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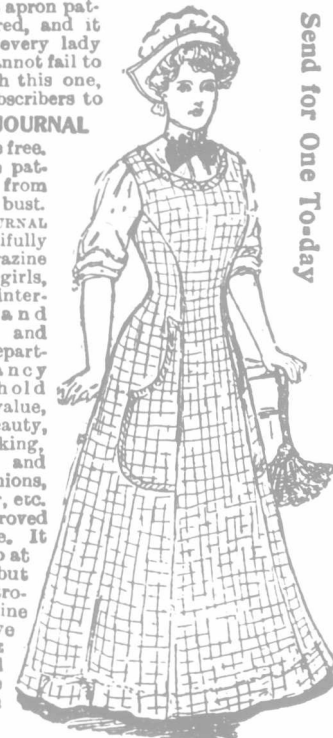
THE HOME JOURNAL

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shifting harness is required, and the movements of the animal are not so likely to interfere with their operation. Simple pressure, continuously applied, that would keep the extruded parts within the abdominal walls as effectually as we can with our fingers do it temporarily, would be all that is needed. This discovery leads to bandaging; the medical man with infants to deal with, who can be so frequently "trussed" and generally controlled, at once supposes that a bandage is all that is needed. There are thousands of people who would thank him to show us how to keep it in its place. Armatage's truss has not yet been improved upon for the purpose.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES OF OLD FARRIERS of using strong mineral acids can be traced back to Celsus, who wrote in the first century A.D., but whose Latin descriptions of surgical operations betray his reliance upon the much older writings of the Greeks. He was not himself a practitioner, save as an amateur, treating his own dependants.

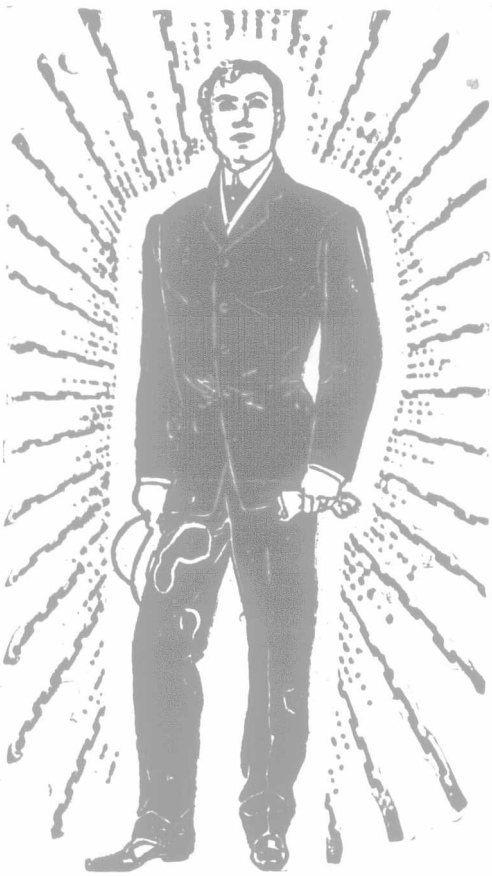
These bold practitioners dab the base or margin of the tumor with nitric or sulphuric acid by means of a mop made of cotton wool or spun glass, and rub it in with moderate friction. A scar forms, and a lot of swelling ensues. The swelling is due to the action of the nitric acid on the subcutaneous connective tissue, which is infiltrated, and causes a uniform pressure on the hernied mass, this leads to the latter being pushed into the abdomen and kept there as if by a truss. The skin subsequently becomes dry and hard like parchment. In place of the hernia there is a newly-formed hard mass of fibrous tissue, which is gradually lessened by the absorption of the softer portions, and condensation of the remainder, just as one sees in a fresh and in an old scar on one's own hand. Like all heroic remedies it has its risks, and a too liberal use of acid may so injure a thin skin as to allow the gut to break through with a fatal result. For puppies it should never be employed, and any one but an experienced veterinary surgeon attempting this operation should begin by spots of acid around the base. An interval of three weeks should be allowed if the swelling proves that the acid has been too cautiously used before making another application. Some practitioners prefer sulphuric acid; their method is to draw lines over the tumor with a glass rod dipped in the strong acid. Others use an ordinary blister of biniodide of mercury. This is safer, and not much less reliable than the strong acids, but may need repetition in a fortnight if the navel is seen to be again disposed to bulge.

A METHOD

advocated by Bouley, will commend itself to many. It consists merely of injecting a solution of common salt into the connective tissue immediately under the skin by means of a hypodermic syringe, such as are used for injecting calves suffering from husk. This acts as an irritant, and produces the same oedematous swelling as the other remedies and with like results.

There are cases in which none of the foregoing will serve so well as constriction by ligature, clams, or suture. The skin covering the hernia may be so manipulated as to enable one to pinch it up, apart from its contents, and wind a more or less tight string around it, or place a clam of wood or metal on it, or run a needle through and tie the thread, or wooden (or wire nails) skewers crossed and wound round with twine in a figure of 8. (The latter method has been used by ourselves, and found very satisfactory. Ed.) They all act by setting up a form of inflammation which first produces fluid, and subsequently organized tissues of a fibrous material, admirably calculated to form a stopper to the hole in the belly, and afterwards, by its gradual contraction, to bring the edges of the walls together. Too great pressure from either the above measures will endanger sloughing and the escape of the intestine. The modest fee usually charged by the veterinary surgeons for operating on navel hernia is well bestowed, but there are many of our readers not only in British Colonies but scattered all over the world, who must either undertake these jobs themselves or let them alone, as the great ranches are too wide for a veterinary surgeon to be available, and a hundred miles often separates the animal owner from the animal doctor—Vet. in F. & S.

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