

lungs is contracted and their action becomes impeded, by a want of tone in the muscular appendages of the respiratory apparatus. And one of the most popular instruments invented to remedy this pathological defect, does, in my opinion, add fuel to the disease. It is so constructed that the shoulders are laced back, and confined so as to admit of little or no movement. Now in order that the muscles may regain their tonicity, it does not appear philosophical that their action should be substituted by artificial supports. Having in view these defects, I have constructed an elastic instrument, of which I would respectfully request your opinion.

April, 1844.

Yours respectfully,

E. R. SMILIE.

P. S.—For the want of proper materials, the article is imperfectly made, but you will be able to obtain the principle that I wish to convey. I have found it a very successful adjuvant in the treatment of pulmonary complaints.

THE SPECULUM.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

WITHOUT wishing the speculum to become as popular with patients in this country as it is said to be in France (*Med. Chir. Rev.* No. 85, p. 30), yet I esteem its merits so highly, that in my opinion anything that shall tend to diffuse the knowledge of it, and render more attainable its practical benefits, is a service to the profession. I have for some time been in the practice of using a speculum, made of the upper part of an argand lamp glass. The one I commonly use is one inch and a half in diameter, and four inches in length. The glass being cut off above the shoulder, and the cut end distinguished by a rim of sealing wax, is completed by a suitable piece of sponge covered with oil silk, and tied to the end of a staff two or three inches longer than the tube. The sponge is then placed in the entering end of the tube for the purpose of acting as a pioneer, to be withdrawn by the staff when its service is no longer requisite. This, in my opinion, constitutes one of the cheapest, most easily introduced, and either for observation, or the application of remedies, one of the most efficient instruments I have ever seen. For the first description of a tubular speculum I am indebted to an article in the *London Lancet*, by Mr. Fenner, some two or three years since. The No. I cannot refer to.

MOORE HOIT.

New York, April 8th, 1844.