

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

Measles or Rubella.

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

FOR THE DEGREE OF
Doctor of Medicine.

BY

Jepe Hill

OF

Manchester Tennessee

1858.

W. T. BERRY AND CO.

BOOKSELLERS AND STATIONERS, NASHVILLE.

Measles or Rubella.

This is a contagious, febrile, eruptive fever.

We have no record showing that it was known to the ancients.

The first account we have of it as a distinct disease was given to us by Rhazes, an Arabian writer. He gave us his account during the ninth century. Before this period, it was compounded with small-pox and scarlatina.

This disease is usually ushered in with a chill or rigors; sometimes amounting to a pretty considerable chill, succeeded by heat. The fever is almost always pretty high.

There is usually headache, soreness of the limbs, loss of appetite, furred tongue, constipation of the bowels, a hoarse, hard and dry cough, with but little expectoration; weak, watery and suffused eyes. Sometimes there is bleeding from the nose, epigastric pains, nausea and vomiting.

Most commonly it has all the characteristics of a regular grade of fever. In children it is very often ushered in with convulsions, especially about the time of teething. These symptoms are not always to be looked for. At times there is nearly or quite an entire absence of all the premonitory symptoms; and the first warning the patient has of the approaching disease is the appearance of the eruption, which first makes its appearance on the forehead and face, and then upon the

neck and trunk; and last
ly upon the limbs.

There is usually a period
of two days between the
full development of the
rash upon the face, and
its completion upon the
extremities. The rash is
the only true diagnostic
sign that we can rely
upon. This makes its appear-
-ance about the 14th day,
after being exposed to the
disease; and the 4th day
after the catarrhal symptoms
appear. It is first of a deep
red, but soon changes
to a dark purple.

The eruption is scattered

in every conceivable form: there being no two spots exactly alike: presenting to the touch a rough - goose-flesh-like appearance.

The appearance of the eruption does not cause the fever, and the catarrhal symptoms to subside; but the expectoration becomes more free about this time. By the clearness of sight, and the acuteness of the tactus-eruditus, we can at times detect this disease 12 or 24 hours before it makes its appearance upon the surface. In some cases, this disease runs its

course without any fever
or catarrhal symptoms;
there being no evidence
of the disease more than
the vesicular eruption.

According to Dr. Willan
this form of the disease
has no power of protecting
the system against an
attack of the disease in its
more malignant form.

I beg leave to differ with
the gentleman. I have seen
three cases of the disease in
this form, securing the
patient against a second
attack. I was afflicted
with the disease in this
form in my fifteenth year,

and was the first one,
who had it in the neigh-
-borhood; and from that
it spread, proving it was
measles, there being some
doubt about it before.

Cause of Measles.

They have but one cause,
and that is contagion.

But through what means
are they contagious? Is it
through the medium of
the atmosphere? certainly
to no great extent - for
in order to take the disease
a person must approach
very near the patient labor-
-ing under the disease;

or enter the room, where
the disease has been, only
a short time previous.

In the Spring of 1854, this
disease prevailed in the town
and vicinity of Manchester.

Two families resolved
that they would not have
the disease, and cut off
all communication with
their neighbors, who had
the disease: they continued
in this state until the
disease had entirely sub-
sided in that portion of
the town; and neither of
these families were affected
with this disease.

Diagnosis.

There are but two diseases with which Measles are liable to be confounded. viz - Small pox, and Scarlatina. From the former it may be distinguished by the occurrence of the eruption on the second day of the fever, instead of the fourth, and the regular, circumscribed, and umbilicated appearance of the eruption; and the subsidence of the fever on the breaking out of the eruption in Small pox, which is not the case in Measles. From Scarlatina it may be distinguished by the

17
occurrence of the eruption
in about 24 hours after
the fever sets in, and the
peculiar red surface, as
though it had been rubbed
over with red paint, and
the more regular appearance
of the eruption in scarlatina.

Prognosis.

The prognosis of measles is
generally favorable in un-
-complicated cases. With proper
-treatment, and a good con-
-stitution the mortality is
generally very small.

It is usually more favor-
-able in children than in
adults, & in summer than in
winter.

Treatment.

This in its mildest form is simple, there being nothing required but to get up a gentle action of the bowels, with the compound cathartic pill of the United States Dispensatory: then give a warm infusion made of Senna ʒss. Alva-ursi ʒss. put into a qt. of water, and a small portion of Spirits: the Spirits being regulated according to the age, and previous habits of the patient. In patients where there seems to be a disposition to take on

pleurisy or pneumonia,
and the febrile excitement
is pretty high, we should
extract blood, both local
and general; give Calomel
to act upon the bowels.
Tartarized antimony to
excite diaphoresis; and
blisters over the seat of
the pain. In children
we should avoid blis-
tering & leeching, as
they are apt to produce
fatal consequences;
though we should use
cups over the seat of
the pain, and sinapisms
to the extremities. If
there be much nervous

excitement, give anti-
spasmodics: I should pre-
fer Camphor and assa-
foetida. If there be thirst
give the effervescent
draught; Spts of nitrous
ether; lemonade, and
orangeade. The patient
should live on a light
diet, principally of a
liquid form, and be
kept comfortable, avoid-
ing cold and damp wea-
ther; but let the patient
take as much ~~of~~ fresh dry
air as he may desire, &
the tendency to a relapse
will not be near so great.