AN
ININAUGURAL DISSERTATION
ON

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BY

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OF
TENNESSEE

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The Medical Student then about to enter upon the task of writing his thesis, it is not without difficulty that he brings his mind to a definite conclusion in regard to what particular subject upon which he will write, and after he has made his selection, he is more or less intimidated with the reflection that there is no subject of a medical character that has not been written upon to a greater or less extent by the most learned, talented, and those of the profession whose heads have grown grey in experience. Therefore it would seem more like pressing my name in vain, than otherwise, were it not made my duty to abide by the faculty. I shall therefore console myself with the
reflection, that as much will not be expected from me as those who have spent the greater portion of their lives in investigating these subjects. The disease upon which I propose to write is that of Stomach. This is a disease of the nervous system, and like most diseases of that system, is but imperfectly understood. This is in consequence, doubtless, to a great degree, of our imperfect knowledge of nervous influence. When we take into consideration their complex arrangement, and mysterious influence, which is exerted on the various tissues and organs of the body, no doubt it is reasonable to conclude that this mode of exerting this influence will never be fully understood.
It seems that they are more or less influenced by the general state of the system pathologically, or physiologically considered. It is a conceded point generally, that the blood influences their functions to a great degree. Not only are they dependent upon the blood for their nutrient material, but they are dependent on oxygenized blood for their influence also. When we contemplate the relationship they bear to all parts of the general system, and their complete arrangement, we would apriori conclude that a disease of that system would not without difficulty be understood, which we find to be a fact elaborated by all those who have had any experience in the medical treatment.
and investigation of such diseases
of which St. Vinc is one among
the many that might be
examined. For we find that it has
baffled the skill of both small
and great of the profession up to the present time in a great
degree, on Post Mortem
examinations it has puzzled our
most learned and experienced
pathologists, we find them differ-
ing to a considerable extent
in regard to the condition of the
spinal cord and how necessary it
was to produce the disease.
Some supposing that inflammation
is necessary to produce the disease
whilst others suppose that
irritation only is necessary to pro-
duce it. But that inflammation
does exist in a great many instances. Can not be denied; but that
it is a necessary condition, has not been proved. For we find cases
in which we can not demonstrate the fact that inflammation had
existed. In regard to the cause there has been equally as much the
preponderance of opinion. I might enumerate a long list of what
is supposed to be the predisposing causes of the disease by dif-
f erent authors; for instance, Dr. George Broadwood, the author
of a very popular work on the
practice of Medicine which
bears to enumerate the causes
that predispose the system.
To the James says a peculiar
predisposition is probably peci-
The production of tetanus as comparatively
frequent attached of those opposed to the exciting cause, though
these to all appearances may be
different, in what this predisposition
consists is not known. He
then proceeds to enumerate
a considerable number of causes
that, probably, act as predisposing:
for instance, heat, hating climate,
and a depraved state of health,
resulting from bad diet, vitiated air, and a residence in low, damp situations.

Dr. Thomas Watson in his loc
tunes on the principles and
practice of physic also en
\[\text{Remaining text is not legible}\]
That D. Watts ideas go together with a great many others that predispose the System to Tetanus. Now I am of the opinion that no one of probably two or three cases are sufficient to produce that peculiar state of the System, nor can we identify any number of them. That would, neither can we tell which of the causes makes the compound, but it would be reasonable to look upon these causes as elementary, and as requiring several of them to compose fully, the predisposing cause. Upon this view of the subject we can account somewhat more reasonably, for the strange occurrences that take place in many instances of Tetanus. In the
first place why it is that every one that happens to come in contact with the exciting cause, as is the case in many instances, do not take the disease immediately, whilst those are attacked almost instantly with it. Those who do not take the disease immediately may be under the influence of what is termed the exciting cause for an indefinite period, and not take the disease, owing to the fact, that the compound cause is not complete. Nor will they be attacked until the remaining portions are added, and then the patient will be attacked of to save. Therefore it should be the duty of the physician to guard his patient who are in any way
under the influence of the exciting cause, and against all these causes we may suspect, as predisposing. Such for instance as cold, indigestible aliment, or any injurious conduct, by which means he may prevent his patients from being attacked by the disease which doubtless is in connection with proper medical treatment. Thus have the case in many instances. In regard to idiopathic rheumatics, I am disposed to believe that it is the same state of system however produced, whether from cold, sun, or any thing else calculated to irritate the skin as surface, for those all aim to act in the same way that a bowel does. That is by irritating the affronted nerve, whether upon the skin or not.
Our Membrane of the Cerebral Cavity. On any other mucous surface of the body, it would seem that it would not make any very material difference. If it does make a difference, it is a great instance of what is stated by authors. That idiopathic cases are not so difficult as those produced, or operated by external injuries. For while wounds and other external injuries inflicted on the external surfaces are generally more violently inflicted, and are opposed to the action of the atmosphere. Those on the mucous surfaces are protected by the mucus, and are not exposed to the same effect. They are consequently less subject to the same effect, probably.
by why they are not so serious, and
are more easily remedied, for the
most of the enemics that are ad-
ministered by idios, the cases are
given by the mouth, and consecu-
tively come in direct contact in many
instances with the dissaid tither.
Therefore they would seem to have a
more salutary effect. The exciting
causes, these we are disposed to look
upon in many instances as pre-
disposing, and exciting also, it
would be difficult in many instan-
tes to identify the exciting causes.
We find, according to authors, that
would be exciting in one instance,
would be predisposing in another.
for whilst cold is enumerated ag-
inst the predisposing causes, we
find it also with the exciting cau-
se.
for instance we have a patient who has a severe wound. who had been previously exposed the influence of cold. we would look upon cold in this instance, as predisposing, and the wound as the exciting cause. or, except the case the patient may have received the wound, and after wounds exposed to cold. we would in this instance say that it was the exciting cause, which would accord with what was before stated, in regard to elementary causes. and according to that it would make but little difference which of the causes were first in the combination. in regard to the nature of fevers, i am disposed to believe that it is irritation primarily situated in the nervous system, in whatever way produced.
Cold, Wounds, Or by Inviting Dehydration
in The Alimentary Canal. Which
Invitation produces an alteration in
the Sensibility of the nerves, and in Con-
sequence of which, we have to suffer a
bundance of Morbid influence
in regard to the Treatment of Ulcers.
There has been no less difficulty than
that attended it in other respects. There
has been every number of Emetics used, both local and Constitutional,
and these too of the most opposite
character. This is doubtless in Conse-
quince of The named expressions in regard
To The true pathology of the disease, and
in some degree in consequence of The
disease being complicated with other
diseases. The Emetics used for The trea-
ment of Its Complications would of cou-
sure, acting accordingly to suit each.
individual Case. The symptoms of
Pertussis, I have not thought neces-
sary to give as it would be nothing
more than a repetition of what we
find in all works that treat of the
disease. In an uncomplicated
case of Pertussis, whether Trauma-
tic or idiopathic, there are three
prominent indications to sub-
pit, first, to allay irritation ac-
Ced to elapse. Muscular Contra-
tion, and third, to enhance all irri-
tating substances in the mildest pos-
sible manner, whether in the Abi-
mentary Canal, or Wounds on the
External Surface, or where else-
ever they may be found, in our pow-
er to remove. In regard to the
first indication, Opinion and
its preparations seem to have
Columnists have received two cases within my own knowledge, the second indication seems to be fulfilled by Tobacco better than any other known remedy, and its application in the form of a Capsicum more or less strongly tuned to the age and strength of the patient, and the extent of the wound would be my prescription. The administration of Tobacco like that of Chloroform requires a great deal of discretion on the part of the physician, and of course its effect is to be watched closely under all circumstances, and surely if ever used for the relief of young children and infants, at least it should be the last resort. Infusions of
Tobacco have been highly recom-
mended by some able practitioners.
used internally to suit the age and
circumstances of the case. The first
indication remains to be fulfilled
by cathartics, and like most cases
of constipation are difficult to re-
crieve. This is doubtless in conse-
quence of the disease affecting the mu-
cular coat of the bowels. I should be
disposed to commence with the mil-
der cathartics and gradually as-
cend the scale until we accomplish
the end in view, that is, to remove
all irritating substances if these shou-
d be easy. The diet should be of an un-
irritating and cæsaline character,
easy of digestion, and more or less stim-
ulating as each case may demand.

Submitted Respectfully by
[Signature]