

perpetual aching pain up the cord, into the groin and down the thigh, tends to direct his thoughts to his ailment, and his life is in consequence often rendered miserable. Howe relates a case where he operated on a man whose mind was rapidly giving way under the morbid influence induced by the presence of a varicocele. In twenty months after the operation he was quite well and able to follow his usual occupation. "Here," he says, "we have evidence of great good having been done, for not only has the varicocele been cured, but a mental state bordering on insanity has been checked, if not entirely got rid of."

I have thus attempted to prove that varicocele, in some persons at any rate, is not so trivial an affair, but actually demands operative measures for its relief, even if some risk has to be incurred in order to effect a cure. It must be remembered, also, that the necessity for operation does not depend so much on the size of the varicocele as on the symptoms it produces. Thus in varicoceles of large size, the pain and discomfort are sometimes very slight; whilst in others, comparatively small and insignificant, the distress is often very great. A patient, otherwise healthy, and about 40 years of age, consulted me two years since for varicocele. The varix was well marked, although not by any means of very great size, but the neuralgic-like pain from which the man suffered was almost unbearable. He was free from pain only when in the recumbent position. I prescribed all the ordinary anti-neuralgic remedies, both internally and externally, and secured for him a well-adjusted suspensory bandage. He was relieved for a time, but subsequently lapsed into his former condition. He now became desperate, and threatened self-mutilation if the organ was not removed. I consulted with my friend Dr. Fenwick, and we decided that, under the circumstances, castration was perfectly justifiable, and I accordingly performed that operation. The man would not submit to any half measures, such as an operation for the cure of the varicocele itself, as he argued that, in the event of its failing, he might be left in a worse condition than before. I may state that castration has been frequently performed under circumstances similar to those just related. Both Aston Key and Brodie report cases almost identical with mine.