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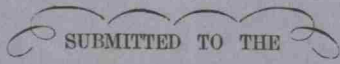


AN

INAUGURAL DISSERTATION,

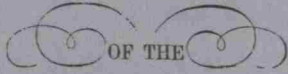
ON

The Use of Tobacco



SUBMITTED TO THE

PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY



OF THE

University of Nashville,



FOR THE DEGREE OF

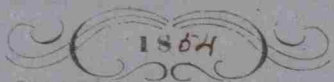
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY

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OF

Alabama



1864

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The Tobacco plant is indigenous to America; but may be cultivated in all temperate climates. Its use as a luxury originated among the aborigines of this continent, from whose example it has been extended to almost every nation of the earth.

Why this self sacrificing and unremunerating practice should have received such unparalleled patronage is a mystery, which neither the records of history, nor the ingenuities of the imaginations have been enable to elucidate.

Yet it is a subject of great interest, and one that should claim seriously the consideration of every individual who engages in this loathsome and degrading

practice. For where on the annals of either ancient or modern history can there be found a parallel to this almost universally followed debauch; spreading like the winds it is accepted alike in the wigwam of the savage and palace of the affluence; disseminating its devastating effects everywhere; disqualifying its subjects for the enjoyment of the blessings of life, and rendering them unfit guests for the most exalted of God's creations; by blunting the acuteness of their perceptive faculties, circumscribing and contracting their intellectual capacities; and ^{it} inflicts incurable disease upon themselves, and degeneracy upon their posterity.

Examine the savage ancestry of the use of Tobacco; search diligently for the

benefits arising from its use and then weigh the misery and death which it has entailed upon Adam's posterity and I am persuaded that the introduction of the use of Tobacco may with propriety be stated as the second fall of man.

Tobacco is poisonous and foreign to the animal economy, an alien to the moral attributes of man, and degenerating in its circumscribed as well as its most unbounded influences, and for these reasons as well as from sad experience I am thoroughly convinced that its place is upon the lists of Therapeutic agents and as such should only be used. And could every worshiper of the demonical idol be properly informed upon this vital and vastly important subject, I should not

be wanting in testimony to sustain me in the above assertions.

But it is to be deeply regretted that the veil of ignorance rendered opaque by the shadows of fashion, and the mist of depravity is still floating unmolested over the intellectual eyes of many of the unfortunate subjects of this tyrannous habit; and nothing but untiring efforts on the part of those who see and know its destructive tendencies can redeem the world from that truly appalling and degenerate state into which it must sink if the use of Tobacco as a luxury be not abandoned.

Tobacco when taken in a concentrated form is a deadly poison extinguishing the flame of life with almost as much promptness and energy as does Prussic acid.

and will it for a moment be contended that man is not violating the immutable laws of nature when he is voluntarily pouring into his system an infusion of that in which the God of nature has stored away for his own wise purposes a positive and active antidote to life?

Ours ears are daily and almost hourly saluted by the invocations of those who are devoting their time, talents, and influence, in endeavouring to expunge from among men the use of Alcohol, while its kindred poison Tobacco, which is found in the hands and mouths of almost every individual, combining in a more concentrated form all the poisonous properties of alcohol, is suffered to pass on without ever being branded with the stigma of

murder, or without one appeal or admo-
nition, to the participant to desist from
this ruinous and paralyzing practice.

When taken in an overdose, Tobacco
produces a state of collapse, which is soon
followed by death. The symptoms are
nausea and ~~from~~ vomiting, palor of the
surface, pulse weak and fluttering,
features sunken and unnatural, cold
clammy perspirations, with hiccough and
death beginning at the heart.

But unfortunately these symptoms
do not follow its use when taken in
smaller quantities; if such were the
fact, its use would have long since
been abandoned, and thousands of
usefull lives would be annually saved,
and Physicians exempt from the melancholy

task of so often beholding without the means of relieving its insidious, but destructive effects.

When used as a luxury, or in small ^{quantities}, Tobacco acts as a stimulant and narcotic; but because it is used in small quantities, often repeated, and the system seems to submit passively to its invasion we are not to conclude that it is not destroying vitality, for it may require months and even years to manifest its effects upon the system; but they will be exhibited, for the laws of nature have been violated, and the annexed penalty must, and will be inflicted, which will be in proportion to the extent of the violation.

Tobacco may produce disease; first, by its stimulating and narcotic

effects upon the brain and nervous system generally, secondly, by vitiating the blood and the secretions in consequence of its absorption, thirdly, by its local stimulation and depletion.

When tobacco is taken into the system of one unaccustomed to its use great disturbance of the whole system immediately follows. The brain being entirely free from its narcotic influence seems indignant at the presence of a substance so foreign and irritating to the demands of the animal economy; and instantly the whole nervous system is aroused to repel the invasion of this deadly foe. But the nervous system being incessantly stimulated and poisoned by tobacco, its energies are soon exhausted and overwhelmed; it

sinks at the invader's feet. But by a sympathetic law, the diaphragm is brought into action, and emesis ensues and thus as a last resort nature endeavours to expell from her province the depressing agent. If by this act the Tobacco is expelled, reaction soon comes on and the physiological action of all the parts, are again established; but by a repetition of this process its narcotic principle is manifested upon the brain, and the sensibilities of the whole nervous system are obtunded, and thus tolerance of its presence is established.

Now we behold in the first invasion of Tobacco the most exalted morbid excitement, followed immediately by morbid debility, the tendency of which is directly towards the extinction of life.

Here we have positively a disease possessing two stages; that of excitement and that of depression, produced wholly by the use of Tobacco, and running parallel in every respect, save that of duration; with that morbid excitement, and succeeding debility of the vascular system, which are always so prominent in febrile attacks from whatever cause produced. But the habit once formed, the system soon seems to become accustomed to its presence, and an actual demand for its use is set up in order to sustain that exalted action, which the use of Tobacco has created; Then such additional portion only more deeply narcotized the brain and renders it more insensible to the demands of the system, and at the same time the

nervous system by its stimulating effects is excited in all of its ~~particular~~ functions, and thus imparting undue action to the vascular and glandular systems, causing them to perform their functions in an exaggerated and unnatural manner, and this exalted action of the whole system is nothing less than disease; for it is a departure from a physiological condition of the system. But this excitement may give rise to other diseases, for it is a law of physiology, that in proportion to the rapidity with which the functions of a part ~~are~~ performed, is its liability to inflammation, and the functions of all the organs of the whole system being increased, and at the same time deprived, in a great degree of the protecting powers of the brain, in consequence of its deeply narcotized condition.

we at once see how easily inflammation may occur either in an acute or chronic form, and this inflammation may occur not only in the vascular, glandular, and muscular systems, but the nervous tissue itself may become its seat, giving rise to ramollissements of that structure. Should this softening occur in a branch of the nervous system, paralysis of the parts to which the nerve was distributed would be the result. if it were situated in the spinal cord, the paralysis would be of a more general character, and if in the brain insanity, and death would result.

But should local inflammation not supervene during the stage of excitement, then the nervous system would persist ^{under} this narcotic stimulus until its vital energies were exhausted and its susceptibilities

impaired which would be manifested by all those symptoms by which we recognize a broken down state of the constitution, such as general torpidity of the glandular system, indisposition to either mental or physical exertion, Hypochondriasis, Dyspepsia, Palpitations of the Heart, Asthma, Night mare, and premature death. By the superovention of local inflammation, or Dropsy, Phthisis Pulmonalis, or sudden collapse of the nervous system.

Tobacco though slow in its progress is certain in its results, for as we have already seen that through the medium of the nervous system it is capable of curtailing longevity, by undermining the constitution, and thus opening the doors of the system, for the reception of disease, and also of producing disease itself, both of a functional and organic nature.

and should life not be destroyed by one of these evils, yet, the subject is left a moving image of misery, for the mind which predominates over the wreck of that once athletic, and unpromising constitution is now wraped in regret, and dispondency, only awaiting the arrival of death to relieve it of that prematurely disorganized body which is now unequal to its office and consequently a fit subject only for the grave.

Tobacco is also taken up by the absorbents and conveyed into the circulation; rendering the blood vitiating, and irritating to all the parts with which it comes in contact, and in this way gives rise to a general state of morbid excitement, which will result in febrile action, and thus run parallel with a superabundant accumulation of vitiated bile, as an excitant of

fever. The solids being built up, and sustained by this oxidating blood, Tobacco is necessarily deposited in them by imbibition and by this process the natural and healthy nourishment of the parts is superceded by a counterfeit, for which the system has no demand, and from which it must suffer materially.

Tobacco also impoverishes the system blood and debilitates the system by impairing digestion, and assimilation, and at the same time keeps up a constant drain through the medium of the highly excited salivary glands.

The office of the salivary secretions is to mix up with the food during mastication and facilitates that process as well as that of deglutition by lubricating the parts and also aids digestion by properly preparing the food for the immediate and easy action of the gastric juice of the stomach.

Now it is evident that if this important fluid be constantly drained off in the form of an infusion of Tobacco, that the food is improperly masticated, and presented to the stomach, a dry and irritating mass upon which the gastric juice cannot fully display its solvent powers. The food is then either ejected by regurgitation or sent on to the lacteals a half digested and irritating mass from which they cannot extract a sufficient amount of nourishment to satisfy the demands of the system: And here we see plainly, that the continued use of Tobacco may not only prove a predisposing, but an exciting cause of Dyspepsia, with all of its concomitant hosts of evils. But let us return to the salivary glands, they are constantly excited to the utmost extent, made to work incessantly.

and the products of their labor instead of returning into the system, and fulfilling their office as nature requires are constantly cast off with the essence of Tobacco: and as we know that the materials of every secretion of the body is furnished by the blood we at once conceive how great must be its loss from this constant drain.

The blood being constantly poisoned, by the direct absorption of Tobacco and cut off from its nourishment by impaired digestion and at the same time sustaining a powerfull drain; is it not evident that this depressing agent acting upon the constitution in all these ways would be sufficient to awaken the slumbering seeds of consumption, and also prove a predisposing cause to Idiopathic diseases? We will next examine the stipures with which Tobacco comes

immediately in contact during the process of chewing; its stimulating qualities are plainly manifested by the sudden congestion and ultimate inflammation of the mucous membrane of the mouth and pharynx which so often follow its protracted use. If this inflammation which is generally of a chronic form confine itself strictly to the mucous membrane of the pharynx little inconvenience will probably arise, save that of a troublesome hawking and spitting, of a tough mucous or muco-purulent secretion. But when we remember that this mucous membrane is continuous with that of the whole alimentary tract, and also that of the lungs we at once conceive how readily this may become a complicated and serious affection.

It may extend it self into the Stomach, giving rise to chronic gastritis, and all the phenomena and suffering of dyspepsia: or the irritation in the fauces may ~~be~~ by sympathy be transmitted to the lower portion of the rectum and there develope it self in that most horraping and obstinate form of disease, Hemorrhoids, or the inflammation may extend from the Pharynx into the Larynx, and distrag by ulceration the vocal cords, the Epiglottis cartilage, and give rise to dropsical effusion into the subcellular tissues of the chin of the Glottis, and death by suffocation: or continuing downwards it may involve the mucous membrane of the Bronchial Tubes, the air passages, and even the air cells of the lungs, and thus give rise to a most fatal form of Bronchitis.

Having traced Tobacco through the several channels by which it may enter, and destroy the animal economy and finding it fully competent to accomplish that object; I again repeat that it is poisonous, and foreign to the system and as such should be found only upon the list of Therapeutic agents; and administered only by the hands of the intelligent Physician.