built of thin stainless steel bent into widely sweeping curves. This gives strength and resilience in every plane, and, should excessive force be used in opening the mouth, this resilience will give a measure of protection in the manner of a shock absorber. Tissue stretching, especially of the mandibular joint and its ligaments, is thus minimized; the tongue taking the counter-pressure benefits likewise.

Tongue Blades. These have been modified in order to further increase accessibility to the mouth. The angle has been rounded off for this purpose. Every blade has an anaesthetic pipe of maximal diameter attached to the long edge of the lingual blade, thus allowing a larger volume of anaesthetic to pass, and there is less chance of blockage of the lumen, while it is easier to keep clean and patent. With the anaesthetic pipe attached to the edge there is obviously less central obstruction.

There are 3 blades in each set, but 5 blade sizes are available. Standard blades can also be modified to fit this gag. Recommended sizes for general use are 2, 4 and 5.

This instrument is used in dental work as well. The makers are Down Brothers, London.

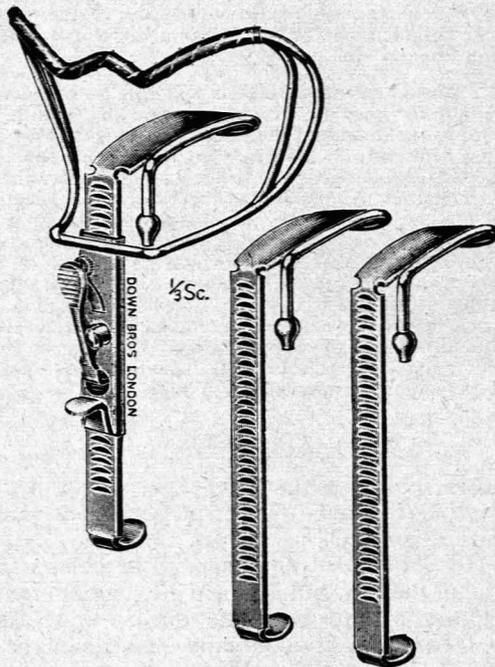


Fig. 1. The mouth-gag described