

I first used this remedy four years ago. Then, and in several cases in which I have recommended it since, it proved harmless and effectual. If the remote cause of the disease be, as I suppose, a deficiency of the valves, it is, of course, beyond radical remedy. And, accordingly, I find that the complaint, sooner or later, is apt to return, if the truss be dispensed with, and to necessitate a second resort to that remedy. But if it may be said, on this account, that the cure is not radical, it is at least true that the treatment leaves the disease no more than an inconvenience.

The case, the worst, and at the same time the most satisfactory, of all I have treated, came into my hands in January, 1850. The patient, C. R., had himself brought to me, from his residence, twelve miles distant, on his back—a position that, with intermissions of not more than ten minutes, he had maintained for three months, if I remember rightly, and which he continued to maintain, as I will explain, as much longer. He was about 50 years of age, and had suffered from varicocele since early puberty. For several years, so irritable had the parts become, he had been frequently obliged to confine himself, for weeks and months at a time, mainly to the horizontal posture. At such times, as he informed me, the parts affected were inflamed, swollen, tender and unusually painful. As we often see in such cases, the pain had come to be, in a measure, of a neuralgic character. The patient's physical and mental powers were suffering under the constant irritation, and the superinduced hypochondriasis. Bad off as he really was, he thought himself worse, and had as little peace of mind as of body. He had long used a suspensory bag, but of late had found its relief very limited. Other remedies had been tried. He had consulted a good many physicians, and among them two professors of surgery, who, having (very justly) little inclination to recommend the common methods of seeking a radical cure, told him, "if he could not get along otherwise, he had better have the testicle removed." It was, in particular, for my opinion on this point, that he came to see me. I recommended a truss. This was altogether contrary to his theory of the disease. He had read a good deal on the subject, and perhaps was not the easier to manage on that account. I explained my notions to him, and he went away half convinced; consulted his books, and his favorite doctor in the neighborhood where he lived, and came back to me afraid to try it, "for fear the veins would swell up and inflame." This course of proceeding was repeated several times, till at length I gave my views in black and white, fully reasoned out, to all possible contingencies and results. With this memorandum in his pocket, for easy reference, he was able to keep his judgment steady. He got a truss and put it on; and the next time he came to see me, much to my gratification and relief, he came on his legs. In short, he now calls himself well, and insists that I shall "publish his case," or he will do it himself.

A single practical direction in regard to the amount of pressure: it should be quite slight, just enough to close the calibre of the vein. Any easy hernia truss will answer the purpose.

CHAS. C. P. CLARK.

Middlebury, Vt., Dec. 24th, 1850.