

AN  
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON  
*Typhoid Fever.*

SUBMITTED TO THE  
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE,  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY  
*J. Henderson Johnston*

OF  
*Alabama*

185

W. T. BERRY & CO.,  
BOOKSELLERS AND STATIONERS,  
NASHVILLE, TENN.

Syphoid Fever.

60 Living as I do in an Italy-like  
clime in the southern portion of our  
Confederacy where malaria has been  
is and will be through countless  
years an invincible agent of disease,  
it will doubtless surprise you,  
Gentlemen, who compose the faculty  
of the Nashville Medical School, that  
I should select the above subject upon  
which to pen my inaugural dissertation.  
But Gentlemen, "Syphoid Fever" has for a  
few years past been lurking through our  
country in search of victims and where-  
ever the citadel of health promises most  
security from the blighting influences of  
Malaria, that heretofore acceded agent  
which like Sirocco's deadly blast has swept  
athwart our sunny land and left effects  
frightful in severity - it encroaches.

A disease, in itself so invincible an agent of death, that with a stealthy and noiseless march has demolished not only our villages and depopulated our towns, but is making every quarter of the habitable globe from the cold and ice-bound regions of north, to the extreme Southern limits its direful abode.

A disease insidiously treacherous, oftentimes disguised and flattering its victims even to the very portals of death. A disease not only in our midst, but which threatens, as our malarial influences disappear, to invade our community, to destroy the lives of our citizens and to blight with its deadly venom forever the luxuriant peace of the domestic circle. Is this, not therefore, one of the most important subjects that could be presented to <sup>our</sup> mind?

A Theme that has not only attracted for years the attention of the medical profession, but which startles the interests, invades the safety and involves the lives of an overwhelming populace. A fever so well characterized by the extensive observations of Louis, Chomel, Prost and others that its symptoms will now no longer attract wonder autopsies prove that its lesions are nevermore veiled in mystery and its causes are wisely appreciated. How exultingly then should we enlarge the names of those medical heroes who with scientific arms crushed that superstructure, reared by Monsieur Broussais upon which many with dazzling vision and undirected judgment gazed, while

Thousands kneled in blind  
adoration. And 'tis to the sub-  
sequent efforts of Louis that chiefly  
belongs the praise: 'Twas his wise  
conclusions which so advanced  
and favored the study of this  
disease, that we have now so  
complete and glowing a descrip-  
tion of this fever and 'Twas him  
that proved to subsequent patholo-  
gists, that his story is no fabled  
legend, 'tis no Chronicle of obscure  
or doubtless authenticity, but  
hundreds of tongues in our  
own happy land can give  
it witness and the brightest  
pages of literary, as well as med-  
ical history have caught lustre  
from his glorious record.  
In our admiration of his  
observations and his talents

is deposited the monument  
-ent of his greatness. The  
qualities of his own mind  
formed the bases upon which  
he reared a splendid and  
beautiful superstructure. The  
aspirations of his very soul  
told him that man was  
capable of more intellectual  
enjoyment than he possessed.  
He shook off the trammels,  
we may say, of his obscurity,  
he shattered in pieces the  
fetters, which manacled his  
mind and trampled in the  
dust doctrines that are ever  
ready to enslave the thoughts.  
Yes Germany may boast of  
her Wagner England of her  
illustrious Huxam and proud  
America of her Smith or her

Dickson, but their productions  
are fragmentary and incom-  
plete, Compared with the  
labors of Louis, whose am-  
bition burned not for glory,  
not for the jangling wreath which  
encircles the conquerors brow,  
but with fervor glowed for  
unbiased and intellectual  
freedom; so that he might  
undermine the pillars of  
disease and ameliorate  
the condition of suffering  
humanity. He grasped  
not for fame, but he wielded  
the sceptre of his mind in  
his heroic attempts to shield,  
protect and ameliorate  
the condition of his Coun-  
trymen. His efforts  
were not confined to one object

“  
But before him opened many a path  
Ascending where the laurel highest grows  
Her branch of everless green?  
Gentlemen, in presenting to your  
consideration the symptoms and  
treatment of this affection, I  
deem it fit to add, that it has  
never prevailed in our imm-  
ediate neighborhood until Aug.  
last, although it has prevailed  
in other portions of Sumner, as  
well as the adjoining counties:  
Nor were we visited, as heretofore,  
with our usual miasmatic  
fevers. Dysentery was generally  
prevailing during the months  
of April, May, June and July,  
some attacks accompanied  
with fever. But on the fourth  
of August, I was called to see  
a negro girl, Harriet. Oct. 12:



Slave of Mrs. Tvery and upon  
my arrival was informed, that  
She was taken three days  
previous with a chill, followed  
by fever, loss of appetite and  
general languor; at present not  
very sick, neither strictly con-  
fined to bed—her mistress thinks  
it is worn fever. In a few  
moments, the patient was  
presented to me, wearing an  
aspect of indifference, with  
eyelids drooped and manif-  
esting much muscular debil-  
ity. Upon examination, there  
was abnormal heat over the  
surface, pulse 127. quick and  
compressible; tongue lightly  
furred, red, pointed and tremulous:  
persisting headache, somnolency  
and dimmed hearing—Some

mental confusion when roused,  
Tenderness over the epigastria  
and right iliac regions. In ad-  
dition, I was informed by Mrs.  
Lowry, that the discharges from  
her bowels were thin, but not too  
frequent and that I found her  
in the same condition, she had  
been in from the date of her  
attack, as she had not herself  
been able to detect the slightest  
remission in her fever, although  
she had watched day and  
night for an opportunity to  
administer quinine. Such were  
the characteristics of eight cases  
of this disease, that occurred among  
the negroes at this place. Two  
of the white family however were  
taken, <sup>one of</sup> in whom there were  
additional symptoms, making

it a better developed case of this fever, than I ever witnessed at the north where. I have seen a number of cases. This case presented itself, in D. S. a bad act: 13; of a nervous Temperament, rather rugged constitution and rarely indisposed. On the day after he was taken, I visited him and learned that he had a chill the morning before, which lasted during the night, but that during the earlier part of the morning of the day I visited him, the family thought that he was clear of fever and gave him eight or ten grains of Quinine and had administered Calomel the night before. At three o'clock in the afternoon I saw him restless indeed,

delirious, muttering piteously con-  
intelligible words with trembling  
lips and fingers incessantly  
at work, ever and anon picking  
at the bed-clothes or grasping in  
apparent agony at imaginary  
objects—pulse 145—acid heat  
over the chest, features pinched  
and excessive tenderness along  
either side of the spine, bowels  
full, confined and manifesting  
tenderness, as in the other cases.

The rose colored eruption was  
well established over the chest  
on the 8<sup>th</sup> day, to which I cal-  
led the attention of those pres-  
ent. I was unable to see his  
tongue, except the point, for  
three days; so fruitless were his  
efforts to protrude it; but it  
was, as it were, involuntarily with-

down. On the thirty-third day  
his back was completely cov-  
ered with bed sores, amount-  
ing to twenty-nine in number.

The second white case that occurred,  
was a sister of the last men-  
tioned above at: 9; "Though she  
was listless, languid and in-  
disposed to muscular exertion; Yet  
she never was confined to bed  
and passed through the attack  
without taking medicine or  
surrendering to the disease.

This gives in cases of this  
fever, that occurred on this  
place, from the fourth of Aug.  
up to the twenty-seventh of October.

There has doubtless been other  
cases since. Three other  
persons in the neighborhood  
lost this disease, two of whom

were white and had been daily  
visitors to Mrs Lowery's. They  
had the rose colored eruption,  
slight twitchings of the tendons,  
but no delirium. These make  
thirteen cases in all. The  
duration of the attacks, being,  
from nineteen to forty seven  
days.

Treatment — As regards this,  
I believe, it is the general conce-  
ived opinion of those who have  
seen this disease, that it  
ever tends to a termination  
in health and I therefore am  
of the opinion, that all  
remedial agencies that are of  
an active nature, are more  
apt to render complications  
in this fever troublesome, than  
to prevent them and that

Even too much attention in the way of nursing results itself in bad consequences. Mercurium is frequently aggravated by schemes, used by friends to elicit something rational from the tormented patient and of themselves, when emerging as it were from the very portals of the grave, has the subsiding spirit of the frail body been depressed forever by the discouraging expressions inadvertently dropped.

The plan I pursued with these cases, was in the first place, to dry cups them freely on both sides of the spine and to supply them over the cervical vertebrae every day until the pain in the head

ceased. I neither apply the Scar-  
-ificator or Blisters along the Spine,  
for fear of bed sores, which add much  
to the sufferings of a weary and  
bedridden patient. I scarify and  
cup freely over the tender  
portions of the Cervels, for which  
I search day after day and  
order warm poultices to be  
applied, consisting of mush,  
Pulv. Cayenne pepper and Chlor-  
-ide sodium. also cold ap-  
-plications to the head, the  
patient to be occasionally  
sponged with salt and water  
and the room to be kept  
dark, but well ventilated.

The other treatment is  
rather upon the expec-  
-tant plan and springs  
from Dr Stephen's theory, being



in fact a mere modification of his  
prescription. It consists

of Bicarb Potass ʒ ʒ

Sup Carb Soda ʒ "

Nitrate Potass ʒ "

Chloride Sodium 1 "

Aqua Distillata ʒ ʒ ʒ.

Of this a tablespoonful is taken  
every four hours. In ten or twelve  
days or as soon as the tongue  
becomes dry, I commence the  
administration of the oleum  
Terebinthine in ten or fifteen  
drop doses, between the times of  
giving the above. If the bowels are to  
be moved, I recommend enemata of cold  
Slaperry-Elm mucilage or a few grains  
of Colocyinth. If the discharges are on the  
contrary, too frequent, I give the Acetas Plumbi  
in ʒ gr doses in distilled water, slightly acid-  
ulated with vinegar and three times the

quantity by Enema to assist its in-  
-terual exhibition if required. The  
Saline solution is suspended when  
The Lead has to be used, nor should  
The latter be given until three  
or four hours after the exhibit-  
ion of the former. This, with  
cautious regulations as to their diet  
and drinks<sup>59</sup>, constitutes the treat-  
ment which has succeeded so  
well, that of the thirteen cases  
but one died and that was the  
last at 13; who lived until the  
47<sup>th</sup> day and with exceptions  
of the bed-sores required no treat-  
-ment. We died suddenly as if  
from spasm of the diaphragm  
Gentlemen — when I adopted this  
course, it was not more with the  
purpose of rendering strict obedi-  
-ence to Mr Stephen's Theory, than

with a view to avoid an active  
treatment, which has been notably  
unsuccessful in the hands of our  
most skillful and reliable phy-  
sicians. The remarkable success of  
a homoeopathist of Mobile, will doubtless  
convince many of our scientific  
men of that place, that Typhoid  
fever will do better without any  
treatment; than with an ac-  
tive one; since his practice  
the present year will be worth  
at least \$3000. <sup>or</sup> and that  
he treated well developed cases  
of this affection, I think the  
concurrent testimony of the most  
reliable physicians of that city,  
bears sufficient evidence.

With much respect, Gentlemen,  
I submit myself to your kind  
generosity.

J. Henderson Johnston