AN INAUGURAL DISSERTATION,
ON
Catamania.
SUBMITTED TO THE
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AND MEDICAL FACULTY
OF THE
University of Nashville,
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE.

BY
H.C. Walker
OF
Alabama

1854
CHARLES W. SMITH,
BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER,
NASHVILLE, TENN.
The Catamenia.

The Catamenia generally appears about the age of fifteen, and cease about forty-five, as fifty, which renders these two periods of life very critical to females. About the first appearance of this discharge, the constitution undergoes a very considerable change, generally indeed for the better, though sometimes for the worse.

The greater care is now necessary, as the future health and happiness of the female depends in a great measure upon her conduct at this period. If a female at this time of life be confined to the house, kept...
constantly sitting, and neither allowed to walk about, nor employed in any active pursuit, which gives exercise to the whole body; the becomes weak, relaxed, and feeble, his health, spirits, and vigour decline, and she sinks into a prostration for life. Such is the fate of numbers of those unhappy females, who either from too much indulgence or their own narrow circumstances are at this critical period, denied the benefit of exercise and free air. A sluggish, indolent disposition proves likewise injurious to females an-
this period. One seldom meets with complaints from
the more active and industrious classes of the sex,
whereas, the indolent and slothful are seldom free from them.
They are in a manner eaten up by chlorosis, and other dis-
seases of a like nature. Therefore advise all who wish to escape
these calamities, to avoid idleness and inactivity, as their greatest
enemies and enjoy as much as possible free air. Another thing
which proves injurious to females of this period, is unwholesome food.
And of all manner of trash, they often indulge in it, till
their whole humours become quite vitiated. Hence ensue indigestion, want-of-appetite, and a numerous train of evils. Accordingly we find, that such females as lead an insolent, slothful life, and congregate quantities of trash, are not only rendered obnoxious to obstructions of the colonics, but likewise to glandular obstructions. A dull disposition is also injurious to females at this period. It is a rare thing to see a quick, sprightly girl who does not enjoy good health, while the grace, moping, melancholy creature, provokes the very fierceness of Episcope and Hypostasis. Truth is the season
for mirth and cheerfulnes. Let it therefore be indulged; it is an absolute duty. To lay in a stock of health in time of youth, is as necessary a piece of prudence, as to make foresight against the decay of old age. While therefore, wise Nature prompts the happy youth to join in the gay and sprightly amusements, let not the severe dictates of hoary age forbid the useful impulse. Mr. Tump, with serious glumness, the season destined to mirth and innocent festivity. Another thing very injurious to female at this period of life is "straight clothes." They are fond of
a fine shape, and foolishly imagine that this can be acquired by tight-lacing. Hence, by squeezing the stomach, they impair digestion, and occasion many incurable maladies. After a female has attained the age at which the catamenia begin to flow, and they do not appear but, on the contrary, her health and spirits begin to decline, we would advise, instead of shutting the doors giving up in the house, and losing her with nauseous drugs, to place her in a situation where she can enjoy the benefit of free air, and agreeable company.
Then let her have wholesome food, take sufficient exercise, and amuse herself in the most agreeable manner; and we have but little reason to fear, that Fortune, thus assisted, will do her proper work. This discharge in the beginning is seldom so instantaneous as to take females unawares. It is generally preceded by symptoms which foretell its approach; as a sense of heat, weight, and dull pain in the loins, listlessness, and hardness of the mammae, headache, loss of appetite, loquacity, wanken of the countenance, and sometimes a slight degree of fever. When these symptoms appear, but
the age at which the Catamenia usually begin to flow, every thing which may obstruct that necessary and voluntary evacuation, should be carefully avoided, and all means used to promote it. After the Catamenia has once made its appearance, the greatest care should be taken to avoid that may tend to obstruct it. Females should be very cautious of what they indulge in, at the time they are laboring under this discharge. Every thing that is cold, or that cause acidity of the stomach should be avoided. All kinds of indigestible food should be carefully avoided. Cold is very
permicious of this particular period.
Men of the sex late this diseases
from colds "caught," while the
consternation are upon them, then
from all other causes. A sign
of colds that will not in the
least injure them at other times
will at this period, be sufficient
to impair their health for the
remainder of their days.
Attention should likewise be paid
to the mind, which should be
kept as easy and cheerful as possible.
Every part of the animal con-
scious is influenced by the passions,
but none more so than this.
Anger, fear, grief, and the affections
of the mind, often occasion obstruc-

of the cholera, which proves incurable. From whatever cause this flux is obstructed, except in the state of pregnancy, proper means should be used to relieve it. For this purpose we would recommend sufficient exercise in a dry, open, and cool air; wholesome diet, and if the body be weak and languid, generous liquors, also cheerful company, and all manners of amusement. If these fail recourse must be had to medicine. When symptoms proceed from a weak relaxed state of the system, such medicines as tend to promote digestion to brace the system, and aid the body...
in preparing healthy blood should be used. When obstructions proceed from a viscid state of the blood, as for women of a full habit, evacuations and such medicines as constitute the humors, are necessary. When obstructions proceed from portions of the mind as grief, fear, anger, etc., every method should be taken to amuse and divert the patient. And that she may the more readily forget the cause of her affliction, the threat of possible be removed from the place where it happened. A change of place, by presenting the mind with a variety of new objects, has often a happy influence in relieving it.
from the longest disease. A soothing, kind, and affable behavior to females in this situation is also of the last importance. An obstruction of the cholerae is often the effect of other maladies. When this is the case, instead of giving medicines to force the discharge, which might prove dangerous, we should by all means endeavour to restore the patient's health and strength. When that is effected, the other will return. The menstrual discharge may be too great as well as too small. When this is the case, the patient becomes weak, the color wan, the appetite and digestion impaired, to which sediments swelling of
the fur, fevers, and consump-
tions often ensue. This frequently
happens to women about forty-five
or fifty, and is very difficult to
overcome. It may proceed from
a sedentary life, a full diet con-
sisting chiefly of salted, high-
seasoned food, the use of spiritous
liquors, excessive fatigue, relaxation,
violent passions of the mind, etc.
The treatment of this disease is
to be varied according to the cause.
When it is occasioned by any
error in the patient's regimen, an
opposite course to that which
induced the disorder, should be
pursued, and such medicines ta-
ken as have a tendency to remo
the flux, and counteract the morbid affections of the system from whence it proceeds. This period of life at which the catamenia cease, is likewise very critical to the sex. The stoppage of any customary evacuation, however small, is sufficient to upset the whole economy, and often to destroy life itself. Hence it comes to pass, that as many women lapse into chronic disorders as die about this time. Such of them, however, as survive it, without contracting any chronic disease, often become more healthy and hearty than before, and enjoy strength and vigor to a good old age.
If the catamenia cease suddenly, in women of a weak habit, they should abate somewhat of their usual quantity of food, especially that of the more nourishing kind. They should likewise take sufficient exercise, and secure themselves against constipation. It often happens that women of a weak habit, at this period of life, have ulcersous sores break out upon their ankles, as in other parts of the body. Such ulcers should be considered critical, and should either be suffered to continue open, or have artificial drains substituted in their stead.

For those who have them dried up, and often seen after carried off by
acute disease, as differ into those of a chronic nature.

R. C. Walker

Library Disbursements

COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
AND MEDICAL FACULTY,

UNIVERSITY OF NASHVILLE,
FOR THE DEGREE OF
Doctor of Medicine.

Trav: Byrum Mitchell

Ted Evans, Superintendent

1857