AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION,
ON
Milk Sickness.

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Ritch Sickness

This peculiar and horrible endemic disease, which prevails, in some of the middle and western states, made its appearance in the extreme western part of North Carolina about the year 1830. From that time, up to the present, the disease has been rapidly increasing. The localities in which the disease generally prevails are broken, much diversified with hills, mountains, and valleys.

Symptoms. There are two forms of this disease, the acute and chronic. They are, however, the same disease, produced by the same cause, and differing only in degree. In the chronic form of this disease, the individual is languid, unable to make much
enervation, impaired intellect, torpid bowels, palpitation of the heart, prominence and stiffness of the limbs, trembling mau-
sea, and syncope. If any considerable exertion is made. The pulse varies considerably in the disease, though generally slower than natural. The individual may linger along in this form of the disease, chronic for weeks or months, but unless removed by the sanative means of water or some other remedial means the disease will assume the acute form.

Acute form. The individual is suddenly seized with extreme nausea, prostrated vomiting, syncope, and great feverishness. The temperature of the body and extremities are now greatly reduced, the skin cold and clammy, great distress and anu
Icy symptoms are depicted when the countenance of the individual, the breath acquires a peculiar fetor, the tongue generally swollen and eroded with yellow or dark fur. A complete retroverted action of the stomach occurs, and at every effort of vomiting, a fluid is ejected of a green or dark colour. The eyes have a greenish colour, pupils dilated, dimness of vision, intolerance of light, and giddiness. The bowels are always obstinately constipated, and when the discharge is obtained, they are very dark, and so offensive, that it is almost impossible for anyone to remain in room with the patient. The pulse is slow and easily compressed. Delirium and torpidity are present in this stage.
but most commonly confined to children. The peculiar foci of the broach is pres-
ent throughout the whole course of the
disease. As the disease advances, the
patient complains of acute gastritis-
trains and intense sense of throat burn-
ing in the stomach, esophagus, and fauces
causing him to call out every few min-
utes, loudly for cold water to allay the
burning sensation. The pulse now
increases in frequency, but is still easily
compressed. The extremities and body
are bathed in a cold and clammy sweat,
the eyes are half closed, vomiting so viol-
ent that every article of diet, drink, or
medicine is immediately expelled.
During the intervals of vomiting, the
patient lies on his back, tossing his
nts of the infected localities have suffered greatly from its poisonous influence; however, they did not suffer so much from it, when it first visited the Country, as they do at the present time. When it first visited the Country, it was supposed by some to be a kind of malarial Fever, while others considered it to be a species of Congestive Fever. At the present day, it is considered, by some, to be a species of typhoid Fever. Observations have proved to me, that it is neither malarial, congestive, nor typhoid Fever, but that it is a peculiar disease caused by some unknown poison taken in the System. Wherever this disease prevails,...
The human species, the lower animals, that feed upon vegetation, are liable to a peculiar and fatal disease, called y
Trembles, and that, in the human species, the origin of the disease is in some specific poison, obtained, universally, from the milk, butter, cheese, and flesh of animals that feed in these infected localities, producing the disease (Trembles).

What is the local cause or specific virus that invades these localities producing the disease, we know but little.

There are no two who have attempted to investigate this subject, agree.

I believe that all agree that the disease in the human species is caused by eating the milk, butter, and flesh, etc.
Of animals affected with the poison.

There are various notions about the direct cause of this fatal disease. Some attributed the infection of the cattle to their having eaten of some species of Rhus, or another fungus, or the mushroom, or something of that kind. Others contend that it is caused by the water that the cattle drink, but this is not true, from the fact that it appears in localities, where there is no water, and moreover, water in which the poisoned flesh was boiled remains entirely unaffected, while the meat still retains its poisonous quality. This proves clearly to everyone, that the poison is not soluble in water.
From my own observations, I think that it is of a mineral origin, existing in the soil. Accounts conflict, as each observer judges from the prominent features of his own locality, which may differ in some respect from that of another. The disease makes its appearance in certain kinds of soils only, and cultivation does not destroy the poison. The cause, whatever it is, affects the cattle grazing at night, and in the morning while the dew is on. During the day there is no danger of the cattle being affected with the virus. Those animals that have been gradually accustomed to the range or pasture of affected districts suffer as much as others unaccustomed to it.
Cows exposed to the poison during lactation generally escape, while their offspring die.

While grazing and browsing animals only are affected by the original disease, their flesh will reproduce it in all animals. Carnivorous animals never have the disease, only after feasting upon the carcases of herbivorous animals that have died of the complaint. Those persons that have been affected, once by the disease, are more liable to be affected again than others. If an individual has the disease once, he never will get over it. The only way to do so, is to sweat him and then give him warm water. If he overheats himself, he will feel it sensibly.
The disease does not prevail in the winter and spring. I never have seen a case sooner in the year than the twentieth of June. It prevails mostly in the fall, September, October, and November.

Mortality, progressing. The mortality is obviously stated, some say three out of every six, or one-half. Others five out of six. I have been practicing in the infected localities four years, and have treated a great many cases of Milk-Kickness, with good success. I never have lost a case of Milk-Kickness in all my practice, and have more or less cases each fall.
Of the anatomical character I know nothing as I never have had an opportunity to make a post mortem examination. When the disease is overcome by remedial agents, the heart begins to return to its natural pulsation. The irritability of the stomach subsides gradually, and the vermiform motions of the intestines can be perceived; the skin and extremities take on their natural heat.

Treatment. The prominent indications in the treatment of Child's disease are to remove constipation, to allay gastric irritation, and to counteract debility and exhaustion. Bloodletting and emetics do harm in this disease. Consequently, they should never be used.
Constipation must be removed by active cathartics and stimulating injections. Stimulants must be given freely, as soon as the constipation is removed, and before, if the patient is bad. Peach Brandy and Carbonate of Ammonia are the best stimulants for this disease. I generally take a pint of peach Brandy and one grain of Carbonate of Ammonia, and a gill of Cold water, put them into a bottle, and sweeten it with honey, and make the patient drink it all in twelve or twenty-four, as the case may require. The bottle must be shaken always before taken it. Three grains of blue mass should be given in every night or two. The bowels must be acted on everyday by castor oil. Large blisters should be applied early in the disease (upon the stomach).