AN INAUGURAL DISSERTATION
ON

Ménstruation

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MENSTRUATION

It is universally known that the human female is distinguished from the male in three distinct peculiarities; namely that of child bearing, giving suck and elimination at stated periods of a quantity of sanguinious or bloody fluid; then the bearing of children and the giving of suck and the menstrual discharge are the three great distinguishing peculiarities that belong to the female sex. At the approach or just before menstruation there are very great and perceivable changes that take place in young girls, you will see a decided difference in their manners and attitudes at the approach of this period, you can also
perceive a decided change in their voices it becomes more harmonious and womanlike; The muscular system also becomes more symmetrical and better developed; The physiognomy assumes a more charming and beautiful appearance. the changes are so palpable and perceivable, that you will be constrained after having been absent for a month or two from a girl to remark what a great change has taken place since you last saw her, you will remark how much like a woman she behaves herself; And now it is that the young girl takes on all the characteristics that belong to the female sex; climate has a decided influence on the female
organs of menstruation, for we are informed that girls who are
raised in hot countries arrive at
puberty or at the period of
menstruation earlier in life than
those who are raised in colder
countries, for instance in Greece girls
menstruate at eight nine and ten
years of age; and as we advance
to the north there is a gradual
protraction of this period un\ill
we reach Lapland, where women do
not menstruate untill a much older
age; and inpart some of them
do not menstruate only during
the spring and summer seasons,
so we plainly see that climate
has a decided influence on the
menstrual organs of females;
The period or age in this Country that girls menstruate is from the fourteenth to the sixteenth year of their lives; and they continue till about the forty-fifth year of their lives, there are symptoms that are familiar to the medical man just before this period of menstruation commences and these are more severe at the first attack then in the succeeding periods, but are perceivable during the whole period of menstrual life; The quantity of fluid or Blood lost at each period differs in different women in the same climate or in the same women at different periods, the average amount
in this country is from two to six ounces, there is also some difference in the time required for the completion of each menstrual period, in some women this discharge returns precisely to a day but in others there is a variation of several days; in some it is over in two or three days, and in others it may last for ten and more, but the average time is from three to six days. at whatever time in life this discharge comes on a girl is said to be at puberty, but as above stated this depends much on climate, or the constitution delicacy, or hardness of living, we know that much depends on
The training or raising of a girl at what time in life she will menstruate, we know girls who are brought up to hard and laborious labor, and fed on a rough diet do not menstruate as early in life as those who are brought up with all the luxuries of life, also those in whom the susceptibilities of the nervous system are exaggerated by their moral and physical training and education, will menstruate earlier in life than those who are brought up roughly. You may take two girls and raise one of them to rough and hard work, and a rough diet, and the other
vice versa, who shall have all the luxuries of life and confined in warm rooms and keep the company of the gay and rude; the latter will menstruate two or three years before, the former, this kind of raising has a decided influence on the premature elimination of the catamenial discharge. Girls who are raised in large cities and kept in school rooms and fed on the richer diet will menstruate much earlier in life than those who are brought up in the country and exercise freely in open air and eat a rough diet.
A great many people think the moon has the power of regulating the time for females to have this peculiar catamenial discharge, but any thinking individual can see at once that this is not the case, if the moon influenced this discharge, would not all women menstruate at the same time, most assuredly they would; and we know that this notion has been for ages deeply impressed in the public minds of men, but we deny the moon having any such influence, for there is not probable an hour or a minute.
of any day in which some women
is not in the beginning or middle
or end of her term; now if the
moon had any influence in this
discharge it ought to be felt by
the map of the female population
on the same day and not by
one in a hundred;
Another hypothesis is that the
menstrual discharge is caused by
general plethora, or vascular fulness,
but we know this to not be
the case, for we see women
menstruate who are not plethoric,
but quite anemic or to a certain
extent bloodless; again you do
not prevent a woman from
her regular menstrual discharge
by bleeding her just before,
The return of her regular period, you may bleed a woman a day or two before her regular time for menstruation without at all hindering or checking her menstrual discharge, besides this there are many lean and scrawny women who loose a much greater quantity at their menstrual discharge than the robust and fat women who you would suppose to loose a much greater quantity at each period, so we plainly see that general plethora can not be the cause of menstruation, or of any more blood being lost at a time and if a woman had to be plethora to menstruate, then
would be but few who would menstruate at all or if they had any discharge there would be little or no fluid eliminated at each period, but we have as high authority as is in the world that women who are quite anemic do menstruate and do discharge or evacuate as much if not more at a time, then those who are quite plethoric or of a sanguineous temperament; there are women who are laboring under severe diseases yes chronic disorders such as will at last bring them to their graves who notwithstanding menstruate regularly,
untill their late decline in the disease, but this is not the case with all women or in all diseases. Some times the slighter shock to constitution will put to flight all this power of life; Notwithstanding how little some times deranges or breaks in upon these organs and hinders them from performing their natural function, so we are not to conclude because a women is not plectoric or that because she is diseased that she dose not menstruate, for women in all diseases and of all classes menstruate; But why it is that woman alone is endangered
with this great peculiarity of function, man has not ever been able yet to tell and we doubt much whether he ever will be able to satisfactorily explain this great physiology peculiar only to woman. The inferior animals none of them are endowed with this great and peculiar function.

It does seem that menstruation peculiar only to woman places her high in the scale above the inferior animals, or that menstruation is her highest endowment, but why it is necessary that woman should menstruate or that she have a
discharge from her genitalia every twenty eight days, we think it is for the well being and good health of the woman; is it necessary that a woman should menstruate to conceive, we answer not women conceives before and after menstruation at all times; notwithstanding few women menstruate during pregnancy or after conception but if a woman who has not conceived misses her period or fails to have her regular discharge does not her whole economy become deranged, it must assuredly does where is a more severe,
disease then amenorrhea or suppression of the menses, we know of none. So then we plainly see that it is for the wellbeing and good health of the woman that she has this monthly discharge. This discharge is from the follicular tubes and uterus, and just before this discharge ten or twenty hours if this discharge was suppressed would it not leave these organs in a state of high congestion and would not inflammation necessarily follow it undoubtedly would and if these organs could not be relieved of their
excess of blood would seem serious disease follow most assuredly it would so this is plain proof that menstruation is a preservative process to health. A woman who is not pregnant can not live long without this periodical discharge, we acknowledge that women do not have this discharge after conception. One out of a hundred may do so, but women unimpregnated to enjoy good health must have this discharge. Monthly, it seems that conception changes the economy of the woman in some way that every thing go on
right without this discharge
but why this is so we
can not tell.