

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION
 ON
Asiatic Cholera

SUBMITTED TO THE
 PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY
 OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE,
 FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY
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OF
Shannon Tenn

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Gentlemen Proffs. of The University of
Nashville Medical department It is
the duty incumbent on Every Candidate
for Graduation At The End of The present
Session to select and prepare a Thesis on
Some medical subject I as one of the
members of This institution propose
to offer for your consideration some
remarks on The Subject of Asiatic Cho-
lera. One which perhaps is as impor-
tant as any Subject in The Science of med-
icine. A disease which has given more
trouble than all other diseases combined

A disease which seems to be covered deep and
thick with the veil of mystery and ruin
A terror to our land and country and
which is feared even more than Pestilence
famine and war-

A disease which has slain its Thousands
and multiplied Thousands for The last few
years. And gentlemen when The great
men of The present day Tremble even at The
near approaching name of Cholera proving
in some degree a perfect Panic to The community

So I must confess that it is with fear and
trembling that I Endeavour to offer a sin-
gle thought on the subject. yet I will
only speak the things which I know
and testify to the facts I have seen for
much has been said and done concern-
ing this malady all to but little purp-
ose. We see things laid down ^{in some} ~~in~~ medical
works coming from men of fame and
distinction and yet if we notice the disease
of common occurrence we witness signs
which cause us to doubt the Skill and
Judgment of the ~~Scientific~~ ^{Scientific} on the ~~of~~ ^{of} books

but I will proceed with my Subject

Cholera I ask what is it? I confess that
I can't tell And I do not believe that the
Medical Faculty has yet decided; like
Fever we know it when we see it we
meet it and recognize it on all occasions
we combat with it and still we are
unable to define it

Cholera when ever we are introduced
Even afterwards it is familiar to us we can't
see it and not recognize it

It leaves a lasting and sorrowful recollection never to be forgotten as long as we live. Cholera I consider to be the Champion of all other diseases. The monster as the roving Lion seeking whom it may devour and even at this time I can look back with feelings of solemnity where this disease even in this land and country has cast a perfect gloom over the city of Nashville and nearly all the little villages I could mention. Nothing to be seen but Doctors busily engaged hearses traveling to and fro to deposit the dead. The signal of bells announcing the burial of some departed friend. The Planes of the mechanic whirling and throwing of its shavings in the preparation of coffins. The cries of the distressed mourning lamentations. Nothing save these things mentioned could be seen or heard and to some ye to many these recollections will be the dearest spot in memories waste never to be forgotten by friend parents husbands & companions.

I will remember to ^{have} witness many scenes which
ideas fresh in my recollection as though
it was yesterday. This disease has no res-
pect to persons. The rich the poor the
Monarch Kings and all have to yield
and fall at its command.

The origin or first appearance of Cholera
was it in our land and country. I answer
no. we are told that it had long been
raging in India but first began to
attract the attention of the medical
Profession generally about the year
1817. At that time it broke out in Bengal
as a violent Epidemic from Thence it
commenced its fearful march and
did not cease until it encircled the
whole globe. Several years after this
we see it make its way westward and
it seems to have struck the United
States at New York about the year
1831. Since that time it has continued
its march and has not failed to visit
nearly every country and every ^{even} little
Town I could mention.

Confined to no particular Class of Persons
having no regard to Locations Seemingly
to come without a cause disappearing
suddenly seemingly to be controlled as it
were ^{merely} by the winds or change in the
weather For me to pretend to give
any cause or explain its cause would be
presumption in the Extreme. - as men of
Age Science and great Minds have failed
to explain its mystery. Though all I do
believe agree that it is an Epidemic and
truly may it be called so. It seems to
me to act as a Ferment or Leaven
while in the atmosphere if it comes in
contact with any thing which has the
least affinity it Leavens it and partakes
of same nature. not acting as the Leaven
Spoken of in the holy Scriptures as
being of the bread of life but as the
Leaven of death in all its horrors

There seems to be several Stages of
this disease laid down in Books and all
persons who ever witnessed a case of
Cholera are willing to confirm the fact

As it is plainly marked out in the progress of the disease. The first stage is called Cholera operating more mildly on the System than the other stages of this disease. The symptoms in Cholera or first stage is not so alarming and is not always same if I understand correctly. This stage is frequently followed after mild dysentery or simple diarrhoea taking on a more decided character and without counting to true Cholera. This is what constitutes the first stage. Cholera

To give a full detail of all the symptoms in this disease would be a useless task and would certainly weary your patient. So I will only give a few of the most common symptoms in Cholera. We sometimes find the tongue slightly furred a considerable thirst patient constantly calling for water and see impaired digestion uneasiness in stomach vomiting feeling a general weakness and if not promptly attended to in this stage it will often terminate in true Cholera.

~~Symptoms~~ Symptoms in true Cholera we find them much more alarming than in cholera, and when any rational man will think for a moment on this subject I am disposed to conclude that ^{every} ~~ones~~ veins are chilled with terror. It is to me I confess more alarming than even death itself for if I understand the symptoms they seem to depict death in all of its horrors imaginable — Symptoms are such as vomiting purging both incessantly cramping in Extremities and muscles of body muscles of arm and legs also cramping of stomach and bowels the patient sinking rapidly pulse hardly perceptible the blood strangulated as I have been told by respectable Physicians that the lance or Scurf had no effect whatever and even after the veins had been opened that little or no blood showing itself the flesh of patient being much shrunk assuming a purple hue pervading over the whole surface of the body

The countenance changed Prostrations
so great as to change the voice scarcely
to be heard unless very near ^{the} patient

These are some of Symptoms present in
true Cholera though not always
present. I have seen cases ~~of~~ of cholera
where some were wanting in truth
there is no regularity in the symptoms
connected with this disease not like
many other diseases of our country
generally having a regular chain
of phenomena by which we can
form some idea of progress giving
an opportunity for the practitioner to
reflect examine and conclude the
probable progress of the disease and ad-
apt such remedies as are indicated
= Not so with this scourge
It comes as a thief in the night runs
its course rapidly giving no time for con-
sideration scarcely time is allowed for the
administration of medicine
= The character of the discharge from ^{the} bowels
In appearance is such as Soap suds

Mixed with mucous Sparkling
forming as it were seeming to indica-
te irritation in the highest degree This
Characteristic is not in the commence-
ment of the disease generally speaking
Though I have seen it the first opera-
tion from bowels commencing copi-
ous nearly or quite a half full common
Chamber vessel The first move in-
creasing until a vessel entirely full every
move patient sinking down and still
downwards. Gradually changing into what
is called rice water discharges and still
changing until I have seen the dis-
charges as clear as spring water pro-
ducing not a particle of ^{of colour} change on the
bed clothing when it comes in contact
with them = turning off from ^{the} bowels
unavoidably resisting all the means of
Treatment paying no regard to any
whatever when this is the case the
Patient you can see death before your
Eyes apparently in action There is something
in the countenance of ^{the} Patient that will drive

Every hope of recovery fades away, nothing is expected but death and that speedily as I have before remarked there is no certainty in the regular presentation of symptoms. The worst form of Cholera as I believe is where there is but little vomiting hardly any discharge from ~~the~~ bowels perhaps one or two loose stools no perceptible spasms no pain of any kind patient dying without a struggle. I well remember to have witnessed two or three cases of this kind during the prevalence of Cholera in Lebanon this State in the Summer of 1849. month of July & August several Medical gentlemen will testify to the occurrence of these cases as they were present on those occasions.

The most constant symptoms ^{appearing} in this disease as I think is the acceleration of circulation always as I have found a quick small pulse this I have noticed particularly and always finer in a confirmed case of Cholera a small ^{& quick} pulse.

After giving you some of the symptoms present in both stages of this disease though I have not gone into a full detail of them as I deem it unnecessary for I certainly would trespass on your patience I have therefore only presented some of the most prominent

It now devolves that I say something in regard to the treatment indicated and although the remedies which are used in this disease ~~are~~ ^{are} so very numerous ^{that} one can hardly mention them all. yet I am at a loss to now how to proceed but in so doing I will only mark out the course which I conceive to be the best. For if I ~~were~~ to introduce ^{the} ^{opinions} of others on the treatment of this disease I would have to write a large volume on this ^{one} subject and perhaps not only try you patients but at the same time advance nothing strange nor interesting to your consideration

neither do I expect to offer any thing
new to you as I am satisfied that
I am utterly incapable of so doing
I am aware there are great differences
of opinions existing among the me-
dical profession at this day and time
concerning the treatment of Cholera
as this is the case it is hard for
a young man like myself to endorse
either sentiment. So I therefore think
the proper mode to pursue would be
to examine the premises observe from
what I have seen and conclude ac-
cordingly. Some of the standard authors
Mr. Bell Stokes & others have adopted
for the treatment of Cholera the emet-
ic and purgative plans. ^{the} Treatment
Some other authors recommend the
Laxative and Salines ^{treatment} also venisection
in both stages of the disease

In justification of this Treatment they
say that it is nature's mode of deple-
tion as the symptoms commence gen-
erally with vomiting and purging

In order to assist nature they recommend
Spicac & Yoster Emetic in large doses as
an Emetic and Croton Oil as a Cath-
artic. To this plan of Treatment I
can not subscribe for the simple
reason believing that the Purging and
vomiting being the result of a lesion
Existing which produces this state of
Affairs and not a mode of relief I
therefore could not think of giving
the remedies which has been recommended
And in justification of my Position
which is founded more on Observation
than any thing else. I would refer to
the effect produced by this incessant
purging - Every time the patient has an in-
vacuation from ^{the} bowels we see its effect
a constant sinking. This fact is plain
to be seen by all and which will not
be denied by any.

The advocates of the Treatment to which
I have directed your attention contend
that this disease is relieved on ^{the} same
principle that simple dysentery ^{and Dysentery} is relieved

By leaving the congestions of Stomachs
Bowels I admit in ~~Diarrhoea~~^{Diarrhoea} and
Dysentary that there is Congestion
Existing in the intestines and am
fully persuaded that the Laxative
and Saline Treatments is plainly
Indicated. but I do not admit a
Congested State of the Intestines in Chol
era instead of this I believe the Cap
illary vessels to be in a relaxed condit
ion pouring out their contents without
the necessary Stimuli to prevent this
Copious Evacuation from Bowels

In support of this proposition I will
Simply refer to postmortem Examina
tion in dysentary and diarrhoea
What is the condition of the Alim
entary Canal. There can always
be traces of inflammation to some
Extent. In Cholera what is the
condition. I am told that postmor
tem Examination reveals ^{evidence of} inflam
mation. Every portion of the Abdom
inal visceras presenting a relaxed

Colaps appearance no marks of inflammation whatever

I could offer other considerations but deem it useless for the present As it is not my intention to do any thing more than simply reject this plan of Treatment and offer what I consider to be the better adapted for the Cure of this disease and one if I was called on I should pursue

In the Treatment of Cholera there has been many remedies offered to the public some called a Preventative to wit Cannon Agden and many others some are called Specifics - In many diseases I believe there are positive Specifics as in the common intermittent diseases of Country Fever Ague The article - Quinine - properly used will eradicate this disease Entirely in other diseases I could mention Specifics but in true Cholera I believe the Specific has yet to be found - for I have seen Administered and have given a

great many preparations and never have
found much relief resulting from
their use and to attempt to relieve
a confirmed case of Cholera with
any one of these articles would be
folly in the Extremes In Ordinary
Dysentery they may perhaps be beneficial
though I should greatly prefer some gentle
Laxative as the most of them contain
Stimulants and astringents combined
which is only calculated to produce Dia-
phoresis and stop the Evacuation
from bowels whereas the Laxa-
tive ^{treatment} would free the intestines from
any appendage ~~or~~ Irritating Cause which
might exist

The treatment in Cholera not only dem-
ands the deepest research in the Science and
practice of medicine it likewise requi-
res the continued and undivided atten-
tion of the Practitioner he must give
the case if it be a confirmed one his
whole time not like the common
Ordinary Fevers remittent. Continued

The indications of treatment can be fulfilled by another we can give medicine with directions and leave for a ~~while~~^{time}. In Typhoid Fever, we have from four to six weeks to struggle with its continuations we can try a remedy or plan of treatment cautiously and witness its effects. In Pneumonia we know if we use the Lancet Tartar Emetic and local depletion properly we have a chance for succeeding in restoring the sufferer to health. We have some assurance of a quiet nights repose - not so in this felled distemper Cholera we must stay with the patient for if we give medicine and leave perhaps before we return the patient is gone to his resting place never more to return. - Without saying more I will proceed to give my views in regard to the treatment for the cure and removal of this disease. I think the first object should be to remove the symptoms

If vomiting and purging be present I should use every means to arrest it. I believe if these symptoms can be arrested it will afford us time to prescribe such Medicines as require time for their operation which will produce such an alterative effect on the system as to remove ^{cause} or reconstitute the system. Believing that mercury is calculated to produce this change I should prescribe it combined with Sulphate of Morphine. In Pill 6. Grain pills containing 1/2 grain Morphine repeated according to circumstances I prefer it in pill for the reason it would perhaps be more certain to be retained if thrown up repeating until a sufficient amount was retained to produce the desired effect. Mercury being a fine promoter of Assonpleans at same time lessens Circulation. Increasing the secretions of systems I have more confidence in it than all other remedies. The Morphine being a Sedative & Stimulant.

I therefore rely more on these two medicines
than any others I could mention
As I have seen several patient who
was in Collaps State recover from the
use of Calomel & Morphia

I have had some to contend that
Calomel should not be used until
the bowels was controlled. I would
ask the question if it will do good
in this stage why will it not do the
same good in the first stage and as
it requires time for its operation think
the safe plan would be to loose no
time in giving it

but I proceed to give Calomel and
Morphia first and then do every
thing possible to have it retained
by adapting means to quiet the Stomach
also using Mustard freely Extern-
ally over Stomach & Chest & Extremi-
ties Cold cloth or Ice to Throat
also same time using other Remedies
Aromatico & Co to allay the vom-
iting trying all and refusing if do not ^{see}

To control the Evacuations of the bowels is of paramount importance I prefer doing this by per rectum and have found Terebinth of starch gruel and preparations of opium and French Brandy. 60 drops in anam Tea Spoon full Brandy about four or five Table Spoons full of Starch gruel. I think the Terebinth is more certain to be retained the less its bulk or quantity I prefer controlling the bowels in this manner for this reason. to wit: If you throw these medicines into the Stomach you will excite and increase its action, which would cause it to throw off every thing we could give these remedies must be given in proportion to demand of symptoms if you see symptoms decrease by their use lessen if increase increase the amount. I have found the Extract of Tannin to be a good astringent in this disease and after using the preparations

To a certain extent I would substitute the
Yanins which would not produce
the narcotic effects which the opium
would by its continued use

External Stimulation I should
commence this in first stage mus-
tard freely do not wait for ^{2^d stage} colds
to set in The great indications
are to keep ahead of symptoms if
possible as I believe it is much
easier to prevent them than to
overcome them after they make
their appearance

If you find coldness in the com-
mencement of the disease instead
of mustard or in addition to it I
think Turpentine is the best remedy
we could use rubbed freely on Extremi-
ties This I have seen produce reactions
when many other remedies had failed
heating the skin which I would
much prefer a hot skin in cholera
than an icy cold clammy one
sinking the patient rapidly to his grave

Turpentine I believe to be a valuable
remedy in this disease having with
its good effect on several occasions
- Internal Stimulators if Patient is
sinking sustain them by the adm-
istration of Brandy and Quinine
I believe these are as good Stimulants
as we could use The Brandy being
very diffusible and The quinine
more permanent in its nature. I
should always give Ice in lumps
believing it to agree with the stom-
ach much better than water. I
would prohibit the use of any kind
of fluid whatever to be given in
Stomach as I never have seen it ag-
ree with a Cholera Patient accon-
tagiously.utch gentlemen is about
the Treatment. I think indicated in
a confirmed case of Cholera in
a mild form The Treatment should
be according to circumstances of
the case As to the diagnosis it is
not complicated the symptoms being

So very plainly develops a fondling, unmi-
stakable Evidence the disease not being co-
nfined to any particular organ but in-
volving the whole nervous system as I be-
lieve. I therefore will say nothing more
concerning the diagnosis in this disease

Prognosis I hardly think it worth
while to mention as it is generally unfa-
vourable, and I do not wish to dwell
on uncertain determinations

Contagion Much has been
said in regard to the contagion of
this Pestilence. If we look for a
moment the manner in which Cholera
progresses and its determinations we wou-
ld conclude immediately that it was be-
yond a doubt a contagious disease
And many perhaps a large majority
of both the community and Medical
Profession believe it to be directly com-
municated from one individual to
another

I do not impeach the opinions of
any but can not from every investigation

In my conception believe it to be common
scated from one to the second person

I will offer a few remarks in support of
the position which I occupy.

In small pox measles Typhus gonorrhoea
we are satisfied that contagion can and is pro-
pagated by positive contact This is proven
and established undeniable. The striking
phenomenon in these diseases is inflammation
both of a local and general nature. The
Viruses from the operation of vaccination
will show its effects. Let us observe

This is not the case it has been tried
sufficiently to prove that it cannot be propagated
by immediate contact either from blood the conten-
ts of Stomach of cholera Patient. This exp-
eriment was tried by some gentlemen of
Louisville Ky. There is no inflammation dis-
ting and if it is contagious it is certainly
different from all other diseases we read of

I therefore regard it to be portable but not
contagious. The Cause I believe to be in
the atmosphere a miasma similar to the
Causes which produce other diseases in similar
in nature but in construction

I believe that the process of attacking a person depends ^{on} the surrounding circumstances to wit ~~the~~ the continuation of the general system & the surrounding atmosphere being calculated in its nature to produce this disease being impregnated with a peculiar material or miasmata. So I think it may truly be called a constitutional Epidemic

Thus gentlemen of the Medical Department I have given you some of my best views in regard to the Origin Nature and Treatment of this grave disease. And as I expect for the future to practice medicine for a living - and not for aught but little on medical subjects I have devoted but a small portion of time in the preparation of this document as I believe it would be better for me to fail in writing than to fail in securing your confidence in the green room I hope therefore you will excuse me for not offering something better for your consideration than this article contains I am with high esteem your humble student John B Hoays