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MALPOSITION OF THE TESTICLE, COMPLICATED WITH INGUINAL HERNIA, REQUIRING CASTRATION.

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The subject of hernia is, always has been, and ever will be, one of interest and anxiety to the practical surgeon; its various forms and occasional anomalies, as in the case I am about to describe, all tend to invest it with the gravest importance.

An imperfect descent of the testicle complicated with hernia, I need hardly say is an unpleasant complication. What to do in each case is still a *questio sub judice et vexata*. What is the course to be adopted with regard to the testicle? Is it to be left there, and an appropriate truss (if such a one could ever be properly made) to be worn over the seat of the hernia? Or, should it be removed, in order that the formidable obstacle which it presents to the application of a proper truss might be removed, and thus the future safety of the patient secured?

These were the points which suggested themselves to my mind, when I came to the consideration of what was to be done in the following very interesting case, which has lately come before me. The subject is a young man *æt.* 25. stout and healthy, lately married. When four years old he was ruptured on the right side, for which he was trussed for more than two or three years, when the truss was discontinued as he was considered cured. Such, however, did not prove to be the case, as the hernia recurred when he grew up, sometimes requiring considerable trouble in its reduction. It was noticed also, that the testicle was not in its natural situation in the scrotum. He often tried to wear a truss, but never could, on account of the severe pain and sickening sensation it invariably

caused. He went on for some years in this way, the hernia occasionally coming down, but always being capable of being reduced until a few days ago. March 14th it descended, and he could not succeed as usual in putting it back. He remained in this state for two days, when he came to consult me. On examination I found a direct inguinal hernia, with the right testis behind and outside, lying in the inguinal canal opposite the external ring. The hernia was about the size of a hen's egg, very tense and very tender. The testicle could be distinctly made out; it appeared to be considerably atrophied (not half the size of its fellow), and could be pushed up the inguinal canal as far as the internal ring, where it was brought to a stop. I reluctantly tried the taxis for a short time, but the parts were very tender, and as other symptoms were not very urgent, I determined not to persist but to try the application of a cold evaporating lotion, composed of muriate of ammonia, *spts. vin. rectificat.* vinegar and water, and await results.

In the meantime I had to arrange what course should be followed in case of a reduction being unsuccessful. The conclusion I came to, was to remove the testicle at the time of the operation for the relief of the strangulation. The following reasons influenced me in this:—1st. It was atrophied, and consequently useless. 2nd. Paget says undescended testicles are very prone to cancer. 3rd. Its removal ensured the proper application of a truss, without which he was always carrying his life in his hand. Indeed, I extended the reasoning further, and determined to propose castration, even if the hernia became reduced.

The lotion was sedulously applied for eight hours, when I again visited him. I then found that the hernia had disappeared, but that the testicle was still *in situ*. The inguinal region was still very tender; accordingly he was directed to continue the lotion. The following day his bowels were moved, and in a few days more he became convalescent. When he was thoroughly recovered I broached the subject, and laid before him the narrow escape from a strangulated hernia he just had, and that at any time a similar danger might again arise. He was always going about with his life, as it were, in his hands. The great danger arose chiefly from the abnormal position of the undescended testicle, which prevented a truss from being worn; as long as it was there he never could