



Castration - Advocating the Method of Torsion

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Castration, or emasculation of the normal horse is an operation performed in a variety of ways, each country having its own preferred method. In portions of India, climatic influences prevent the making of an incision into the scrotum, so that the operation has to be performed, either by ligaturing the artery of the cord from outside, or destruction of the artery by the use of two round sticks, an assistant holding the testicles, whilst the operator rolls the two sticks in such a fashion as to bruise the artery; also the barbarous method of crushing the testicles with a stone until reduced to pulp, then leaving what remains of these sensitive organs to the tender mercies of nature. Barbarous as it may seem, it does away with the dreaded sequels, lockjaw and septicaemia. These methods, fortunately, have not come within the pale of Colonial aborigines. We frequently hear of practitioners advocating castration whilst the animal is standing, such a method in South Africa cannot be advocated, unless the would-be operator is desirous of having half a dozen broken ribs. Witness the operation for once, and that will be sufficient to deter you.

A favourite method of castration is that by the ecraseur, in which you have a chain on a wooden or iron frame. After having freed the testicle from the scrotum, the chain is passed over it to about three inches above the testicle; then by gradually twisting the handle of the instrument, or it may be ratchet fashion, the chain gradually diminishes in space,



Ecraseur

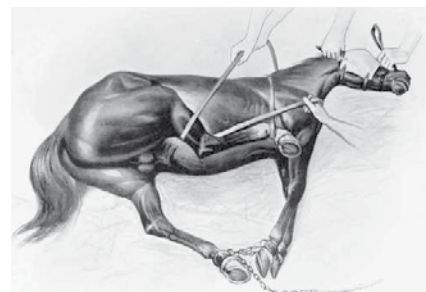
eventually tearing through the artery and integuments. There is certainly very little bleeding; but there is often extensive swelling from the lacerated ends of the vascular and non-vascular cords.

Actual cauterly – This method is performed by securing the cord three inches above the testicle with an iron clamp, then burning the testicle off with a red-hot iron. In this operation there is no bleeding, unless it be that the artery has been severed too quickly. Actual cauterly is certainly inconvenient, necessitating fires, etc.



Castration instruments

The aboriginal method of releasing the testicle from the scrotum, then gradually tearing the cord until the testicle is withdrawn about half a foot, then severing the artery, is certainly not scientific, neither is it humane, because we do not in any way prevent bleeding, but rather, in the horse, enhance it (in young ruminants the artery occludes more rapidly than in horses), and all kinds of devices are resorted to in trying to arrest bleeding, such as knee-haltering, driving into a stream of vlei, covering the loins with wet bags, etc. Why all this trouble? The simplest method, perhaps, second to applying a clamp on both



Horse cast for castration

testicles, including the scrotum, and allowing them to drop off, is torsion, or castration by the ordinary iron or wooden clamp.

Before going into the method, let us glance at the ordinary naked eye appearances of the testicle, when outside of the scrotum. The organ is somewhat oval, having a somewhat soft, round prominence at its posterior aspect, the same on its anterior, but smaller and more adherent to the testicle substance. In the middle, somewhat anteriorly, are the blood vessels, being afferent and efferent. On close examination, we find that from each of these prominences there is a continuance of a cord resembling them in structure, proceeding upward. Between the posterior prominence, to attach it to the testicle proper, is a medium of rigid tissue, white and non-vascular, (and it seems to me that nature has placed this tissue here for the particular convenience of castration).

Having secured the horse properly on his near or left side, wash the scrotum with a solution of permanganate of potash, ten grains to the gallon, in pure cold water, seize the lower or near testicle with the left hand firmly, make the incision well forward, in direct line with the raphe, or medium of the testicles, sufficient