

AN  
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

*Typhoid Fever*

SUBMITTED TO THE

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BY

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## Typhoid Fever

This is a continued fever characterised by great prostration of strength, and may continue a few days only or extend to many weeks, The forms under which it has been seen are so various, that it has never been decided whether there are several distinct varieties or not. And there is much doubt whether it is, or is not contagious, All not content with any who may entertain a different opinion; Some writers have described Typhoid fever, prevailing as a general epidemic and depending on some unknown cause, Others pronounce

The whole, the effect of contagion; Typhoid fever is not epidemic, it is confined to certain neighborhoods or plantations, Typhoid fever is not contagious in South West Georgia and I doubt it else where. Typhoid fever cannot be carried from place to place by infected persons.

What ever the cause of this disease may be, it attaches itself to places and is very slowly removed, by a free exposure to air and light. Houses have been abandoned for weeks, with open doors, furniture exposed to Sun, and rain, and yet a person may sleep a night in it, will contract the disease, the house is still infected.

Cause of Typhoid fever;

It is a disease produced by human effluvia, this fever appears spontaneously, It attacks the youthful, healthy and robust, in preference to the diseased, the immature or the feeble. Youth and vigor are its chosen victims, and it is a mistake to think that health can delay its attack.

The cause of Typhoid, bilious remittent fevers, stand opposed to each other. Typhoid fever arises from a poison generated in human bodies. It attacks the mature, the healthy, and the vigorous, leaving unharmed the child, the invalid and the aged, it is the scourge of crowds, in houses, in jails, in ships and in cities. And when Typhoid fever becomes formidable,

it will always be found to have originated at a point on which numerous persons had been concentrated, for the purposes of rest and sleep, This fact, so important to be known, can not be placed on evidences too clear, for it is in our power to hinder the origin, and to arrest the progress of this formidable disease. It is obvious that the colored population in our countries, and the poor in all countries are most subject to Typhus, not that they are unprovided ~~for~~ with the comforts of life, but that their habitations are too densely peopled

How then is the virus of Typhoid fever produced, I have stated that it is owing to, too many

persons crowded or sleeping in too small a house or space. It is conceded that cases are often met with, in which the application of this rule cannot be easily seen, These cases are almost always of a mild grade, They are met with by every practitioner, and are called by various names according to their particular symptoms. Each physician will adopt his own name, hectic fever, continued fever, inflammatory fever typhoid fever, or something of the kind, and in two or three weeks the fever subsides without extending to others, These cases never originate in persons residing alone; and I think they are produced by a cause which operates equally on others, but finding in them less suscepti-

bility to the disease produces no effect.

### Symptoms of Typhoid fever

There are certain traits upon which nearly all writers have agreed as being usually characteristic of typhoid fever. In the first place there is always more or less prostration with an impairment of the functions of the nervous system, and a fever which is continuous, but variable in its degree. In the vast majority of cases there is more or less diarrhoea generally of an obstinate, but passive character, and its most constant, pathological appearances have been found to be those which refer to the abdominal viscera, there being very uniformly some special alteration in the follicles

Studding principally the mucous mem-  
branes of the mesenteric portion of  
the intestinal canal, known as the  
glands of Peyer. Most of the  
symptoms signify a debilitated state  
of the mind and body, the patient  
is feeble and easily fatigued, and  
has great listlessness and sometimes  
timidity; the patient is very unste-  
ady in his movements. On enquiry it  
will be found that his bowels are  
irregular, sometimes being affected  
with diarrhoea, but in other cases  
with costiveness; his tongue along  
its centre, will be found covered  
with a thin white fur, and tremble  
when it is attempted to be shown.  
head ache, abdomen tumid and tender,  
running at the eyes and nostrils



palesness of the skin, and a copious discharge of lymphoid urine were not to be distinguished from this common disorder. Wandering pains in various parts of the body, cephalalgia, pain in the back loins and extremities more or less delirium, vigilance, somnolence dulness of hearing impaired vision, soreness of the muscles and occasionally subcutis tendinum, together with prostration of muscular power, pulse accelerated, the average mean of the pulse according to the accurate observation of Dr. Flint is  $95\frac{7}{13}$ , and if the pulse exceeds 115 except for a transient period that the case is of dangerous severity, and the danger increases in more than geometrical ratio if it ~~varies~~ rises above this

point. There is more or less heat of the surface, which varies from a little above the natural warmth, to what is known as biting heat, but we cannot attach much importance to many of these symptoms because we find some of them in most all other diseases.

The singular forms of Typhoid fever which have prevailed of late years in different sections of the United States exhibits to the eye of the medical philosopher the very wide difference of expression it may assume—yea, and I might add, the very singular contrariety of treatment will also furnish them an interesting theme for contemplation.

## Treatment of Typhoid Fever

In a disease so important, so widely diffused and universally known as Typhoid fever; it is painful to be obliged to say, that there is no established mode of treatment. Remedies the most opposite in their nature, and affect, are recommended with equal confidence, and I may say with equal authority. But I am satisfied that there is a preference due to a certain mode of treatment, and I will recommend it; without claiming for it, any originality. We are never to forget that Typhoid Fever is a disease of such obstinacy, that it will often keep its own course, in spite of all our efforts. Do not be in too

much hast, to give your remedy.  
Having made up your opinion as to  
the nature of the case, you will  
select your remedy according to  
the present symptoms and stage  
of the disease. Blood letting and  
cathartics have been the British  
practice, since the days of Syden-  
ham, but I object to the practice.

The remedy I would recommend is an  
emetic. This may be of tartar emetic  
or ipecacuanha, This remedy is called  
for, when there is great sickness at  
the stomach, with heat and fever.  
This remedy <sup>must</sup> be given the first week  
of the disease. The emetic should be  
prompt; from fifteen to twenty  
grains of ipecac in one drachm  
of cold water, followed in ten

minutes by half a pint of cold water if the patient can take it, if not a cup of tea; The emetic is to procure a free evacuation of the contents of the Stomach at once and to lessen the action of the remedy on the bowels as a cathartic.

When the contents of the Stomach seem to be fully discharged, give a dose of laudanum, if the patient is not much exhausted give twenty drops; If the laudanum is thrown up, give a second dose.

Cathartics should be mentioned, but ought to be used with fully as much caution as emetics, and in the most cases they are altogether unrecalled for, and improper.  
Diarrrhea is a common Symptom

of this disease and seldom yields to cathartic medicines. I would recommend five grains of Colomul, followed by a dose of Castor Oil, when there is vomiting and considerable heaving, other wise I would withhold them.

Opium, is one of the great remedies in this disease, if emetics operate with violence, or operate as cathartics, give a grain or two of opium, greater or smaller doses may be given according to the urgency of the symptoms. Opium is a leading article, and if attacked suddenly, with delirium or coma with rapid pulse, or heavy breathing, give opium, give two grains at first, and one grain afterwards two or three times a day, according to circumstances. Its use is

to still the agitation, support the patient, and hinder a fatal termination of the case. When the patient is torpid, the pulse low, and the hands and feet cool, with some increase of fever and restlessness at night, give Dover's powder, say ten grains at night in a little water, in bad cases, repeat the remedy in eight or ten hours, but if the bowels are disordered, or the powder causes vomiting, give twenty drops of laudanum in stead of the powder.

Niter is a cooling remedy, beneficial in this low protracted fever. It may be given in doses of from five to ten grains in water, four or six times a day. This medicine should also be noticed, and if it

operate on the bowels check it with  
Laudanum, The Nitre and Tartar emetic  
might be combined. The power we  
have of lessening the heat on the  
surface of persons in Typhoid  
fever, is one valuable remedy. This  
we accomplish at pleasure, by the  
application of cold water or cold  
air. Patients, in this fever rarely  
complain of heat. They are insen-  
sible, and whether they are too  
hot or too cool, are to be judged  
of by the attendant. If the hands  
and feet are cold it will be pre-  
mature to apply cold in any form.  
But during a part of every day,  
the heat, will be found to be  
diffused over the whole body  
and then it is proper to moderate



it by artificial means and this may be made by cold towels to the head, face, hands, and feet, or to the limbs and even over the whole body. This application should be made when the fever is at its height, and continue untill the heat is reduced, The pulse can be in a great degree controlled by this means; It is common to apply the cold water, from fifteen minutes to half hour at a time, and once or twice a day is often enough to use it, and this remedy may be used from day to day as long as thought necessary. The Cold water will not hinder the return of the fever however cold the patient may be

made. This like other remedies, in this disease, should be used with sound discretion.

Spirits of Turpentine, is highly recommended by some of our able practitioners. Bowling, recommends the following, recipe: Two and a half ounces, Gum arabic, half ounce Compound Spirits of Lavender and one drachm, Spirits of Turpentine mix well, dose one Teaspoonfull every three hours or not so often

Cleanliness, should be strictly observed, fresh air is also indispensable. The clothing of the patient ~~should~~ be changed daily. A free ventilation of the apartment of the sick, is also indispensable. This is to be attended to even in winter.

If the patient's bowels are disordered he will be thirsty, but he will forget sometimes to ask for water, and a reasonable portion of cold water should be offered to him, unless in extreme weakness, some brandy should be combined. In the sinking stage of typhus, give brandy, Two table-spoonsful is a dose. Veratrum Viride is a very popular remedy, but should be used with discretion, it lessens the action of the heart. I have used it in one case only, with good effect. I would recommend but few remedies in this formidable disease, and those that I have mentioned are my favorites. Though a great many others are recommended with equal force. Opium

and Spirit of Serpentin are our  
Shield and anchor.

David Edward Lee