

of a much esteemed confrere a year or so ago has caused a repetition of what I have just detailed, and the instances which have occurred within the past few months have been so glaring, and have touched me so directly, that I am compelled in self-defence to protest against such conduct. What right has any body of men, united for the purpose of medical education, to band themselves, to keep within their circle—the chief practice of the city? Is it fair, that a body of gentlemen, composing the Medical Faculty of a University, should so act, as virtually to make themselves enemies towards their graduates? I think not. I feel strongly that the public should have full right to choose their medical attendants, and that medical men already blessed with practices so large, that they are not desirous of extending them, whether connected with a school or not, should not become the champions and *touters*, for a few particular friends. Is it just that in addition to the hard struggle for existence, which is my lot in common with the great majority of the profession, I should have to contend against the influence of those who received my money to teach me my profession. Perhaps I should be charitable. Perhaps, in acting as I have said they *have* acted, they have done so inadvertently—thoughtlessly. If so, I trust that my words, written simply because my manhood rebels against their conduct, will lead them in future to act honorably and fairly to all. As a junior practitioner, I am willing to bide my time. Fair, open, honest professional competition I expect, but the puffing into practice of a favored one or two by those who from age have the public ear is neither fair, just or honorable to the profession at large.

Yours, &c.,

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PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL—CLINICAL LECTURE.

By Dr. R. J. LEVIE.

VARICOSE VEINS AND THEIR TREATMENT BY SUBCUTANEOUS LIGATION.

Varicose veins are frequently met with among persons whose occupation requires constant standing, and the treatment of them is consequently of importance, as the affection entails much suffering upon the patient, and may incapacitate him from undergoing any physical exertion in the erect position.

The veins of the lower extremity are most liable to become varicose; but the spermatic, the hemorrhoidal, and, indeed, nearly all the veins of the body may suffer in this manner upon the occurrence of any obstruction to the flow of blood through them; for the disease consists in a dilated and hypertrophied condition, dependent upon loss of the function of the valves, by which the return circulation is supported against gravity in a long hydrostatic column.

The affection may be caused by a constitutional tendency, as when the heart by its feeble impulse gives rise to venous engorgement; by check given to the portal circulation from cirrhosis of the liver; and whenever there is pressure made upon the veins, as by the gravid uterus, tumors, or enlargement of the lymphatic glands in the groin. The condition is frequently exhibited by blacksmiths and cooks, who are compelled to maintain the erect posture all day, and are, at the same time, exposed to the heat of the fire; and by those who are given to violent muscular action, thereby pressing the blood from the deep veins into the unsupported superficial ones. In all these cases there is a stasis of blood with increased intravascular pressure, producing dilatation of the veins and consequent insufficiency of the valves, which, by failing to support the column of blood against the action of gravity, cause augmentation of the varicose condition of the veins. The vessels are hypertrophied not only in diameter, but also in length, as is conclusively shown by their convolutions and the tortuous course which they exhibit.

As regards treatment of the affection, the surgeon must be governed by the severity of the symptoms in each individual case, for if the patient suffers very little inconvenience, some palliative measures, as the application of tincture of iodine, or the wearing of some supporting apparatus like the laced stocking, is all that is required; but if the condition is attended with great pain, or complicated by the existence of varicose ulcers, some operative procedure is demanded.

This patient, an engineer, suffers from a varicose condition of the internal saphenous vein, which is exceedingly tortuous and dilated all the way up the thigh, though the trouble is confined to the left limb, which is rather unusual when the affection has attained such a marked degree. He has had also an eczematous eruption, which is not an uncommon complication of varicose veins, and is often quite difficult to influence by treatment; but thus far the patient has been free from the intractable varicose ulceration which so often increases the suffering in varicosity of the veins of the lower extremity. The man has been obliged to desist from work on account of the disease, and has entered the hospital for treatment, which shall be attempted by ligation of the veins subcutaneously.

The most effectual, and at the same time, if properly performed, safest operation for the treatment of varicose veins is subcutaneous ligation, which has been practiced many times in this hospital with complete success, and without any unfavorable symptoms.