AN IN AUGURAL DISSERTATION
ON
Bloodletting
SUBMITTED TO THE
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Bloodletting

In speaking of bloodletting as a remedy in disease we include both general and local. By general bloodletting we mean the act of taking blood directly from a vein or an artery. When we take blood from a vein it is called venesection or phlebotomy; when from an artery, it is called arteriotomy. Local bleeding is performed by the application of cups or leeches to or in the vicinity of the diseased part.

Bloodletting is class among the old remedies one of the best classes of remedies we have for the remedy good reason that the great majority of diseases we have to treat are attended with over excitement and by the use of these remedies we reduce the excitement and relieve our patient of a
grate deal of suffering or at least of a grate deal of uneasiness and restlessess and perhaps prevent the onward march of the disease to a more serious termination. For instance in pneumonia, perse by bloodletting, and the other antiphlogistic remedies we can often stop the disease in the congestive stage when if it was let run its course a while longer it would have went through all the stages of the disease. But it is not my intention to take into consideration any of the Specifics except that of bloodletting. We will first take into consideration its effects on the system and its application as a remedy in disease. Its affects on the system as modified by various circumstances.
for instance the effects of this remedy is produced by a much less amount of blood taken from the healthy subject than from one laboring under active inflammation. By bleeding we alter the quality as well as the amount of blood contained in the system the vessels becoming empty readily absorb the water from the system and is pinedless less stimulant. A reduction both in the quantity and quality of the blood has a tendency to reduce the vital action—it depresses especially the heart's action. The langet was formerly resorted to a gratified more than at the present day and as a general rule the people were better able to stand the remedy for they were generally of better constitution.
Consequently when they were taken sick the excitement of the system was in proportion to their physical strength; hence they needed more active treatment than persons of more delicate constitution. But there is no doubt but what the lanseit was familiarly very often used when it was not called for and when it did occasion injury to the patient. But we should not compare the crimes committed in those days by the use of this remedy to that which might be committed at the present time if used to the same extent. For as I have said the people were of better constitution than they are at the present day. So perhaps there was not as much murder in the days as might be supposed to have been
We said in the commencement of our illucidation of the subject under the present consideration that blood letting was a sedative but it is not under all circumstances. The general rule may be said to long as the blood is in excess as regards its animalised or vital constituents under these circumstances the remedy may be used if indicated by acute inflammation of any of the vital organs. But copious blood letting when mistakenly used may act as an excitant instead of a depressing agent to certain functions and especially that of the heart and nervous system—the functions of the system generally feeling the want of their wanted support make it known to the nervous centers and they transmit it
Stimulant impression to the heart causing it to act tumultuously in order to supply the wants of the system. Under no circumstances is the heart made to act more tumultuously than some times in an impoverished state of the blood. This remedy therefore should be used with the utmost caution in anemic states of the system, even when strongly indicated by other circumstances. Blood letting upon the whole is a remedy that should not be used without discrimination for it is a certain fact if we lose our patient no good we do him an injury hence before resorting to this remedy we should use discrimination and be satisfied from the lines and symptoms that it is indicated.
or by the use of it we can benefit our patient. I do not think we could be too cautious of the bad effects which may be produced by the use of this remedy. For it is one of our best remedies in complaints which indicate its use and one of the worst when used in disease regardless of its effects on the system. There are a diversity of opinions as to its propriety of the use of the lancet, some are still adhering to the old system of practice that it is our best remedy in cases of excitement of the circulation especially when attended with fullness of the system. And some that it is our best remedy in all cases of active inflammation others and we believe the greater majority
Of physicians believe it is not applicable even in all cases of active inflammation for instance a patient that had been the subject of the malignant fever until his constitution was broken down was attacked with splenetic who would think of benefitting such a patient by taking blood from him we think we hall better try to get more into him by the use of tonics and good diet and treat the inflammation by counter irritants and if necessary local bleeding general bleeding is by far the best remedy we have for the treatment of acute inflammation of the vital organs
There are several considerations to take in view before resorting to the use of this remedy, both the mode of taking the blood and the propriety of repeating the remedy. All varying greatly in different cases. It is of great importance that we should learn to use this important remedy, so as not to abuse it for its power is great for evil as well as for good and in rash or inexperienced hands too often becomes an instrument of mischief. It is of the utmost importance that we should recollect the effects of the different modes of blood-letting, for it is necessary to bleed patients sometimes who are very much debilitated and
in this case we should incline to produce as much of the sedative effects of the remedy with as little loss of blood as possible. To accomplish this the patient should sit or stand up and the blood be taken from a large orifice. It is of great importance that we should have this in mind for if the blood was drawn from a small orifice while the subject was in the recumbent position the vessels would have time to adapt themselves to the amount of blood in them and the recumbent position favoring the flow of blood to the brain. We might bleed such a patient near to death without producing
but very little affects from its employment. The quantity of blood to be taken varies with the nature of the case. Inflammation of the brain and other vital organs bear the loss of blood better than the less vital organs. As a general rule, the blood should be allowed to flow until there is a decided impression produced on the system or till signs of approaching syncope appear but it should not be carried to complete syncope for there is naturally a reaction after bloodletting and it is apt to be much grater when carried to this extent. It should be recollected that some people lose bloodletting better than others.
the very young and old do not bear it as well as the middle aged females worse than males. the nervous and lymphatic worse than the sanguine and phlegmatic. The Tolerance is affected more by the existing Disease than any other cause. There are many indications for the employment of this remedy as it is not to be resorted to in all cases of active inflammation. We should consider the principles which regulate its employment. There are three things to be taken into consideration first the patient's strength and the state of his constitution. Secondly the part affected and lastly the amount of injury and nature of the
nature of the cause which produces the disease. As to the state of the system, bleeding is born least when the temperament is sanguine and the patient in full habits when he was attacked with the inflammation and, is known was when the patient is debilitated from any antecedent disease. As to the part affected it is known best in inflammation of the brain and other vital organs. There might be an equal degree of inflammation in some of the less vital parts and yet not require the use of this remedy. We will now take into consideration the special indication for the use of this remedy.
The presence of fever especially
when the febrile symptoms are
Well marked indicate the near
cessity of bleeding especially
when associated with a full
hard pulse. The pulse is the last
sign we have for the use of
this remedy but it will not
always do for our guide.
A hard, full, and frequent pulse
we think always indicates the
use of this remedy. So when
we meet with this sort of a pulse
in inflammation of any of the
vital organs we think we are
justifiable in the implantation
of the lancet. Some people are
in the habit of looking at
the frequency of the pulse.
As a sign for the use of the
sunset but the frequency is
worth but little to us as
an indication for the use
of this important remedy for
We may have failed until a frequent
pulse without any inflammation
at all hardness is the best sign
We obtain from the pulse in
relation to the use of the
sunset but it a low will not
also to go by in every case
for it exist naturally in some
people or some chronic disease
of the heart may be the cause
of it. The period or stage of
the disease is an important conside-
ration as to whether we should
resort to the use of this remedy or
not. We should always use this remedy in the commencement of inflammation. The sooner we bleed the more surely will the inflammatory process be moderated. We will not attempt to give all the diseases to which this remedy is applicable. Bloodletting is a good remedy in cynanche trachealis. We draw on the principal that the blood is not duly airdated until it does not afford the proper stimulus to the brain but depresses the functions of that organ by the carbonaceous matter contained in the circulation. And when medicines are administered they also not have their proper effect from the fact the brain is not alive.
to their action here we may give
large doses of emetics and they
will not have much affect—but
if we take away some of this
unpurified blood. The oxygen the
patient breaths may be sufficient
to purify the remainder of blood
and if so the patient will be
relieved of the cerebral depression
by this means we may gain the affects
of emetics when before the use
of the lanter they had but little
affect. With these brief
remarks on general blood
lettings. We will make a few
remarks on local bleeding.
There are two modes of taking
blood in this way one by
the application of leeches
and the other by scarifying the surface and drawing it from the part with a cupping glass. This is an important remedy in chronic inflammation. When the strength of the patient will not bear general bleeding or in active inflammation after the use of the lancet it is an important remedy. When Wish to Arsengorge the capillaries of an inflamed part. Some say it can do no good in this way but they say if it can Arsengorge these vessels they will be immediately filled again but we believe it is beneficial in this way for when it once unloads the capillaries of a part if the blood
is sent back to them in a condition that they can dispense with it. As to which is the best mode of taking blood in this way as a general rule we are inclined to give the preference to cupping, but there are certain cases in which leeches are preferable in situations where we can not apply cups of coarse leeches would be most efficient. General bleeding is best suited to active inflammation and local in chronic or that which is slow in its action but a combination of the two is an excellent mode of treating active inflammation. We may lessen the general circulation by ainesication but the
Capillaries of the inflamed part may remain engorged and by the use of local bleeding unload these vessels and hasten the termination of the inflammation.

The good effects of local bleeding after the use of the lancet is often made manifest by the relief of pain.