

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON
Gossypium

SUBMITTED TO THE
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OF THE

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FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY

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OF

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To John M. Watson. M. D.

This essay is respectfully
inscribed, as a mark of esteem
and regard, by his friend and
pupil

The Author.

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Gossypium Herbaceum
Cotton Plant

In this essay I shall not attempt to give a detailed description of this plant. Every medical man South must be well acquainted with its general appearance. And in consequence of the commonness of this plant I will be saved ~~from~~ the trouble of going over what others have already described. The *Gossypium Herbaceum* is a native of most tropical regions; growing in Asia and Africa: and also in the United States where it is cultivated very extensively in most of the Southern and western States, and yields the cotton of commerce, which is of very great value.

to the farmer. And is much used
 for the construction of Cloth.
 The Cotton lint has been used
 for a considerable length of time
 by the Surgeon for the purpose of
 protecting the surface in burns &
 Scalds from the Air. And for dressing
 blisters. It also forms an ingredient in
 Colloids. The part of the plant, to which
 I wish to call attention, is the inner-
 bark of the root. But little has been
 said or written on ^{this} consequently what
 I shall have to say will be said from
 experience. And as my experience has
 been somewhat limited. I hope as much
 lenity will be shown me as possible.
 And that this will be considered as
 coming from one who has hardly comm-
 enced in medicine. Emmenagogue & Parturient

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properties have both been ascribed to this plant. I shall in this dissertation attempt to describe its effects on the uterine Organs, not confining myself, however, to its parturient effects. I shall first give its effects as an Emmenagogue, then, as a parturient. After which I shall have something to say of its use in preference to that of the ergot of Rye. In Amenorrhoea this plant appears to act as a good Emmenagogue. In Cases produced by an Anemic Condition of the blood it is an invaluable remedy. Given in combination with tonics, such as the preparations of Iron, Guaiac &c. Notwithstanding, however, the prejudices of the Profession are against

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~~On~~ the use of Emmenagogues, I have used it in many cases with much success. Not wishing by its use to bring on the discharge before the system is able to part with it. But by the use of the Gossypium through the month previous to the regular period, ~~the~~ confunction, as I have already said, with tonics, the uterus appears to be better prepared to execute its office. For a patient of this kind I generally prescribe Carb. of Iron with Guaiac, given alternately, with wine of the Gossypium. And unless the patient should be very Anæmic the discharge will, almost invariably, come on at the end of the first month. And if the uterus should fail to act, after the use of the above named remedies,

Which it sometimes fails to do from
 debility - This medicine acts well in
 such cases given in the form of decoct-
 ion. At the commencement of the pe-
 riod. And in cases of Suppression
 from opposite causes and from cold
 exposure, &c. where the discharge has been
 stopped immediately. - The Attendant
 will never find a better remedy than
 this. Often in such cases the patient
 is harassed with Stimulants, baths
 and various kinds of Treatment,
 until the uterus becomes so much en-
 gorged that an irritative Concretion of
 the organ is not unfrequently set up
 which often results in Convulsions
 when if he ^(the Physician) would only avail him-
 self of the means which are placed
 in his reach - he would frequently

Save his patient ~~of~~ all this unnecessary suffering. The Gossypium will undoubtedly produce the flow of the Menstrus in such cases as this.

The mode of administering it is in the form of decoction; in doses of a wineglass-full every half hour or hour according to the effects desired. If we wish to produce the discharge immediately, it must be given in large doses repeated as often as every thirty or forty minutes, until the discharge is reproduced, I shall not fail to mention, as I proceed, its good effects in that painful disease, denominated Dysmenorrhoea. In this Malady, when the failure, in the discharge, is attributable to a debilitated condition of the System and

Uterine organs also, This remedy
 again claims our Special Attention.
 In this Case as in Suppression from
 Anemia, the wine, given in Con-
 junction ^{with} Tonics, appears to exert a ben-
 efitial effect upon the organs, and
 prepares them for the performance
 of their proper functions.

I have sometimes been induced to
 ascribe, to this medicine, some effects.
 It appears to have a Special Tendon-
 cy to act on the Uterine organs—
 And when given in small quan-
 tities and continued for a consider-
 able length of time it appears to str-
 engthen the uterus. Acting, probably,
 on that organ alone, or on the organ
 and its appendages. Experience will,
 I hope, prove this medicine to

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be^a tonic the peculiar tendency,
of which, will be to act on the
uterine organs. Such has been my
experience with the Gossypium, as
an Emmenagogue. Short as it has
been I think I have been enabled to
discover, in its effects, a medicine
which cannot be excelled as an
emmenagogue. I hope the profes-
sion will be kind enough to give
it a fair trial, before they discard
it. For in it they undoubtedly will
find a property, not possessed
by any other medicine of this class
which I have been able to get hold
of.

It will now give a few ideas as to its Parturient effect. The attention of the profession has been called to its effects as a parturient by Dr Bouchell of Mississippi. For several years past, many of our Southern farmers have ascribed abortive properties to this plant, from the fact that many of their negro women abort in the latter part of the summer and fall; and their conclusions ~~were~~ are, that they use this plant as an abortive and also as a preventive of pregnancy. And the experience of the profession accords with their opinions. For it has been ascertained, by experience, that a decoction of the inner bark of the

root of this plant is as effect-
 ual, in producing Uterine
 Contractions, as any other
 Medicine known to the prof-
 ession as a parturient.

In Cases of Labour, where the
 womb fails to act, from weak-
 ness, or when it has been overcome
 by violent Contractions, After
 the Mouth of it is well dilated, this
 remedy will bring on the pains
 most commonly in from twenty to
 forty Minutes. Causing the womb
 to throw off its Contents in a
 very mild and gentle Manner.
 In any and all Cases, where the
 use of a remedy for the expul-
 sion of the Contents of the ^{is demanded} womb
 the Sopsyrium will answer,

producing imperceptible
 Contractions of those thickness
 walls & bringing the organ down
 to its natural dimensions.

The common mode of us-
 ing the Sopyrium is in the
 form of decoction. Made by
 boiling four ounces of the inner
 bark of the root, in a quart of
 water, down to a pint: Dose a
 wine-glass-full, every fifteen or
 twenty minutes, or at longer
 intervals; just in proportion to
 the effects you wish to pro-
 duce so ought the dose to be.
 When we wish to continue the
 use of the medicine for some
 time, the best form is the wine.

To make the Wine of Sassafras.
 Take of the inner Bark of the
 root, bruise, four ounces. Wine
 (Sherry) a pint. Macerate for four
 ten days and filter. Dose one to
 one and a half fluid drachms.

The tincture is sometimes used;
 and is made by taking of the
 bruise bark, six ounces. Diluted
 Alcohol two pints. And proceed
 as usual for making tinctures
 Dose from one to two fluid dra-
 chms.

Its effects on the uterus, as I
 have said before, are mild-
 And very nearly in accordance
 with nature, Unlike the Ergot
 of Rye, it produces periodic con-
 tractions. The pains coming on at
 regular intervals.

I have also
 found this to be the best remedy for
 producing expulsion of the plu-
 centa in cases of abortion, when
 this organ fails to come away from
 the womb. In all such cases, where
 the use of the Ergot is needed, this
 plant will act as well, never, in
 my knowledge, having produced
 any bad effects, whatever, by its
 action on ~~the~~ the uterus

Again in Suppression of
 the Lochia, we sometimes
 have occasion to use some rem-
 edy, for the purpose of producing
 gentle contractions of the walls
 of the Womb. And I feel safe in
 recommending this as the very rem-
 edy that can be given in such
 Cases. I know we do not often
 need a remedy of this kind in
 Lochial suppressions. Sometimes,
 however, the ^{utero} fails to relieve itself
 of the vast amount of blood,
 which has accumulated in its
 walls, during the stage of uterine
 Gestation. And the tonic effects,
 which this medicine appears to
 have, on this organ, are fully brou-
 ght to play in this case.

I will now proceed to offer a few remarks in favour of this remedy, as a parturient, in preference to that of the Ergot of Rye (or Spurred Rye). In doing so, however, I must confess that I feel some delicacy. The Ergot is a medicine, which has been used for many years, by the profession, as the best parturient known. Yet, when we bring into consideration the vast amount of injury, which has been done by the use of Ergot, we are constrained to raise our voices against it. We are consoled too to know that many of the most eminent Physicians, of our Land, are opposing it.

Men, too, who have never
 used the Sassafras. Now, we
 are not disposed to be harsh
 or egotistical, but we are per-
 suaded to believe, that as soon
 as that portion of the profes-
 sion, who are so much in
 favour of the use of Ergot,
 ascertain the virtue of the Sas-
 sassafras, that they will forever
 exclude it ^(Ergot) from their list of
 purgatives and use the Sassa-
 fras alone. And why should
 we use the latter medicine in
 preference to the former? The
 reason is very obvious, when we
 have learned, that the Sassafras
 is not only as effectual in its
 action; but, that it has never

been known to produce any
bad effects, whatever on nei-
ther Mother ~~or~~ Child. While,
on the other hand, we have a host
of evidences which go to prove
that hundreds of Children
have been born dead, whose deaths
were produced solely from the
violent effects of Ergot. And
the list is daily swelling, from
two causes. First, because many
Men who are at present enga-
ged in the practice, do not know
any thing about Pathology, Ther-
apeutics or Obstetrics, as a Science.
Such Men only know that Ergot
will produce Contractions of the
Uterus. And, whenever they have
a tedious Case of Labour,

They appear to be impressed with the notion that it will not do to wait; and they commence strenuously their patients with infusion of ergot; the uterus contracts violently on its contents, long before its mouth is dilated, and the result is, that they will have a Still-born Child. And sometimes great injury is done to the mother also.

Secondly - That labour is performed with much more difficulty now, than it was many years ago, from the fact that our females are raised in idleness, without being permitted to take but little exercise; the consequence, of which, is a lack of development of the

pelvic and uterine organs.

Now, if these things be true, would it not be best to use the Sesquipedium all the time in preference to ergot? Reason will say yes. I hope our Professors will give this medicine a slight trial, at least. The objections to it are not great. In bulk it does not exceed ergot but little. And, more over, the plant is very accessible.

All can be supplied with any amount of the best article, during the latter part of the summer.

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