

MR. HATTON AND DR. AIKENHEAD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ASSOCIATION MEDICAL JOURNAL.

Manchester, April 2nd, 1855.

SIR.—Dr. Aikenhead's last letter scarcely requires or admits of a rejoinder, as he entirely evades the facts stated in my former communication, under the subterfuge that it was a sufficient answer to my statements, that I refused his proposal to refer the matter to arbitration, after having publicly stated my willingness to do so.

Perhaps it would be difficult in the whole range of controversy to find a piece of cooler assurance than this. It is quite true that I declined to enter into any correspondence or discussion with Dr. Aikenhead regarding the case; and it is also true that I may be said to have declined an arbitration, inasmuch as I gave him no answer.

Before Dr. A. published his correspondence in the JOURNAL he knew all this; but when he published, he made the profession at large the arbiters between us, and when I meet him before this tribunal he says this is not what he wanted.

Did it never occur to Dr. Aikenhead that there might be private reasons why I should dislike to be brought into further contact with him? Did he not know that there was a general condemnation of his unfeeling allusion (in his first letter to me) that the patient he was called to see was the "child of Mrs. B., who had unfortunately died under my care"? And again, "the unhappy result of my attendance on Mrs. B." Were these not sufficient to have an influence in my not wishing to be brought into further contact with him? Again, was he justified in speaking of the testimony of the father of the child (whose case we are disputing about) as "a preposterous absurdity."

So long as the Doctor's contradiction of my statement was confined to our respective circles it did not matter; but when he chose to publish the correspondence he must have known that I could not remain silent. Dr. Aikenhead has chosen the profession at large as arbiters between us; I assent, and I challenge Dr. A. to point out the "many inaccuracies, erroneous suggestions, and false inferences" which he says exist in my letter. I have carefully perused that letter again, and I believe it to be in all respects true.

With regard to Mr. Allen's letter, I consider my money too good to throw away in paying for an advertisement to answer such "mischievous loquacity."

I am, etc. JOHN HATTON.

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Fig. 1.

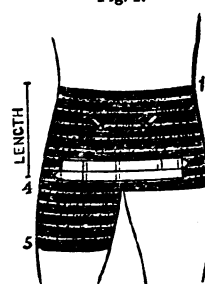


Fig. 2.

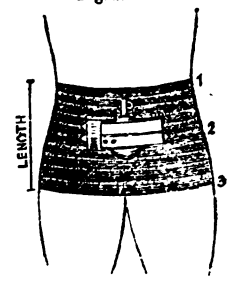


Fig. 1. THE BELT AND AIR-PAD FOR FEMORAL HERNIA.—Mr. BOURJEAUD begs to state that this has been extensively tried, and has met with great approbation, especially at Guy's and St. Bartholomew's Hospitals. (See *Lancet*, Jan. 10, 1852, p. 43; and Mar. 13, 1852, p. 267.) The air-pad is carefully adjusted, so that it may exactly rest on the femoral ring, the tube and stopcock being free, to allow of the pad being subjected to more or less insufflation. The belts in all these apparatuses possess the great advantage of encompassing the abdomen without distressing the patient, and of giving such support to the intestines as to lessen the chance of hernial protrusion. It is, in fact, extremely erroneous to confine the pressure to the rings; the whole abdominal mass should be well supported, and the pressure on the rings will then be effectual, without being exerted with the violence so often connected with the steel trusses.

Fig. 2. APPARATUS FOR UMBILICAL HERNIA.—The belt is of the same kind as those figured in the other diagrams, but an air-pad sufficiently large is here fixed in the centre of the belt, and has the advantage, by its yielding and resilient properties, to fill, in some degree, the umbilical ring; thereby preventing protrusion, and leading the way, especially in children, to the final closure of the ring. Mr. BOURJEAUD has had several cases of radical cure with young subjects. (See *Lancet*, July 12th, 1851, page 33; and Feb. 12th, 1853, page 153.)