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AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON
*Syzyntery as it
appears in its three pathological
aspects,* — — —

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OF
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Do

W. R. Bowling M.D.

this dissertation is—
very respectfully dedicated

By

The Author

Dysentery as it appears
in its three pathological aspects
From the
mixed character of this disease
it has always been a question
among pathologists, how to classify
it, some considered it as an in-
flammatory affection, and that
it was essentially & at all times
contagious; while other writers
appear to establish it as a genus
under the division not of fevers
but of fluxes, without any notice
of fever, or contagion Dr Good
arranges it under two distinct
heads, simple dysentery and
dysenteric fever; I deem it
altogether unnecessary for me to
consider the disease in all of

its species given by the older
writers, but I shall pass them
by & take the disease up as
it appears in its three great
aspects, The first variety that
I shall mention, is the simple
-st form of the disease, and
on that account has been
called dyre^utery, per se, this
form of the disease is generally
very easy to manage if taken
in time; a person may feel
a sense of lassitude, want of
appetite, nausea, depressed pulse
a slight chill; and after the
chill passes off, he will have
heat of the body, great thirst
and dry skin; pain in the
bowels, costiveness & often

diarrhoea, in this division of the disease the patient does not seem to have any malarial or typhoid diathesis, it is phlogistic in its character and seems to be dependent on inflammation of the lower bowels and especially the sigmoid flexure of the colon, the patient has a great inclination to go to stool, the faeces are small mucous and bloody, sometimes there is no blood voided at all they are often of a clay like appearance, or washings of meat when they are of the last kind mentioned, we may consider it as a favourable omen that the disease is

not of such a phlogistic grade
as there would be if they were
bloody or streaked with blood
Hæmorrhæus seems to be almost
a constant attendant with
this disease, and the violence
of this symptom, affords us
a very accurate measure of
the degree of danger which may
accompany the disease in
whatever type it may ap-
pear, the terminæ are very
great and distressing and
the patient will complain
continually of soreness in
the abdomen, The prognosis of this
form of the disease is generally a
favourable one, when the inflam-
-mation is not very great & the

Toemina, Tenesmus, and tenderness
of the abdomen abate & at the same
time the skin becomes moist, we
may come to the conclusion
that the disease is rapidly ten-
ding to convalescence; and if
the stools at the same time turn
to a more natural consistence
we may be almost certain of
the fact,

I shall now notice
the second variety of the disease
A person has dysentery & is at the
same time, under the influence
of malaria; the great character-
istic symptom of this variety,
and which will enable us to
distinguish it from all other
forms of the disease, is the
distinct paroxysms which appear

at different times in the course
of the affection, And although
a great many of the symptoms are
identically the same as in the
variety I have just mentioned
still we can distinguish them
with great certainty & exactness
A person is taken with a high
fever, has a distinct chill, there
is more or less congestion, the
spleen is enlarged, it frequently
begins with a diarrhoea and
afterwards the faeces become
bloody with mucous & sometimes
pieces of fleshlike substance come
off with them; frequent going to
stool; the stools are generally
very small in quantity, And
in the advanced stage of the

disease the faeces assume a very disagreeable smell, the patient may have an intermission or remission, every day or every other day; and as soon as the fever goes off, the dysenteric symptoms somewhat subside and then his whole body becomes moist with perspiration, and with the exception of his having dysenteric symptoms, he will seem to be laboring under ordinary malarial fever in some of its forms. I shall now take up the third variety of this affection. A person who has great debility of the system, with a loss of vital power, is taken with nausea & vomiting, feeble & irregular pulse

with rather a dark looking
tongue, the skin may be very
hot at, one time, & perhaps the
next hour, he will be as cold
as ice, We may say almost for
certain that he will have spots
of some kind about the body;
and they are generally of a dark
color His stools will be dark &
often have a reddish appearance,
they will be much larger and
will have a foetid odor & for
the most part are very offensive
He has diarrhoea in the beginning
and it will continue throughout
the whole course of the disease;
when this is the case, it is a dan-
gerous symptom; the fever is gen-
erally slow and continued

All of these symptoms make out
a disease that is more malignant
and fatal in its character than
any other known to the profession

There is a loss of strength, depression
of spirits, and the patient will
look dejected; this is attended
with violent pains & sickness
& if not skilfully treated, with
great peril, For when the spirits
are much exhausted & the heat of
the system diminished, by such
copious & frequent stools a cold-
ness of the body may ensue and
there is a danger of death even
in the acute period of the disease

Causes Among the various
causes which produce this affection
may be enumerated; obstructed

perspiration by cold, a sudden change in the atmospheric temperature, is a frequent cause of mucous inflammation of the intestinal canal; a cold & moist autumn succeeding, a warm & dry summer is peculiarly favourable to the production of the disease, Some writers assert that malaria has an agency in the production of the disease to some extent I believe it has; but I don't believe that malaria of itself is capable of producing the disease, still I believe that it acts as an agent from the fact that in hot & marshy countries a person may have malarial disease and

at the same time have pure
dysentery, The Torsion of the hepatic
& cutaneous functions in this
disease, is proof enough that the
cause is dependent upon the
united influence of changes in
the atmosphere ^{upon} & malaria.

"Dr - Johnson says most emphatically
that in every case of dysentery that
has ever come ~~under~~ under his obser-
-vation, two functions were invari-
-ably disordered, from the very
onset, these were the skin & the
liver; farther he says I defy any
one who has regarded this disease
at the bedside, to produce a single
instance in which these functions
were carried on in a natural
manner at any period of the disease"

He is very correct in his conclusions, but I think he carries it too far, for most of the late writers in treating of this disease seem to pay but little attention to the liver, as if it underwent but little or no change at all, Let that be as it may, I know that this organ is often disordered in this disease, but whether it follows, as a natural consequence or not I am not able to say, Among the causes may be mentioned; the immoderate use of unripe fruit & indigestible articles of all kinds that have a tendency to irritate the bowels, Post-Mortem appearances, There is more or less inflammation of the large intestines, but in most instances inflammation &

its consequences are found nowhere but in the mucous membrane of the colon & rectum, there is sometimes inflammation of the mucous membrane of the stomach & it has been found of a deep red or purple color, soft & pulpy, and often granulated; there is often structural derangement of the liver, and its whole structure is sometimes apparently destroyed Treatment

In the treatment of this disease it must vary according to the violence of the symptoms & its complications with other diseases. If it is simple dysentery it should be treated like all other simple inflammatory affections, and if there is existing in the system

at the same time a malarial or typhoid diathesis, co-labouring with it, our remedies should be directed accordingly; we should therefore first see which of the three great aspects it may assume; And if after we have made all necessary examinations, we should come to the conclusion that it was a case of simple dysentery, we should give our patient a purge (Epsom salts is one of the best) and then give him an anodyne, if ^{this} does not prove to be sufficient to reduce the local inflammation, we would give a large anodyne. With this treatment the ^{patient's} disease will rapidly tend to convalescence, in a very short time. By some of the old

awiters opium was considered as
a nuisance in the treatment of dys-
-entery; But it is our only sheet-
-anchor in this disease throughout
its whole course I believe it is
the only remedy in the whole category
of medicines, that we can rely
upon in the treatment of dysen-
-tery, I would not take the re-
-sponsibility on myself to manage
a case of dysentery without the
use of opium or some of its prep-
-erations; Where there is great
irritability of the lower bowels
it is a good plan to give Clysters
for this purpose slippery Elm
infusion answers a good purpose
or we may use sweet-oil and
starch, we may accomplish a

great deal from anodyne clysters
for this purpose we may use lau-
-dinum or some of the salts of
morphia in gum water or starch

In the second form of the
disease the patient has a distinct
chill; and it looks reasonable
that we should employ quinine
which is undoubtedly one of the
best remedies we have, in this
form of the disease, the best
plan we can ^upursue is by giving
a dose of epsom-salts & then
give, sulphate of quinine and
if the patient complains of pain
and great tenderness of the ab-
domen, we should give him a
large anodyne; or we can use
as a purge castor oil & turpentine

three parts of the former to one of the latter, we can give calomel or blue mass to advantage where the glandular system fails to perform its natural function, but as a general thing it is not admissible in this disease. In the advanced stage of the disease, when the system is very much reduced we can gain a great deal by the application of blisters. The counter-irritation produced by the blister, seems to overbalance the irritation within & we have a happy result, but we should be particular & not use them injudiciously for they may prove a source of evil, instead of good, to the patient.

The third form or Typhoid diathesis
All writers when they come to
the treatment of this form of the
disease touch upon it as lightly
as possible And of course I am
at a loss to know what is to
be done in such a loathsome
& fatal disease as the one under
consideration, sometimes I
think that Physicians are in the
habit of doing too much in this
affection, & they kill their patients
by giving them active medicines
when they really do not need them
Would Calomel be admissible here
not; by any means, Give calomel
to a patient that is sinking
lower & lower every minute; where
the vital powers & energies of the

system are depressed & he looks like
pale death itself.," To give Calomel
at such a time as this in my
humble opinion, is but to aggravate
the symptoms of the disease & to
hasten the death of our patients
In this form of the disease the
plasticity of the blood is diminished
and to give Calomel, is but to
diminish it still more & we re-
duce our patient, to such a
low state, that it would be
a matter of impossibility to bring
about a restoration I believe
one of the best plans we can
pursue, is, when the bowels
act too freely, (which is nearly
always the case) we should
give large doses of opium & if-

we wish to give something to
placate the bowels of all irrita-
-ting articles, we should give
turpentine, with a small por-
-tion of castor oil. Having in
view at the same time, that
he has a downward tendency
& that we should give him
something, rather to sustain
them to weaken his bodily
strength; for this purpose
we have no better article
than turpentine; and it would
be a good plan to give it
throughout the whole course
of the disease, where the hemor-
-rage is very great, we may give
sugar of lead to advantage com-
-bined with opium. In the

latter stage of the disease we
may sustain our patient with
brandy, or a very good article
is the syrup of dried peaches
In advanced cases, there is
often a predominance of alkali
in the secretions, at such
a time, some of the vegetable
acids are invaluable, "Vale vale

He hoc multi multa omnis aliquid
memo satis.

J. H. Rucker,