

AN

# INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

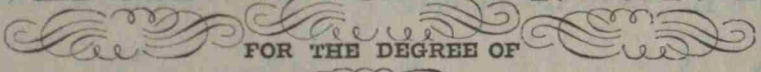
*Prophesy*

SUBMITTED TO THE

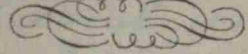
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY

OF THE

## UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE,



FOR THE DEGREE OF



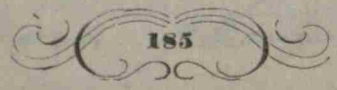
## DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY

*J. J. Pickerton*

OF

*Senior*



185

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

Edema may be defined to be an accumulation of serum in the cellular tissue or cavities of the body. In the consideration of all diseases the point to which we should pay particular attention is to their pathology.

As the pathology of disease is intimately connected with the treatment, and in fact as the rational mode of treatment is based on the pathology of the disease, it is of high importance that we should be well acquainted with the true pathology of the disease so that we may be able to direct our treatment according to the principles of science and of reason. Otherwise it will be mere empiricism. The first pathological state to which we shall direct our attention is irritation.

It is a well known fact, that secretion is greatly increased by irritation until it reaches a certain point when it has advanced beyond this point it decreases. This result is in all probability brought about by an increased flow of arterial blood to the part so irritated. Or perhaps it may be owing in some degree to an increased amount of nervous power directed to that particular tissue or from both these causes combined. Secretion occurring in a case of this kind, might very properly be denominated active. But on the other hand we may have irritation and a relaxation of tissue of the part. then secretion would take place in a passive manner.

It is quite probable that dropsy does not occur very often from the effect of irritation, unless it at the same time should be associated with a relaxed state of the system. The next pathological condition which we shall notice is that of venous congestion. This is one of the most frequent pathological conditions of dropsy. It may result under various circumstances. It may result in an anemic condition, or in a sthenic condition of the system. When the congestion takes place in a debilitated state of the system the dropsy generally commences in the lower extremities, and depends in the first place on the relaxed condition of the blood vessels owing to a want of the necessary stimulating

Qualities of the circulating fluid, the venous blood accumulating still farther favors this condition. until at length the blood vessels permit the watery part of the blood to be forced through, or to pass through by mechanical exudation. The effusion may be in part owing to the downward pressure of the blood, the valves being obliterated, and it is probably owing a great deal more to this than to the force of the blood from behind. We will take up next venous congestion of the portal circulation. there are circumstances attending this which differ materially from the preceding, and which require particular notice.

Verous congestion of the porta circulation  
is the pathological condition of Ascites  
it is generally caused by inflammation  
of the liver or of some malignant  
disease of the liver obstructing the  
blood in the radicles of the vena  
portae and causing it to accumulate  
in the venous radicles supplying the  
vena portae this condition may  
occur in a pathological state  
differing entirely as respects the  
condition of the system. it may  
occur in an anemic or in a  
plethoric condition of the system.  
we can very easily account for  
the effusion taking place by  
remembering that duly oxygenized  
blood is necessary in certain  
limits to give tone to the

& circulatory apparatus and that when  
ever this is disturbed by any means  
the vessels become relaxed, in part  
from the want of this stimulus  
and in part to the deleterious influ-  
ence of blood surcharged with car-  
bon. in this manner the blood  
or its more fluid parts are prom-  
pted to ~~through~~ by the force of  
the blood from behind and as  
I think by mechanical exudation  
owing about as much to the  
pressure of blood in the veins  
as other circumstance which  
favors the arrangement accum-  
ulation of serum in this form  
of congestion is that the absorption  
is principally carried on by means  
of the veins these becoming con-

congested can no longer absorb  
the effused serum. what absorption  
does take place is principally carried on  
by means of the lymphatics. It would  
be reasonable to suppose that absorption  
would be diminished if there were no  
accumulations of blood in the absorbent  
veins because of their relaxed condition.

This relaxed state owing to a deficient  
supply of arterial blood.

Deficient absorption is mentioned by  
writers as being one of the pathological  
conditions of dropsy it is true that  
absorption is diminished in dropsy yet  
the same pathological condition that pro-  
duces the diminished absorption increases  
the effusion and dropsy would take  
place provided absorption should not  
in the least be diminished.



We have passed over what we conceive to be the pathological conditions in dropsy. we shall consider next the causes on which these conditions depend

The causes of irritation among the causes of irritation may be mentioned cold when in a state of perspiration the translocation of gout or rheumatism. long continued disease as intermitted fever or chronic inflammation of the liver the latter acting as a cause by debilitating the tissues and impoverishing the blood. among the causes of a venous congestion are impoverished condition of the blood acting indirectly by <sup>relaxing</sup> impoverishing the tissues. the obstruction by tumours and disease of the heart. and of the liver. are among the most frequent causes, after merely mentioning

Some of the causes I will remark that we may have almost any one of these causes acting on the system and yet dropsy will not be the result, and is generally associated with more than one of the pathological conditions mentioned.

The prognosis is favorable or unfavorable according to the cause if it depend on derangement of the function organ we may regard it as favorable while on the other hand if it depend on organic lesion of some important organ as the heart lungs or liver it is uncertain.

Treatment, in the treatment of disease we should in the first place endeavor to remove the cause of the disease for as long

The cause remains it will be impossible to eradicate the disease.

In the treatment of dropsy we might reasonably expect the treatment to be as variable as the pathological conditions are on which it depends, and knowing that the system may be placed under quite different circumstances, we would readily come to the conclusion that no routine of treatment is applicable or can be adopted with success.

The first remedy which we shall ~~us~~ bring forward in the treatment of dropsy is venesection, now it may sound almost strange, to hear talk of bloodletting in this disease, associated as it is generally with an anemic state of the system, indeed it is scarcely ever indicated, yet we think there

are certain conditions in which  
it would be of great ~~benefit~~ benefit  
as in irritation with active con-  
gestion. in a case of this kind it would  
act beneficially by diminishing the quantity  
and the force of the blood. in irritation the  
secretion depends on the stimulating  
effects of an increased amount of  
arterial blood being directed to the part  
by bleeding we in the first place  
lessen the amount of blood sent to  
the part as well as in the whole system.  
and at the same time promote the abso-  
rption of the effused fluid which ren-  
ders the blood less stimulating and  
by this means lessen the irritation  
which keeps up the congestion

Another condition in which it might  
be employed with advantage is

When we have distension of the blood vessels with impure blood, by bleeding we would decrease the exhalation by relieving the distended vessels, then by giving Tonics and diuretics we should expect to relieve the system of the disease. If the irrita dropsy depends on a debilitated state of the system and a relaxation of the tissues then we should give diuretics to promote absorption while we at the same give Tonics to invigorate the the system, and improve the condition of the blood. in dropsy produced by the gouty or rheumatic diathesis we might expect advantage in the use of colchicum. from the good effects it is capable of

of producing in these diseases,  
In the treatment of dropsy depending  
on congestion of the portal circulation  
our treatment would differ materi-  
ally from that caused by debility  
in a great many cases of this kind  
we will find the system able to  
sustain pretty active depletion,  
two indications are to be fulfilled one  
to remove the cause the other to effect  
the absorption, if the disease depends  
on chronic inflammation of the liver  
we would direct our remedies to the  
liver while we at the same time  
should give other remedies to relieve  
the congestion, we would direct  
a dose of calomel or blue pill at  
night, followed a drastic cath-  
artic in the morning such

as garbage. the cream of tartar  
in combination with galap. and  
if there should be irritation a dose of  
dovere powders would be advantageous  
if not in relieving irritation it  
would be by directing action to the  
skin if the disease results from  
organic derangement of the liver  
such as tubercles or other malignant  
forms of disease we could not  
hope for a cure — our treatment  
could only be palliative. we might  
go on to state a great many other reme-  
dies which are said to have performed  
cures, but the true pathological condition  
should ever be our guide, and following the  
indications we should scarcely err.  
Respectfully submitted to the Faculty.  
J. J. Pinkerton.