

The Operative Treatment of Inguinal Hernia 29

of the rent should be secured by a pair of Spencer-Wells' forceps. Provided that it be recognised at once, opening of the sac at this stage is not likely to lead to serious difficulties, but if it should escape notice and the sac be badly torn, the subsequent ligation of the neck of the sac may be a very difficult proceeding.

The edge of the sac having been secured, the next step is to separate it in a transverse direction from the normal structures

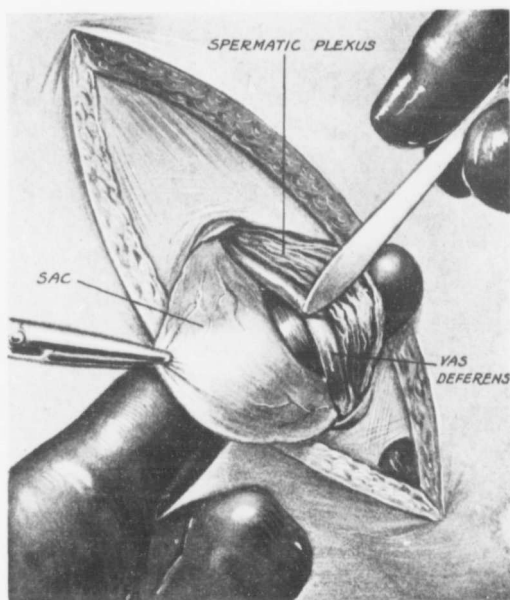


FIG. 8.

of the spermatic cord. A great help at this stage is to keep the various structures well spread out. This may be effected by traction on the edge of the sac on one side and convenient fascial strands on the other, or the left forefinger may be introduced behind the cord and the sac and other constituents be well spread out over this. Transverse separation is effected by gradually peeling away the veins of the spermatic plexus by means of the blunt dissector until the opposite margin of the flattened-out sac is reached (Fig. 8). Isolation and separation