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ABRIDGEMENT
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D E T E S T A B L E S I N
O F
S E L F - P O L L U T I O N,

A N D A L L I T S
D R E A D F U L C O N S E Q U E N C E S (*in both Sexes*)

C O N S I D E R E D;

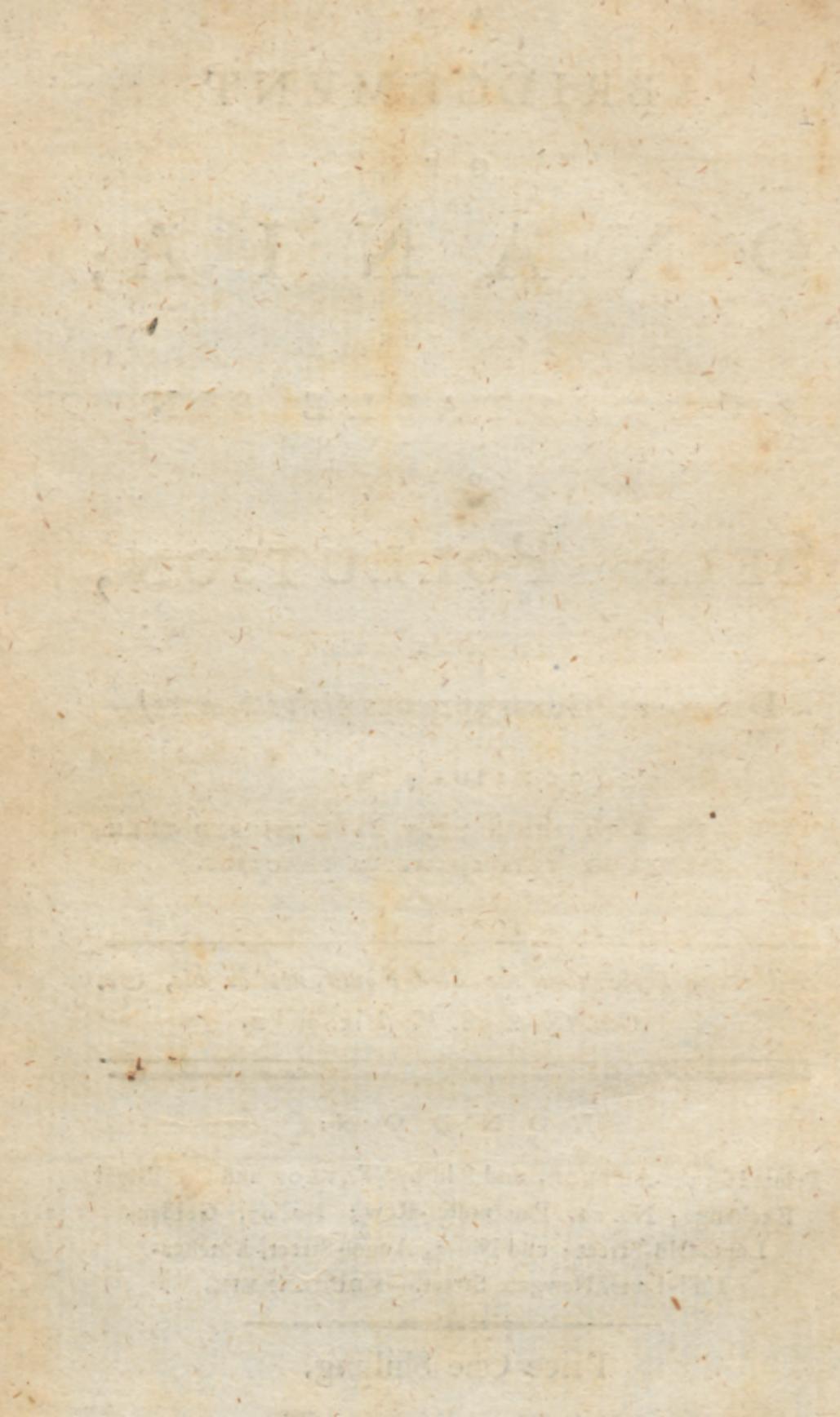
W I T H A D V I C E T O T H O S E T H A T H A V E I N J U R E D T H E M -
S E L V E S B Y T H I S S H A M E F U L P R A C T I C E.

*And Onan knew that the Seed should not be his, &c.
Gen. Chap. 38. Verse ix. and x.*

L O N D O N:

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

TH E only motive that first induced me to think of publishing this Work in so small a compass, was merely for the public good: former editions have been the means of convincing many of their error, but they have been so expensive, as to prevent the circulation of them in a proper manner, to answer the laudable purpose that appeared to be aimed at, of reclaiming that abominable vice of Self-pollution (as generally practiced in both sexes, particularly in youth,) and promoting virtue. And I have reason to believe, that many would never have been guilty of it, had they been apprized of the heinousness of the crime, and the dreadful consequences that must inevitably ensue both to soul and body. A young man that I am very intimate with, confess'd to me that he followed this vice a considerable time, but de-

clared he had not the most distant idea that he was committing a sin, or of the injury he was doing his constitution, if he had would have detested the thoughts of it; and now it is almost too late to repent, he finds his health much impaired; he is afflicted with many complaints mentioned in this book; suffice it to say, he is sincerely penitent for his imprudent conduct, and regrets that he did not see the publication of *Onania* years ago.—Some are of opinion, that in these diseases where the remedy is pointed out, the sin is by that means encouraged; but I leave every impartial person to judge after they have read this book, whether they think any reasonable creature can be so blind to his own interest and preservation, as to be induced to run the hazard of bringing upon himself the dreadful consequences of Self-pollution, by what is said of the possibility of being cured; especially when I have added this caution, that whatever remedies may be applied or physicians made use of, no rule or prescription can ever be effectual in removing the bodily infirmities occasioned by Self-pollution, without they are likewise accompanied with an entire cessation of this infamous practice, a total abstinence from this sin, and an unalterable resolution of never falling into it again; and that all relapses are surely fatal in these cases.

A N
A B R I D G E M E N T
O F
O N A N I A.

An Account of the heinous Sin of Self-Pollution, of the woeful Consequences of this Practice, and Advice to those that have injured themselves by following it.

SELF-Pollution is that unnatural practice, by which persons of either sex may defile their own bodies without the assistance of others, whilst, yielding to filthy imaginations, they endeavour to imitate and procure to themselves that sensation, which God has ordered to attend the carnal commerce of the two sexes, for the continuance of our species.—It is almost impossible to treat of this subject so as to be understood by the meanest capacities, without trespassing at the same time against the rules of decency, and

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making use of words and expressions which modesty forbids to utter. But as my great aim is to promote virtue, and to discourage vice and uncleanness without giving offence to any, I shall chuse rather to be less intelligible to some, and leave several things to the consideration of my readers, than by being too plain run the hazard of raising in some corrupt minds, what I most endeavour to stifle and destroy: I am persuaded that those who have defiled themselves by this practice already, or by wicked thoughts are tempted so to do, must understand what I mean by Self-pollution, as I have defined it, without any further interpretation. To them it is that I chiefly recommend these papers, with my hearty desire of their most serious consideration on what is contained in them: with respect to those who are wholly ignorant of this sin, I would warn them against it; I think them happy in their innocence; assuring them they shall meet with nothing but what shall incite them to chastity, and deter them from all manner of uncleanness.—Self-pollution we see remarkably punished in Onan, by a particular stroke from Almighty God; for it is not to be thought that his guilt lay totally in not raising up seed to his deceased brother Er, though we allow this was an aggravation of it, but the way he took to prevent it, would have been highly culpable at any other time; and from Gen. 38. ix. and x. it is reasonable to imagine, that the greatest part of the offence lay in the act of defiling himself, rather than the neglect of his duty: it was the thing that he did,
rather

rather than the thing he omitted, which most displeased the Lord, as may be farther seen Deut. 25. v. to x. Be that as it will, this is certain, it proved so intolerable a provocation, that Almighty God could not bear with it, and therefore immediately cut him off in consequence of it.

Some easy casuists, notwithstanding the exemplary punishment that has attended this sin, have made flight of it : and shamefully deceived those who consulted them, perhaps to their ruin. Others by being too open though severe enough, have treated this matter so grossly in the learned languages, that it is impossible to translate any part of them without offending chastity.

To condemn and expose a sin so displeasing to God, so detrimental to the public, and so injurious to ourselves, requires no flights of wit, nor any other way of arguing than what is agreeable to the plainest truth, and the test of the most severe reason. That it is detrimental to the public will soon appear, if we consider that it hinders marriage, and puts a full stop to procreation.

That it is highly displeasing to God is evident from the holy scriptures and our own reason. There is not a place in either the Old or New Testament where uncleanness, the lust of the flesh, or the abominations of Sodom are condemned, but this sin is hinted at among others. The Apostle Paul affirms of the Heathens, " That being given up to uncleanness they dishonoured their own bodies between them-
 " selyes,"

“ selves,” and in another place, that “ It is
 “ the will of God that we abstain from uncleanness.” Let any man examine all the places of the New Testament where mention is made of vices and sin, and he will find there is not any other crime so many times mentioned as uncleanness; and how can a person be more superlatively unclean, than when he is guilty of Self-pollution? But if it was not revealed to us that God is highly displeas'd at all manner of uncleanness, when we reflect on the end of marriage in all countries, and in all societies, and the manner that God has ordain'd our species should be continued, natural religion and our own reason would of themselves instruct us, that to destroy that end must be very offensive to God: for whether we commit abomination with our own sex, or with beasts, or that we defile our bodies with this shameful action, the consequences are the same to society and our species, and what a learned divine has said of the first is equally applicable to all three: “ That the
 “ crime is in itself monstrous and unnatural, in
 “ its practice filthy, and odious to extremity;
 “ its guilt is crying, and consequences ruinous:
 “ it destroys conjugal affection, prevents natural
 “ inclination, and tends to extinguish the hopes
 “ of posterity.”

For fornication and even adultery itself we have frailty and nature to plead, though these are heinous sins; but Self-pollution is a sin not only against nature, but a sin that prevents and extinguishes nature; and he who is guilty of it

is labouring to the destruction of his species, and in a manner strikes at the creation itself.

I shall now consider the causes of Self-pollution; the first is ignorance: there are thousands among the youth of both sexes, who, either by the example of their intimates, through their own wantonness, or by being idle and alone, and some by mere accident, have learned to pollute themselves in this manner, that would have abhorred the thoughts of it had they understood the nature and tendency of the sin. There are likewise many adult persons who are guilty of this sin, that never would have ventured upon it, had they known what bodily sufferings and infirmities it frequently is the occasion of.

The second is the secrecy with which this crime may be committed: all other acts of uncleanness must have a witness, this needs none.

Some lustful women have made all the outward shew of virtue and morality, and yet have abandoned themselves to this vice; and some young men of vicious inclinations, whose natural bashfulness has secured them from every act of impurity but this; from which it appears, that the secrecy of this sin has betrayed many to it, whom hardly any thing else would have tempted.

The third and last cause I shall alledge is impurity. Though the laws in many places against fornication and adultery, are either very remiss or ill executed, yet the dread of them keeps the fearful in awe. But the laws are not the only things the vicious are afraid of: some are withheld from prostitutes by their covetousness

ness only ; others again for nothing else but the fear of diseases or of having children. Whereas in Self-pollution neither the cautious, nor the covetous, imagine that they have any thing to fear. It is not easy to determine, whether it be more monstrous or unaccountable, that rather than commit a sin before others, who would be their accomplices and uphold them in it, men should choose to be guilty of a greater before God, who has avowed to revenge it.

I shall now speak of the dreadful consequences of this sin : The afflictions which may, and often do, fall upon those who are, or have been guilty of this sinful practice, belong either to the soul or body ; I shall begin with those of the least concern : first, it manifestly hinders the growth, both in girls and boys, and few of either sex, that in their youth commit this sin any considerable time, ever come to that robustness and strength, which they would have arrived to without it.

In men, as well as boys, the first attempt has often been the occasion of very painful and troublesome disorders, sometimes ulcers, and worse symptoms, especially if improperly managed. The frequent use of this wicked practice causes stranguaries : priapisms, and other disorders of the Penis and Testes, especially gonorrhœas, more difficult to be cured than those contracted from women, actually infected with the foul disease. When the feminal vessels are first strained, and afterwards relaxed, the ferment in the Testes is destroyed, and the seed, grown thin and waterish, comes away unelaborated, without any provocation.

provocation. This distemper often proves fatal, even under the hands of the most skilful. These gonorrhœas are chiefly occasioned, says a famous physician, by that cursed school of wickedness, masturbation. In some it has been the cause of fainting fits and epilepsies, in others of consumptions; and many young men, who were strong and lusty before they gave themselves over to this vice, have been wore out by it, and by its robbing the body of its balmy and vital moisture, without cough or spitting, dry and emaciated, sent to their graves. In others whom it has not killed, it has produced nightly and excessive seminal emissions, a weakness in the penis, and a loss of erection, as if they had been castrated. Many a young gentleman, says Dr. Barnard, has been for ever utterly undone by it; because when young it so forces and weakens the tender vessels, that when they come to manhood, it renders them impotent. In some men of very strong constitutions, the mischiefs may not be so visible, and yet the blood and spirits impaired, and the seed rendered infertile, so as to make them unfit for procreation, by changing the crasis of the spermatic parts, making them become barren, as land becomes poor by being over tilled; and few of those that have been much accustomed to this vice in their youth, have ever much reason to boast of the fruits of the marriage bed; for if by nature's extraordinary helps they should have any children, which does not often happen, they are frequently small, that either die soon, or be-

come

come tender, sickly people, always ailing and complaining, a misery to themselves, a dishonour to the human race, and a scandal to their parents. Therefore in the words of a noted author, “ With what encouragement to virtue
 “ may young people behold a man of the age
 “ of fourscore, with a wife of the like anti-
 “ quity, both blest with healthy hale consti-
 “ tutions, and fresh wholesome countenances,
 “ with sound minds, and perfect senses, with
 “ active limbs and chearful tempers, pre-
 “ siding over a healthy progeny, perhaps to the
 “ third and fourth generation ; and all those
 “ blessings owing under Providence, to their
 “ temperance and continence ; when, if we
 “ turn our eyes upon licentious masturbators,
 “ we shall find them with meagre jaws, and
 “ pale looks, with feeble hams and legs with-
 “ out calves, their generative faculties weak-
 “ ened, if not destroyed in the prime of their
 “ years : a jest to others, and torment to them-
 “ selves.”

In women Self-pollution, if frequently practiced, relaxes and hurts the retentive faculty, occasions the fluor albus, an obnoxious as well as perplexing illness, which upon account of the womb may draw on a whole legion of diseases ; it makes them look pale, swarthy and hagged ; it frequently is the cause of hysteric fits, and sometimes of consumptions ; and very often barrenness, by an indifferency to the act of generation, a misfortune seldom to be redressed.

A caution I shall give to young women who have any esteem for their honour, which is, that
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many of them who thus defile their bodies, do actually deflower themselves, and foolishly part with that valuable badge of their chastity and innocence, which when lost is never to be retrieved. This may be the cause of endless jealousies; their husbands may think there is but one way by which maids can forfeit their virginity.

The devil may suggest to the haughty and the bashful, that in Self-pollution they will run no hazard of their reputation, that nobody in the world shall know it but themselves, and to the covetous that they shall lose nothing by it; but he will not tell them that the all-seeing God must be a witness to an act which his holiness so much abominates, and that the greatest loss is that of the divine favour, which to balance the gain of the whole world is not equivalent; and that eternal damnation infinitely exceeds all temporal punishments that can be invented.

The next evil consequence to be apprehended from this practice is, other vices it may lead the way to, and be the occasion of: thousands have been guilty of adultery, as well as fornication, who never would have yielded to those temptations, if they had not acquired to themselves a habit of impurity by Self-pollution first. In such, not only the grosser crimes of uncleanness, but likewise all others that may be occasioned by them, as lying, swearing, and perhaps murder, must be laid to the charge, and brought in as the effects and consequence of their first darling sin, by which they were in-

fected with a stronger habit of impurity than they could have contracted from any other frailty. There are many heinous offenders, who are hardened in sin, and continue in it, and all worldly enjoyments without relenting; but few go so to their graves: most great sinners before they die feel a deep remorse, and are tormented with the bitter stings of conscience, upbraiding them with the guilt, and representing it to them in its true colours and most frightful forms. What comfort must a man have in reflecting on the past actions of his life, who hardly coming to half the age he might reasonably have expected to arrive at, finds himself enervated by the practice of Self-pollution, his spirits sunk, his body wasted, and his strength decayed; in continual danger of being forced to resign his impure breath upon the least rigour of the season, or any other small accident? What comfort, I say, must a man have when his crime, representing itself before him in its most ghastly shape, shall upbraid his conscience, that by so many repeated acts of murder, he has destroyed himself before he is thirty years of age, as has been the case with several? If such great misfortunes happen but seldom, there are other infirmities that may occasion very disagreeable reflections; when persons of good estates, in the flower of their age, find themselves bereft of their manhood, and conscious of their impotence, and the cursed cause of it, are forced to decline the most advantageous matches, and, without the least hopes of posterity, remain the contempt

of

of others; and a burthen to themselves; to which perhaps the mortification shall be added, that the name and honour of an ancient family extinct with themselves, must be for ever buried in oblivion, whilst the magnificent seats, and venerable structures of their more virtuous ancestors, are inherited, or pulled down by strangers. Others again who cannot be said to die without offspring, have puny lingering children, more brought up by physic than kitchen diet, without any probability that they will ever come to maturity. When persons of large possessions have no better views to turn to than these, and so much reason to lay all the blame upon themselves, as the effects of the frequent practice of Self-pollution in their youth, their prospect can be but melancholy. These are the consequences of Self-pollution, this is the dreadful state to which it brings men, and these the sins into which it drives them, and the punishment to which it renders them obnoxious, and one would think them enough to inspire all persons with a detestation against this vice. I am sure every one has reason to dread the thoughts of falling into that brutishness and hardness of heart, of which all are in great danger, who any time pass the bounds of modesty and part with their chastity, and should therefore study to prevent that remorse which will sooner or later be the portion of the lascivious; and to keep at a distance from a sin that draws many others after it, and in a word, casts its slaves and votaries into an abyss of evils.

I shall now add the advice of a clergyman to one that had injured himself by this detestable crime; "Sins of deliberation often repeated against vows are very dangerous; but the danger consists in this, that they are hard to be forsaken, because of an habitual pleasure in them. You will agree I suppose to the following doctrine: first, that there is no pardon to be hoped for without repentance. Secondly, that repentance is totally forsaking the sin. Thirdly, that it is abandoning all sin whatsoever. Fourthly, though this forsaking of sin does not make us clean as to what is past, yet it has a promise of mercy and forgiveness annexed to it, which we cannot fail of." 1. John 1. vii. 'If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' Observe that it is from all sin; and in the 9th verse, he saith, 'God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' From whence we draw another conclusion, that pardon may be claimed as a matter of right and justice by them that forsake their sins. God would not be just, if he should deny it to such a person suing for it; it is inconsistent with his faithfulness to withhold it: then add, that if sin be forgiven, God must needs treat us as his friends, and use us kindly as if we were innocent; for, 'it is sin only that makes a separation between God and us.' From whence it follows, that his spirit,

rit, which he hath promised to those whom he loves, must also return again, and overlook former offences. Labour to understand the gospel, and to have a comprehensive sense of the duty contained therein, and hereby the Holy Ghost will sanctify that part of you which the apostle, 1 Theff. 5. xxiii. calls the spirit, i. e. the mind and understanding, which is cleansed by those new principles assented unto: then bring your heart to consent to be governed and led by the holy rules of life, hereby the will and affections will be sanctified also, then all the outward actions of life will inevitably be sanctified, and prove conformed to that determination of your will. I believe in some constitutions, the stimulations to this sin may be very vehement, and hard to be resisted; therefore it will not be amiss to tell you, that you must call in the assistance of all other natural remedies, to which a Christian must not think it below him to be beholden. As first, meditate upon sad and doleful objects; get your fancy painted with such kind of images as have little gaiety in them. In the case of adultery, Baccalini, as an antidote against it, advises those that way inclined, to carry about with them a well drawn picture of the most perfect and faultless beauty that ever appeared in flesh and blood, pencilled over again with rotten teeth, blear eyes, no nose at all, in fine, rendered as loathsome as venom and corruption can make it; that whenever desires of the flesh stir, they would take a sober view of it, and

seriously consider what they are about to do; and the consequence, and no doubt but it would effectually damp their inclinations. So, in Self-pollution, would transgressors that way, set before their eyes (at the time their inclinations stir) what woeful miseries and calamities both to soul and body, others have drawn upon themselves thereby, and they, by the like practice, will in all probability, bring upon themselves; and seriously consider, that while they vainly strive to please themselves, they displease God, exhaust their own strength, and are hastening themselves to the grave, it must surely, one would think, deter them from the evil; especially if they further consider, that being thereby enervated, should they in that state marry, they would, instead of that love and delight expected between man and wife, find nothing but quarrels, jealousies, bitter hatred and discontents. Secondly, you must use a spare diet, high living greatly contributes to lustful desires. Thirdly, have a care of the kind and quality of your meat; salt meat you must forbear, all windy food do puff up the humours, and make those parts turgid; such as beans, pease, artichokes, &c. neither is it proper to eat much butter. Fourthly, I would advice you to live most abstemious about the full and change of the moon, for then the body is more full of moisture than at any other season. Fifthly, only eat dry suppers, unless it be water gruel, or such cooling diet. Sixthly, take proper medicines as well as food, and use much exercise,

exercise, though not too violent ; the bed is a great friend to this sin, therefore let me advice you to make no further use of it than for sleeping ; sleep on one side and not on your back, for that heats the reins, and cause irritations to lust. Do not handle those parts at any time, but when necessity of nature requires it, for that puffs them up and raises fleshly inclinations ; I should advise you never to think of these things, for even the thoughts of this sin doth renew the desire of it ; forget therefore as much as you can, that there has been any such thing done by you, and employ your thoughts otherwise, till you can think of it with more safety, that is, when you are married." These are excellent advices, and marriage the chief preventative, it being an institution appointed by the Almighty as a remedy against incontinence, and to preserve us from the guilt of impurity, as well as for the propagation of our species, whereby the united pair may with honour use that freedom with one another, as was by no means lawful for them to do while they were single : yet there are restraints in that state also ; bounds set that they are not to exceed. St. Paul counsels parents 'Not to suffer their virgins to pass the flower of their youth ;' but not meaning, as I suppose, to encourage too early or unseasonable marriages ; for when so young that either of them have neither mind nor need, it exhausts their vital moisture, nips them in their bud, and renders them for ever after weak and enfeebled, and
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the children they have to be puny and ailing ; but when a man is in his twenty-fifth, and a woman in her twentieth year, both retained their virginity till then, and were born of healthy parents, and each in perfect health, of good constitutions, full of ardent love and vigour, those I would advise to marry, and from their loins would result the best, most lovely, strong, and healthy posterity.—That the nuptial state was a necessary method for man's propagation of his species is undeniable, since it is obvious there was no other means for attaining that end, and without which the human race must long since have sunk into its primitive nothing, being annihilated, and the memory of mankind buried in oblivion : this argument is sufficient to shew that celibacy is inconsistent with reason, and contrary to the stated laws of nature, which renders procreation necessary for the support of our own species, and implants in us a desire to preserve the same at all times.—Those who have not only injured their souls, but likewise their bodies, by this practice of Self-pollution, if the case be chirurgical, they ought immediately to apply to a skilful surgeon, for by neglect it may be attended with the worst of consequences. Where the strength is but in part decayed, the blood not altogether dispirited, and the tone of the parts but lately relax'd, cold bathing has been beneficial to many ; in some only accompanied with a milk diet, in others with restorative medicines. But as every body cannot bear the cold bath, and milk does

not agree with all constitutions, in such cases, as well as others more stubborn and deplorable, as it is impossible to give general rules for so many particulars, I would advise every person to apply to an experienced physician; and without hesitation open their case.

But though these are the fatal consequences of Self-pollution, and that the avoiding the practice, and repenting for the sins past should be the utmost care of every one; yet there are some people fearless of danger, and deaf to all manner of instruction, that will run the risque of health and safety, however terrible it may prove, rather than deny themselves the gratification of that detestable pleasure: but as often example and the actual sufferings of others, have worked upon and influenced such, when the best admonitions that could be given them, have been ineffectual, I shall now insert some of the Letters to the Author of the original Onania, by persons that have read the former editions of it, in which the miserable effects of this abominable practice will be obvious; and I sincerely wish it may act in a proper manner to caution others against this filthy practice.

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ WORTHY SIR,

“ **A**T the recommendation of a very reverend Gentleman of my acquaintance, I have lately given your accurate treatise of Onania a diligent reading; and though there are some things in it that do not exactly quadrate with my present sentiments, and others that I could have been glad of a more full and adequate answer to in this last edition, particularly the ingenious letter of C. T. yet in the main it gave me so much satisfaction, that I have not only bought one myself, but also have engaged some of my acquaintance to do the like, it being hardly possible to find any of years who are entirely innocent; nor do I know of any author that has handled this subject (however deserving the consideration of the wisest and the best of men) so judiciously, so candidly, or so modestly, as yourself.

“ It is undoubtedly matter of just lamentation, that a vice so odious in its nature, and so pernicious in its consequences, should have found means to insinuate itself so far among us, as to become (what we have too much reason to fear it is) almost universal: To you, therefore, Sir, is the public much indebted for your kind endeavours to suppress so great, so growing, and so mischievous an evil. And may that good Providence that governs the universe, and (notwithstanding what either the de-
luded

luded or the profligate part of mankind says to the contrary) prospers or disappoints the designs of good and bad, according to his own good pleasure, so influence the heart of every reader, that the effect may be eminently adequate to the greatness, the usefulness, and the wisdom, of the undertaking. For my own part I protest the end proposed by this performance seems to me to be so noble and momentous, and the means made use of to attain it so judicious and extraordinary, that the more I reflect upon them, so much the more sensibly am I affected with admiration and gratitude. From which reflections (together with those that occur from the candour and integrity observable throughout the whole, I am at last induced to presume upon (or at least to hope for) a full resolution of such difficulties in this way, as have for a long time (at intervals) broke in a little upon the quiet and serenity of my mind.

“ The act itself, that you have so largely and judiciously treated of, when encouraged by lascivious inclinations, &c. and perpetrated merely to gratify the sensual appetite, has always appeared to me very criminal; but yet in many respects (even in these circumstances) much inferior to several crimes that mankind is too much addicted to; such as sodomy, whoredom, prophane swearing, murder, and the like: But whether it be so, abstracted from those amours, and irregular attendants (and from which it is possible to be separated) is, I
confess,

confess, what I am not entirely satisfied about. That evacuations of this fluid will frequently, copiously, and unavoidably happen, (provided there be a due conformation of the organs, and a regular circulation of the fluids) to adults of all sorts, is, I believe, what you, and all men, will readily allow; and that it is even necessary that such evacuations should be, in order to continue us capable to answer one great end of our creation, is, I suppose, what few if any, will venture to deny, and that it is also, or may-be, in every man's power to guess pretty nearly (if not exactly, at the time when such evacuations will happen) nature being more intensely disposed to admit of, and to be carried away with venereal pleasures of all sorts, as the repositories of the seminal fluid approach to a fulness, is what may (I have reason to think) safely be granted me.

“ Upon these presumptions, therefore, I beg leave to know, whether it can be properly termed Pollution, or whether it can justly be deemed criminal, for a man to ease himself voluntarily of that trouble and stimulus, which is the necessary result of a copious secretion, and a long retention, provided the action be entirely free from mental impurity, and the person himself a single man? Or, is it better to acquiesce in an involuntary emission, although that may, and often will, be attended with such marks of uncleanness, as cannot but be taken notice of, as well by those whose business extends to either bed or linen, as by our own
selves?

selves? I am very sensible, that should such an answer be given to the proposal, as the case thus stated seems to dictate, it is possible that some of weak judgments and great vigour might take occasion from it to allow themselves a more frequent use of the above-mentioned action, than an honest and judicious reasoning upon the circumstances of the case can safely admit of; and where the sensation is so quick, and the disposition so strong, as it often is in this case, the greatest prudence is many times unable to express itself so as to check the progress, and prevent those misfortunes, that are the unavoidable consequence of a too frequent indulgence. These considerations had almost prevailed upon me to forbear sending my thoughts upon this subject; and had I not been certain there was some weight in what I have proposed, and that a considerable number of sober and ingenious gentlemen would be much more obliged by an answer to it, I had certainly spared myself and you this trouble. However, since you have been pleased to appear in our behalf upon this occasion, and have discovered an ingenuity and industry, a candour and integrity, that but few can equal, and none perhaps exceed, I beg, Sir, that you will please to take into consideration, at a vacant hour, what I have now offered; and if it may be thought either safe or serviceable to appear in public, you will very much oblige me, and many more than I can at present conveniently name, by inserting it, (together with

such remarks as may occur upon reading it) in your next edition. This, if you should incline to comply with it, would be rendered much more acceptable to us, if you would be pleased, at the same time, to let us know, whether a man may lawfully, and consistently with his health, make use of any means to prevent the secretion of this fluid, and the evacuations of it when secreted (provided such secretions and evacuations be moderate, and not oftener than may be reasonably expected, or safely tolerated) without endangering an interruption of the course of nature, and an inducement of such disorders as may very much impair the other faculties, and incapacitate him to go through as he ought the several functions of life. That this, or such as this, will be the consequence of long retention after due elaboration, is sufficiently apparent from the profound writings of that stupendously great man Borelli, in whose learned treatise *de Motu Animalium*, part II. prop. 237. are these remarkable words, viz. “*Novum enim non est, ut semen genitale in animali perfectissimæ temperici destinatum expulsionem pro fine generationis, diu retentum contrahat corruptam & veneficam naturam.*” Now if health be so precious, and so essential to a comfortable subsistence here, as it appears to be; and if a defect in any of the sensible evacuations must necessarily be attended with an excess in some other, or a disorder of the whole animal œconomy (as I think is abundantly evident from the curious observations of

of those excellent physicians Sanctorius and Keill) it appears to me to be the indispensable duty of every man to be more than a little studious how to preserve that valuable blessing, and to admit of nothing easily that any ways tends to either the impairing or destroying it. This, Sir, is what I have humbly to offer (in my own and in the name of many worthy gentlemen) to your consideration. It is, I confess, what I have more reason to ask pardon for, than to expect an answer to; and therefore I submit it without any further enlargement or apology, and shall only say, that I shall be extremely glad of an opportunity to shew you with how much respect I am,

S I R,

YOUR MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT."

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*T H E   A N S W E R.*

" S I R,

" **Y**OUR very obliging, as well as curious, well-wrote letter, deserves a well-weighed answer, the greatest part of which, be pleased to lookfor in what I have given to C. T.—I am so far from thinking that it will do prejudice to any of my readers, that I am confident it will be highly advantageous to them, for two reasons: when a man of the learning and penetration you seem to be of, approves of any one's labours

labours in public, it can hardly fail of adding weight to his arguments and persuasions, and in answering you, it is probable, that many will see questions resolved, which they would have asked themselves.

“ I allow of every thing you think ought to be granted; but when I find these words in your letter, “ Upon these presumptions therefore, I beg leave to know whether it can properly be termed Pollution, or whether it can justly be deemed criminal, for a man to ease himself, voluntarily, of that trouble and stimulus, which is the necessary result of a copious secretion, and long retention, provided the action be entirely free from mental impurity, and the person himself a single man ?” Depend upon it, whatever is voluntarily done that way is Self-pollution, and consequently criminal. The supposition, that the action may be entirely free from mental impurity, is very dangerous: I cannot think it practicable, and I sincerely believe, that whoever affirms the possibility of it, if he does not wilfully deceive others, imposes upon himself: therefore pray acquiesce in the involuntary emissions, without making the least scruple of what you say about the linen, those who make beds, and are employed in the washing and mending of shirts and sheets, are used to such things: it is impossible to prevent every thing that is capable of fullying the imagination of lewd people, either in town or country. Dogs in the streets, and bulls in the fields, may do mischief

chief to debauched fancies; and it is possible, that either sex may be put in mind of lascivious thoughts by their own poultry. Lower down you ask, “Whether a man may lawfully use any means to prevent the secretion of this fluid?” I answer, No, if it has the least tendency to disable him from procreation, and whatever may be injurious to his manhood, is not less sinful than castration itself: but then on the other hand, it is not only lawful, but likewise necessary, by diet and exercise to subdue the rage of lust where it is required; because such means may be either made use of, or omitted at pleasure, and pro re nata; and single men, who would preserve this virtue, and complain of too great a secretion, act very imprudently, if they indulge themselves in the use of generous wines, nutritive meats, high fauces, and other things which are known to be provocatives to lust.

“The rest of your questions and doubts I have reason to hope that you will find answered to your satisfaction, either in one part or other of the letter which I referred you to at first.”

*TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.*

“SIR,

“I AM one of the young fellows who have read your Onania, and do question whether it be possible for any of your readers to be

better pleased with so beneficial a work? I make no doubt but you have had your ends in publishing it, viz. by deterring some hundreds of people from that horrid detestable sin of Self-pollution. It cannot be supposed that your intent was either to gain the reputation of a famous physician, or a very good man, (seeing you conceal your name from the world,) though all your readers must allow you the latter, as I hope your patients will the former. I shall not presume to ask the reason of your secrecy, yet in my humble opinion, you may be known to the world without being acquainted with any of your patients, by the same method you now use, which may hinder any quack after your death from pretending to have been the author of the *Onania*. As to what you mention in the preface, about a virulent pamphlet, published against your book, about *Onanism*; it is the opinion of many others, as well as myself, that you are very far out of the reach of any such foolish malice: and it would be too hard a task for wiser heads than theirs seem to be to prove, by any expression throughout your whole book, that you give the least encouragement not only to Self-pollution, but even any other sin. However, as a friend, (though not a judge,) I will be bold to tell you, that it is humbly conceived, if four or five of your letters in the latter end of the second chapter were omitted, (seeing you have already acquired so great a name in those sort of cures,) it would give less cause of ridicule to  
your

your malicious adversaries, and, from what I can learn, would entirely take off the unhappy objections that have hitherto lain against the Onania; it would then, I say, be all of a piece with the other letters and answers, which are very edifying and instructive, and which may be read by the chastest of women. But I do not give this entirely as my opinion, for I am very well satisfied that you have faithfully committed them to the press in their genuine simplicity, as may appear to any one who sees the great difference between the stile of them and the rest of the work.

“ It is no small pleasure to me to find, that you partly promise the satisfaction of another edition to the world, wherein we may hope for an answer to the two letters, especially that of Philalethes, who seems to urge the necessity of Self-pollution, and the dangerous consequences of neglecting it; which he endeavours to prove from what my Lord Bacon says, as if it was a thing so highly proper for health. I would fain know what he thinks of such people as never practised any such thing, nor had carnal knowledge of any woman till the age of twenty, twenty-five, and thirty, and yet are healthy, strong, and vigorous. If the practitioners of that filthy vice will not believe there are any such people now in the world, (as I am satisfied there are many,) let them enquire what ages the particular favourites of God Almighty, in the Old Testament, were married at, who surely never were guilty of Self-pollution, which  
was

was so severely punished in those days by the sudden death of Onan, whose story is transmitted as a dreadful example to all succeeding ages : and shall my Lord Bacon, or Philalethes, persuade the world, that any physical excuse or pretence (for that is no better,) can extenuate the guilt of so horrid a crime ?

“ For my own part I will solemnly declare, that I never do use any such unclean tricks to purge my body of those poisonous feminal moistures, as Philalethes is pleased to call them,) neither had I carnal knowledge of any woman for above these two years, and yet am (thanks to God,) sound, strong, active, and of a very hale constitution, and am now turned of the twenty-fourth year of my age : however, I must confess one thing to you, which gives me some concern ; the truth of it is, that I am very apt to dream of women : you may guess the consequence. Very apt, I say, because I think once a fortnight, or once a month, a great deal too often, if I could avoid it : and what adds to my concern is, that most commonly I dream of one and the same woman, whom I verily believe to be as perfectly virtuous, as the utmost extent and signification of the word can possibly admit of : when awake I cannot bear any such thought, nor find place for it in my breast, but always loath myself, and beg God’s pardon whenever I reflect on my sinful dreams. If I know my own conscience, I would not for the world meddle with that woman in particular, as being one for whom

whom I have a great regard, and a married person besides.

“ I am well assured, that you are very capable of giving spiritual as well as physical advice, and therefore earnestly request, that you will let me know how far I am guilty of a sin in what I have here confessed to you, also what I shall do to prevent it: your charitable condescension herein will give great satisfaction to, and mightily oblige,

S I R,

YOUR VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILL. SMITH.

“ If you will be so good as to answer me before you publish the next edition, (which I shall be sure to buy as soon as it comes from the press,) direct to me at any of the book-sellers. All I now desire is, that you will please to pardon the freedom I have taken in giving my opinion of your book so candidly, without being asked.”

T H E A N S W E R.

“ S I R,

“ **B**ashfulness and ignorance are very often companions of the sin I treat of. Many that are guilty of it labour under disorders, without suspecting the real cause of them, and  
continue

continue in their uncleanness only for want of knowing the consequences of it; and some young raw people are so much ashamed of their guilt, that for fear of being detected, they would never dare to complain of any troublesome symptom occasioned by it, unless they were encouraged by the example of others of about the same pitch of understanding with themselves: to both these sorts experience hath taught me, that the letters you think would be better omitted have been beneficial, and my consciousness of their being genuine, and wrote without my knowledge or desire, makes me despise the ridicule I should justly deserve, if I had forged or contrived them myself. The persons through whose hands they come to me, are good witnesses to what I affirm; and as they personally know the writers and cases of many of them, who have been free, and opened themselves to them, their testimonies are the more substantial. I take great care that all the letters are copied word for word in the print, as they were seen in the originals in writing; and I cannot imagine what should induce men of sense to suspect a fraud in the letters of others, when every body sees the exactness observed in that which he knows to be his own.

“ I am obliged to you for the good opinion you have of me and my performance; and your well-penned letter, which I thank you for, I hope will be of use to the public, in recommending virtue and purity, both by precept and example of your own contrivance.

“ As to the dreams you complain of, they are common to all single men, especially those who live chaftefy, as long as their vigour lafts. In my anfwer to C. T. you will find that I hinted at the occafion of them, where there is a turgescency of the feminal veffels. Involuntary actions we are not to account for. When a man keeps as great a guard over his thoughts as he is able whilft he is awake, his confcience needs not to be troubled at any thing that happens in his fleep, and therefore let no pollutions disturb the tranquility of your mind, where the will is not acceffary or concerned.”

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ S I R,

“ **B** E I N G one of thofe that have injured themfelves by the abominable practice fo juftly condemned by you in your book, intituled the Onania, which, by vifiting an acquaintance about three weeks fince, I happened to light on; and having read it through, and thereby finding what difmal confequences have attended thofe that have allowed themfelves in committing the grievous fin of Self-pollution, am aftonifhed at the goodnefs of God towards me, in not fuffering the faid calamities to light on me which have on others; who have followed this wicked custom above five years, being  
a longer

a longertime than (according to my observation) any mentioned in your book; and yet during all this long course of wickedness, I have not found any great inconveniency from it, save about half a year since, or something more, I was seized with a great dizziness in my head, and a great sinking of spirits, and indeed at several times before, I was taken with fainting fits.—Upon my being thus, I applied to Dr. B—d, acquainting him how I was, who ordered me several things; but finding little benefit from them, he, on seeing my water, told me, that the vessels of my back were very much debilitated, and then ordered me to take of the tinctura antiphthifica thirty drops every morning, and so at five in the afternoon, in a quarter of a pint of Bristol water, and also at going to bed, ten drops of the balsam of gilead, in a spoonful of the syrup of comfry root, which I did; but still continuing to be ill, did determine to leave my business (which was a counsellor's clerk) and go to the place of my nativity, in hopes that my native air would be serviceable to me, which I found to answer my expectations; for that in about a quarter of year I was become pretty well, and at the beginning of the last term came again to London, and continued pretty well ever since; and not imagining that my being guilty, as above, was the cause of my illness (and which I am, by reading your book as aforesaid, persuaded that it was) did again return to my former wickedness, but not so frequent as before. I had wont to do it once a day,

day, but since my coming to London, had brought it to once a week, and from that to once a fortnight, and from thence to three weeks; and so on till I had left it off for six or seven; but at all these times I found the titillation to be as delectable as ever, the seed to be rather more than usual; but the last time (which is about a month since) the titillation was very small, and the semen very thin, and in it two or three little dry yellow knobs, about the bigness of the smallest size of fowling-shot; and since that I have hardly had an erection, which I commonly had every morning, as also several times in a day. I always find the semen comes away in my making water, for that seeing as it were small hairs swimming about in it, and trying with a feather to take out some of them, there hung at the end of the feather, as it was taken out of the water, a long string like to thin semen, which I find frequently comes away in my water, I having reiterated the trial several times since. I have also (if I sit a long while together) a pain in the small of my back, and have frequently motions to make water. On reading your book, at the latter end you treat of medicines proper to relieve such as are injured in the manner before-mentioned: you say, that a cure may be depended upon, where there is no ill conformation of the parts, &c. and that a bottle or two of the tincture will be sufficient for it, unless the case be of a long standing, and then a bottle or two more. But you say, that when the act of generation is performed without any delectable sensation, it

is a sure sign of a deviation from the natural state, and that then little or no help is to be afforded; which I fear is my case, for that although I never have experienced it in the natural way, it did yield me the last time I committed it little or no delight at all, and my desires as to venery are very much abated. I having thus, Sir, laid open my case to you, I would beg that you would please to give me your advice in the three following particulars: The first whereof is, that if you judge I may be cured by the medicines your book prescribes, how many bottles of tincture I had need to take ere the cure be effected, one of which bottles I have just began to take. The next is, whether I have any occasion to use the injection, having no gleet or gonorrhoea, nor ever had any; and if you judge I ought to make use of it, how much I must inject at a time. I have done it two days, three times a day, and find that there comes away in my urine slimy matter, much like the scrapings of parchment, and more of it in the morning than at any other times; and how long after the taking of the tincture you will advise to stay ere I take the powders. And the third is, as for the future prevention of my committing the former sinful practice I am (though young) determined to marry, and to that end have made application to a young gentlewoman, who I doubt not but will make me happy, and have gone so far as to be in a manner assured of her affections. How long do you advise me to stay before I proceed

ceed to the step of courtship, which is the solemnization of marriage, and is a state I will (on the other hand) never enter into unless I find I shall be able to discharge the duty that will then be incumbent on me? I hope, Sir, that as you have hitherto been not only charitable but merciful to those that, by their wickedness have deserved none, you will not discontinue to be so to one that is as great an object of your charity as any, perhaps, you may have met with; and that the deficiency of your fee (which would be inclosed if I were of ability, but by reason of my lying out of business I am not, having but barely ten shillings a week to live on) will not deter you from condescending to grant me the favour of an answer, which if you are pleased to do, I would desire it might be left at the bookseller's as soon as your conveniency will permit, whereby you will lay the greatest obligations on,

SIR,

YOUR UNKNOWN

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

J. W.

TO THE MOST WORTHY AUTHOR OF THE  
BOOK CALLED ONANIA.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ THE liberty that so many of my afflicted brothers have taken in opening to you their lamentable case, as the only person ca-

pable of helping them in it, as well as your readiness in complying with their earnest desires, by returning every one of them a most satisfactory answer; those, I say, after the perusal of your excellent and most blessed book, give me hopes of success in venturing upon the same. Be it known to you, charitable Sir, that I am a poor footman (a quality, perhaps, not worthy of your compassion) whose mother notwithstanding sprung out of one of the best families in Flanders; but being unfortunately deluded by an English knight's son, I secretly was taken care of, and endued with a pretty good education, through my mother's means. till I attained the age of fifteen or sixteen years; but (O most cruel fate!) my mother dying suddenly at that time, without having the opportunity of making any provision for me, and consequently my pension not being paid as customary, I was at last reduced to the aforesaid mean and scornful condition. I was in hopes to move my father's pity by coming into England, but I found his heart as hard as a rock, and so was constrained to make a virtue of necessity, tho' with an unspeakable reluctance; for I have a spirit that aims at something more honourable, and less abject. Pardon, good sir, this my tedious deviation; my intention is only purely to excite your charity towards me, as being incapable to satisfy you to your desert, but nevertheless. If any small matter may do it, you may be sure I shall do my utmost to procure it you. My case then is such: About the age of fourteen

teen

teen or fifteen years I was so unhappy as to meet with a bedfellow that grafted into me (to my present sorrow) that damnable and accursed practice, or rather that performance of satan, called Self-pollution, and have from that time made use of it without any considerable intermission. I am sometimes so giddy-headed, that I can scarce make any sense of what people say when in company. My memory has entirely failed me, so that I can scarce remember two or three days at an end. I am dull, sleepy, and melancholy, sometimes to the last degree: I cannot forbear sighing and sobbing, and often do not know for what; my bodily forces, I, think, are also much weakened, for I frequently observe, that when I get up a pretty pair of high stairs my knees bend under me; neither do I walk with that ease and facility as I was wont to do. I feel sometimes a sort of flying pains in my arms, small of my back, and loins; in my fingers also, the joints of which are weakened so, that I fear my nerves are some way effected. I find my body sometimes when I go to bed full of pimples, with a prodigious itching in my arms, legs, and thighs especially: I scratch my legs sometimes till the blood comes. Whenever I chance to lean my arms upon any thing when I am writing or reading they are perfectly benumbed. I should not forget to tell you, that since that tender age I followed drinking some time more than I should have done; whether I may not in some measure thank that practice for my ailings, I leave you

to judge: as for the other, I have given it over some short time ago. Once a week, or once a fortnight at most, I have some nightly evacuations, but cannot say that my genitals have in the least retained that former vigour as they used to have. I scarce ever have any erections in the day-time, without I facilitate them with handling of the part: therefore, good Sir, I beg the favour to know whether I be fit for a married life? Or if I am not, whether some of your prescriptions may enable me for it, being but twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old as yet. Though I have for so long a time been led by that vile passion, I hope still (through the providence of God) to subsist in the world, although with a wife, finding that expedient necessary to make me adhere to my duty towards God. Pardon, dear Sir, this long scrawl, thinking me a great object of your pity; and if you receive not the reward, you at least shall have the good wishes and prayers of,

SIR,

YOUR DISTRESSED HUMBLE SERVANT,

ONEROSUS.

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ I AM one of the unhappy persons that have so far injured myself by the abominable practice of Self-pollution, that I fear all the means

means that I can make use of will not be sufficient to restore me to my natural vigour. I first learned that vile practice by the example of a school-fellow, when I was about twelve years of age, and followed it till between fourteen and fifteen; in which time I so addicted myself to it, that notwithstanding every opportunity of being by myself, I have not forbore to act it even in school-time, although I have been convicted by my school-fellows; but some of them being also guilty, my master remained ignorant of it, for had he known it, without doubt he would have made an example of the offenders. I then left it off for about the space of four years, in which time I frequently used to have nocturnal pollutions, and for a great while together a pain in my back, that when I arose in the morning I have hardly been capable of gartering my stockings. I am now in my twenty-second year, and within these three years last past I have about thirty times acted my former detestable practice; but since the reading of your excellent book (which I lately bought) I have made a resolution never to commit the like crime any more, hoping that God, upon my sincere repentance, will pardon my former transgressions. If I should marry at present, I am wholly incapable to perform the duty of an husband, but finding there is relief for some, I hope that I am not past help. I am at present an apprentice, and obliged to rise early and sit up late, and work very hard; although I am almost out of my time, my parents allow me

me but very little money; but I have, in my apprenticeship, saved two guineas, half of one I have here inclosed, hoping you will accept of it, and, if it suits with your conveniency, to order me where to meet you on Sunday next in the evening (for I cannot possibly come on another day) desiring you will assist me with your advice, and what shall be necessary for my relief. I will endeavour to pay for as I use the medicines: Although my circumstances at present confine me, that I cannot make you a return suitable to your merit, yet I beg that you will undertake my cure; and, if it ever be in my power, I do assure you I shall not forget to make amends for the benefit which I hope to receive. From

YOUR UNKNOWN,

BUT HUMBLE SERVANT,

T. O.

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ I AM a person that was never married, nor never had the carnal knowledge of any woman in my life, and am of the age of forty-five, but have been so unhappy as to practice Self-pollution for many years past, sometimes oftner, and sometimes but seldom of late, not in the least suspecting it to be injurious to bodily health; nor have I felt any ill effects of  
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it till this last Spring, when in March last I had something fell into my left testicle, of a softish substance, which made it swell, and caused a pain cross my loins, and above the bottom of my belly, where it continued three or four days to my great concern, not knowing the cause of it, but only suspecting it to be occasioned by that miserable practice. About three or four mornings after, having my usual erections, I ejected it out, and was for some time after very free from it, and very easy; and from that time I endeavoured to break myself from that vile practice, supposing it to be my seed which fell down, thro' the weakness of some of those parts into my testicles; and it has since that several times fallen into that part, when in my morning erections, that my seed is come into the penis, and I not suffering it to come from me, but checked it back again, have been forced to take the same course to get free from it as I did at first. It is but the other day that I met with your book, which I am sorry I did not meet with many years ago, the reading of which has made me abominate that vile practice; and since I left it off I find, upon the least occasion, or upon none at all, my seed falls down into those parts. There are other ailments which, by reading your book, I find by this practice I have brought upon myself, viz. a wasting of my body, a lowness of my voice and spirits, and a palpation of the heart, and I have a noise in my head like the tinckling of

a watch. All these ailments have fallen upon me since the last Spring.

“ I must now, Sir, desire your judgment in this my case, and your advice of what is proper for me. I have here inclosed a guinea for your advice. I must desire the favour of you to order me such things as you shall think proper and effectual for my case, and desire the favour that they may be ready at your bookseller’s on Saturday night, or on Monday morning next, for they are to be sent me by the carrier, who goes out on Monday morning; and I shall send a person for them, who will at the receipt of them pay for them. What you send me I desire may be taken with secrecy. I have a weakness in my eyes, which I had some years past, and do observe things like peas dart from before them; I am afraid this unhappy practice was the first occasion of it. I should be glad if, by your prescriptions, I could have any benefit for them. Pray, Sir, do not fail to let me have them at the time desired, and you will very much oblige,

SIR,

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT.

L. B.

As the following letter, which came from a young married lady, is intended as a caution to others of the same sex, I could not omit inserting it.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK  
CALLED ONANIA.

“SIR,

“SINCE it is impossible for you ever to know from whom this comes, I can with freedom relate my case to you, which otherways I could not have confidence enough so much as to mention one tittle of it to any physician living. My sad case is, that when I was a young girl of between fifteen and sixteen years of age, at the boarding-school, being enticed and shewed the way by three of my school-fellows, older than myself, which lay in my chamber with me, two beds being in the room, I did as they did, which you can guess at, and your book tells, and I thought it was pleasing enough: I followed it afterwards upon all opportunities by myself; and so that by that practice, and the lascivious talk we had amongst us, and play books, and other books we used to read one to another, I was to that degree prompted thereby, that I was resolved to marry the first man that asked me the question, and the more, because my parents used to say it was time enough for a husband at four or five and twenty: In short, Sir, at seventeen I got me a husband, unknown to my parents; and though he was no unequal match, for I had a considerable fortune left me by a relation, they turned  
me

me out of doors, but soon after they were reconciled to us: I had three children by my husband in less than two years, for I had two at a birth, but they all died, and also my husband soon after. I remained a widow two years, and then I married with my friends consent. But, alas! such was my baseness during my widowhood, I living in all affluence and plenty, meeting with nothing either to sour or ruffle my temper, and having no suitable offers of marrying, and being more inclined to the delights of the marriage-bed than ever, with such vehement desires, more especially just before and after the course of nature, I could not forbear returning to my former wicked practice, and that so often, and with so much excess, that I could hardly sometimes walk, or sit with ease, I was so fore: I indeed feared the ill consequence, and now find it, but the pleasure then would not let me hearken to that, for I had and have now, a sad bearing-down, and forcing of the womb, that I cannot stand long, and have another great weakness follows me, so that I have not been so much as once with child since I have been married, which is now about three years, and is a great trouble to myself, but much more does it discontent my husband to have no heir to leave what we have to: He would have me to take advice, but as I could not tell my case to any man living, I spoke to my midwife and told her how I was; she asked me some questions which I could not answer, and she gave me something to take, but it did me no good, so that by my husband's

husband's order she went to Sir David Hamilton for his advice, and he ordered me several things to take, and the Bath Waters, and injections, but nothing would do me any good; and she going to him from time to time, and telling him I was no better, he said he could do no more unless he searched me; but I absolutely resolved against that; but my spouse said I should, and very angrily insisted on it, so that to oblige him I said I would undergo it; and he brought Dr. Hamilton to a relation's house where he appointed, because he should not know us, and there I let him search me, my mask being on, and my midwife present; he told us that my womb was weak and slippery, and that he was afraid I should never have any children, and wanted to ask me some questions about the cause by myself, but I told him I could say nothing of the cause, he knew that best as he was a physician; so that I believe he guessed at the cause, but he ordered me down to Bath, and he prescribed a great many things, but all to no purpose; and at my return to town, my midwife coming to see me, and finding me no better, told me she had heard of a doctor that had done many such cures, and had published a book about them, which she had at home, and would bring it me to read the next day, and brought it accordingly, which is called Onania. I was surpris'd to see a book that so hit my case, which made me think my midwife suspect the cause of my illness. I told her I would read it through, and desired her to come to me again in a day or two, and she did

so, and then I told her I had read it, and would keep it; and we being by ourselves, I gave her some hints of the cause of my present illness, which she said she all along believed, and asked me some close questions about it; so that at length, I knowing she would keep all secret, fully and freely told her the matter, as I have here related to you, and which I have done in order to have some help from your hands, if possible; but as I cannot expect your advice for nothing, the person that brings this, who is my midwife, will leave you a fee, a guinea, with the bookfeller, for you, and will call for your answer in a day or two; and I desire you will not fail to leave it for her, and therein to let me know whether the tincture you recommended in your book called Onania, or the powder, or both, may be proper, for the weakness is very considerable, but perfectly white, but so thin and so much sometimes, that it runs from me if I stir never so little, and the bearing-down sometimes very much, with a continual pain in the womb, and in my back, which has worn me much away; and besides, I have now no manner of inclination to the act of procreation, and very little or no pleasure in the act, which I am thinking may be as much as any thing the reason I can have no children; but I have a good stomach, and sleep well; but it is strange that I that used to be so amorous, and indeed so excessively desirous of conversing with my first husband, should have no inclination that way at all to this husband, whom I love as

my

my life. Sir, pray advise me for the best, and whatever the charge is I will gladly pay it; and you shall find me very liberal, besides paying for your medicines. Please to direct your letter for Mrs. E. O.

S I R,

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT."

I thought here to have dismissed the reader, but considered it might be necessary to observe, that what has been said to be the consequences of Self-pollution in women, is a good deal made good in the case of the above letter; besides what will be found, towards the close of this book, to have been the fatal cause of the young woman mentioned in the clergyman's letter, referred to in the Preface. And it is too justly to be feared, there are many cases of the like kind, and from the same cause, however industriously they are concealed, even to those they apply to, and can only hope to have the help from, and for that reason are too often disappointed of the relief sought for; and which, upon a true state of their case, in as plain a manner as this lady's, in her letter, they might probably have succeeded in, as it is evidently known she has joyfully done. But though I say it is to be feared, there are many such cases abroad, yet on the other hand, I cannot but own I have observed, that the many complaints of barrenness in that sex, (and which are chiefly among the better sort of them,) are much more generally

from the other side than their own, though too often to their wrong as well as disgrace, and frequently to the prejudice of their healths, they take the cause of it ignorantly, and too readily upon themselves. That this has been done, Dr. Baynard, in his book of Cold-bathing, confirms likewise; for where he has been speaking of infertility in men, he says, that he has often pitied poor innocent, young, new-married gentlewomen, who have sweated and stewed themselves in hot baths, season after season. These unhappy women, says he; thinking the deficiency lay on their side, were willing to undergo any toil or trouble, in hopes of a great belly, &c. when, alas! the fault was in the vile and wicked whoremasterly husband, broke and bankrupt in his bed-tackle; and this is the reason (he tells us) of so many unhappy and miserable marriages, and that there are in families so many married maids, and makes women ramble in quest of those satisfactions which both art and nature in a warm constitution, incessantly prompts them to, and the husband quietly to acquiesce under the antlers of a displayed forehead, or to pocket his misfortune, being conscious that his wife's extravagancies are the issues of his own insufficiencies, &c. The organs subservient to those exercises, having been shaken and battered in their unclean combats, &c. so as not to be capable after of begetting children, or indeed to perform any conjugal intercourse at all, but with a great diminution of the pleasures and delights to what they were before such abuses; and yet

yet the husbands, to any outward appearance, shew not the least sign of any incapacity, nay rather pass for as capable men that way as any; but *fronti nulli fides*, and, as the above doctor says, they are, *Non semper inferius, sicut superius*; for that

*A man may look brisk, with cherry cheek,  
And yet below stairs very weak;  
That woman's in a doubtful case,  
That builds her hopes upon a face;  
As one was cheated when she chose,  
A husband by the length of's nose.*

But yet a promising face, when there is no capacity, is a hundred times more tolerable (say the women) than where there are neither; a beardless chin, and an effeminate voice, are the aversion of that sex, as well as ridicule, and we may allow they are generally pretty good judges that way, as believing what Hudibras says, that

*“ Want of virility is averr'd  
“ To be the cause of want of beard.”*

Another very late author (a physician also) speaking of the imbecilities and weaknesses incident to the fair sex, and their cure, says, “ There is one calumny, amongst many others, ignorance and partiality have very unjustly thrown on them, *viz.* That the barrenness, unfruitfulness, and want of posterity, so frequent in England (especially among the better sort) is commonly cast on them, whereas it is very

great odds if the fault lies not on the other side. If the account of generation, now established and confirmed by undeniable experiences and observations, be true and just, which I really think it must be, *viz.* That the female furnishes out only a proper habitation, fit nourishment, due warmth, and such like outward conveniences for the little Beings; but that the vital principals, the living particles, proceed altogether from the male, then it will follow, that the concurrence of a great many more circumstances, and their precise degrees (which he enumerates) is more necessary for fecundity in the male than the female. The liberties men take beyond women, the riot they run into, their continued debauches, the vicissitude of heaters and coolers, the high-seasoned and inflaming diet the better sort of young persons of our sex accustom themselves to, will more than sufficiently prove this my observation. How can fruit be expected from a tree whose root is roasted, spiced, or salted to mineral? Life is likely to hold long, or be very healthy, that comes seasoned and sowsed in Hermitage, Tokay, or Citronwater. How fertile are the Scotch Highlanders on their milk and oatmeal, and the native Irish on their potatoes and milk? It is common to see at their doors a range of children, like the steps of a stair, shewing the number of years since their parents came together; whereas here in England you shall see great families extinguished, and large estates descend to an ostler or a centinel, scarce within arithmetical degrees of kindred,

for

for want even of a female, in a direct line, to inherit. Such observations as these, as my friend (says he) has since informed me, enabled him to direct several families, which he named to me, towards heirs of their own bodies, who had lived some seven, some ten, some more years, from their marriage, in despair of any. And I am very certain, continues he, if those who are so very anxious for posterity, the want of which seems to make their worldly misery, would in any time not long after the meridian of their lives, enter upon a course of cooling, sweetening, and fructifying their juices, by imitating the labour and diet of the poor, and other proper assistance, they would more certainly give heirs to their families, and enjoy better health themselves than they do, provided there be not a scrophulous and venereal taint on either side; in which case I think their infecundity is no misfortune." Meaning, I suppose, if by their own procurement.

The act of generation is never like, as says another author, to prove more successful, than when the faculties and desires of both sexes are reciprocally powerful, and the just means to preserve the genital forces on both sides, in a just and laudable equality, is to be careful never to impair nature, by either an excess of strong liquors, or to fall into a vile habit of inordinate venery, both which are very great enemies to the pleasing and profitable work of generation; without a moderate commendable use of which, the grim king of terrors must soon reign triumphant over the whole universe,  
and

and the world be reduced from all its splendid improvements to an uninhabited wilderness : therefore it remains as a principal duty upon mankind, to beget their like in a lawful way, that whenever they are called to their last home, they may leave the beauties of the creation to be comfortably enjoyed by a hopeful posterity ; that though their bones are mouldered to their first original, their names may flourish to the last day ! for which reason providence has ordained different sexes of the same species, and has implanted in them a mutual affection to each other, that they may associate together with inexpressible delight, and cordially join with a voluptuous extacy to themselves, in this great and noble work for which they are appointed ; therefore it is absolutely necessary, whenever they engage in this endearing duty, that they look beyond the bare pleasing sensuality, and have a just regard for that most glorious end for which it was chiefly constituted ; and not to use it with such bestial indecencies, as to make that sinful which may be lawfully enjoyed both with delight and benefit to both sexes.

All what these authors have so rightly set forth to be the effects of hard-drinking, hot and high-seasoned diet, inordinate venery, and the like debauches, may be justly said of Self-pollution, and more, as the consequences thereof have been worse, and harder, if ever, to be entirely retrieved ; and where these excesses meet, or are accompanied with the additional effects

effects of a third, *viz.* Whoring, how deplorable must that case be, and insuperable the difficulties of it ?

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TO THE INGENIOUS AUTHOR OF
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ I N April I wrote a letter to your bookseller, signifying that I had read your most ingenious book called Onania, much to my satisfaction, and told him, I believed it would do a great deal of service in the world, by deterring youth from that vile and base practice. Several of my brethren the clergy, as well as other friends, by my recommendation, bought it also, and were of my opinion when they had read it. Another friend of mine called at the shop for one, but was told it was out of print, but that it was printing again with large additions. As soon as I heard of it, I bethought myself of my promise in my letter to the bookseller, of sending you a remarkable occurrence or two of my own knowledge, to be inserted for the good of others, to deter them from that evil and pernicious practice in your next edition. I here accordingly make good that promise, and hope they come not too late : had I known you should have occasion to print the book again so soon, I would have sent you them in better time. The
occurrences

occurrences I mentioned are these : I hinted in my letter, which I suppose the bookseller shewed you, that I was a clergyman, and kept a school ; I had a youth of some note my scholar, who for several years from the age of fifteen, very profusely addicted himself to the cruel and sinful practice of masturbation ; he also followed as he could get time, as extravagantly that of lying with lewd women and drinking, whereby he got no less than three claps and two poxes by that time he was twenty-one. These brought him into divers other disorders, but more especially into miseries of the private parts, and though he was most excessively weak in them as to any venereal desire, and had a hard and painful swelling upon one of his testicles, and the other shrunk to nothing, and the spermatic vessels leading down to them clustered or twisted like ropes ; yet he had such constant and strong erections, that he often voided blood through the urethra involuntarily, which the surgeon, who, with myself and his other friends, advised him to, called a Satyriasis or Priapism, but it gave him rather pleasure than pain. He had a great disorder in his urine with it, that at times was very painful. Under this condition he laboured and badly enough felt the effects of his enormous crimes for many months, and went through two salivations, and divers other courses of physic, by a consultation of several eminent physicians and surgeons ; but in spite of all they could do, the whole matter at length, issued in a very deep stinking ulcer in his bladder,

bladder, which, by degrees, wore him to a skeleton, that he died tabid; but for about three months before he expired, he stunk so intolerably, that nobody could stay a quarter of an hour in the room, without holding some strong or volatile aromatic to their nose. The cause of this ail of his, all the doctors allowed proceeded at first from Self-pollution more than from either his drinking or whoring, but was extremely heightened and aggravated by both.

“ The other case is this: Some time after the said death of this young man, upon my smoaking a pipe, and talking with one of the physicians that attended him, who also practised midwifery, he told me what he had observed in a young woman of about nineteen, that was his patient; she was a person of a sanguine complexion, and hot and lustful temperament, which overcoming the virtuous principles she in her younger days had imbibed, was prompted to abuse herself in the commission of that foul and enormous sin which you have, with so much goodness exposed and shewn the danger of. She confessed she had lived in that practice from the age of fourteen, and that she had often bewailed, by herself, the folly of it, with a resolution to leave it off, but could not keep it, but never imagined either any sin or danger in it, any more than that she believed she had lost her virgin badge, which she dreaded the consequence of, should she marry: the instruments she chose to gratify her lust with, are by no means proper to be named here; by the nature of them and the frequency of their use she brought herself

self

self into a most miserable condition: and the more she followed the practice, the oftener were her desires heightened, till at length, by the excess, it brought her into many dangerous distempers, and severe womb - weakneses, which obliged her to require the assistance of a most skilful physician, but no help could be afforded her; for after all, a Furor Uterinus seized her, and that so violently, that in fits of them she would extravagantly scream out, talk obscenely, pull up her coats, and throw off the bed-cloaths, calling to, and laying hold of any man she saw, or could come at, to lie with her; and what was remarkable, it was observed in the height of one of those lascivious fits, by the violence of the stimulating power upon the ovaria, there were extended or shed some of the ova, which my friend, the physician that attended her, says, the nurse shewed him, as wondering what they should mean, and that he had more than once seen several of them which came from her at a time. She living in this condition, sometimes better and at other times worse, till she was three-and-twenty, and all of a sudden, in a most violent fit, died raving. Upon opening her, which was done in the presence of several physicians and surgeons, the extremity or glans of the Clitoris, called by the Latins, Preputium Muliebre, which was much above its natural size, and which as physicians say, is the chief seat of pleasure in women, was observed to be invested with a sharp corroding tettery humour, which they imagined must, in that part, itch

to a prodigious degree, and occasion the insuperable titillation and desire; and it was their opinion, that the acrimonious humour which that part was affected with, had been enticed thither by the method and means she had so long taken with herself; and yet this young woman solemnly assured them, when she was several times asked, that she never had the least carnal knowledge of any man living. I am,

S I R,

THOUGH UNKNOWN,

YOUR MOST HUMBLE ADMIRER,

T. B.

P. S. I have, by the method I have taken, effectually prevented that foul practice in my school; and the better to inculcate the danger of it in the minds of the youth under my care, I have collected the injuries and sad instances you have taken notice to have accrued thereby, together with the wholesome admonitions therein laid down, and turned them into Latin, the more to be observed; and to oblige the head of every form to read audibly to the rest, such a part as I appoint, twice in every week, to raise a detestation in them of it; and I could wish that every other schoolmaster in the city and country would do the like."

TO THE WORTHY AUTHOR OF
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ I AM an utter stranger to you, but yet could not forbear to let you know that I had long observed an advertisement of your little book, called Onania, against Self-pollution, but had no curiosity to see it till within these two or three weeks that I heard it commended by one that read it; upon which I writ to my bookseller in London, to get one of the new edition and send me. When I entered into it I could not leave it till I had read it through, and being a schoolmaster, and having several times surprized both my boarders and other scholars at the practice which your book justly reprehends, I read to them, as occasion offered, those paragraphs, wherein you so wisely and truly condemn the enormity thereof, insomuch that, together with the letters shewing the sufferings of many youth thereby, I have reason to believe it has deterred them all, even to a single boy, from that practice for the future. My spouse has a sister in the same city where I dwell, that keeps a boarding-school for girls; and she having told her several times, with concern, of some vile practices that way in the elder girls, whom she has caught, I got another of the Onania, and sent it her by my wife, first turning down the parts of the book that relate to that sex,
and

and which I hear has had a very good effect, as it has drawn them into a confession of that abominable crime with tears, and resolutions to abandon it for the future. But what, Sir, amazes me most is, that any of either sex, as your book takes notice of, should pursue such vileness in a married state, when the man and wife bed together, and there is no impediment in the one or the other to hinder the lawful enjoyments. This makes me to be the more of the opinion of the dignified clergyman, who, in his letter in the preface of Onania, says, "That it ought to be read by all sorts of people, of both sexes, of what age, degree, profession, or condition soever, guilty or not guilty of the sin declaimed against." And I say, it is a pity but that every man, woman, or child in the nation, that is capable of reading or understanding it, should have one of them, as it contains the best rules for chastity, and admonitions founded on reason and scripture, that is possible, to deter from the enormities of the flesh. I heartily wish it may have with all, the same success it has had with the youth of both sexes under mine and my sister's care.

S I R,

YOUR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

T. R."

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

TO BE LEFT AT THE BOOKSELLER'S.

“ MOST WORTHY SIR,

“ I AM one amongst that unhappy number, who have been guilty of that most abominable sin of Self-pollution, to the detriment both of my body and soul. It is now about four years ago since I first saw your excellent book, the reading of which put me into a very great concern, to think that I should be guilty of a sin so long, which had brought me into so deplorable a condition; though my case was so bad, I was resolved not to make any one acquainted therewith, but by fasting, and other methods recommended in your book, to abstain from that vile practice: But alas! in a little time I was troubled with nocturnal pollutions, heat of urine, and was very costive in my body: In this most sad miserable condition I went on, till such time I was obliged to make my case known to a surgeon, who, upon sight of my members, told me that I had got the Foul Disease from some naughty woman; but I can appeal to Almighty God for my innocency, who knows the secrets of all actions, that I am an utter stranger to the carnal knowledge of any woman. I took several things by his directions, and have taken several bottles of your Strengthening Tincture, which I have found some benefit from; but as I still labour under very great disorders, you knowing the particulars of my

my

my case, fills me with hope you can prescribe that which may recover me.

“ I have a weakness in my testicles; my right one is small and weak, but the left one is longer; there is something hard in the vessels, which I suppose to be the semen fallen into it, which is very hot, and gives me a great uneasiness; my yard is small and weak, have very seldom an erection, my urine is very hot. I have the piles very often, which I take to be owing to the weakness of my body; my nocturnal pollutions are but seldom to what they used to be; I am troubled with flushings in the face; all these things gives me a deal of trouble, dreading what may be the consequences. Dear Sir, I desire you to leave your answer with the bookseller, whether you have known any in my case cured; if so, pray direct me to those of your medicines mentioned in your book, that may be most proper for my cure. I shall not be ungrateful. Let your answer be directed as I subscribe myself,

YOURS, ONUS, A. C.

“ I am about twenty-three years of age.”

TO THE MOST WORTHY AUTHOR OF
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ WITH humble submission, I beg leave to trouble you with these few lines, as follows. Sir, I am one of those unhappy

young youths, that have injured themselves by that most abominable practice of Self-pollution, of which I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry. Sir, the first time that ever I knew any thing of that most heinous sin, I was about my seventeenth year, when I was shewn by a man that was old enough to have been my father; he was at least fifty years of age; not only that, but the detestable sin of fornication, which practice I committed about twenty times; the very first time I committed it I got a small damage, of which I soon got well; and about half a year ago I got another, which proved more fatal than the other, for it was for the space of four months before I got well; but having met with your well-penned excellent book against Self-pollution, and such like sinful practices, in which I found some cases in relation to mine, which puts me in a great deal of terror, thinking what damage I have done my poor soul and body, being ignorant of it before. I have for this three quarters of a year, pimples continually going and coming upon my face and head, and some parts of my body; I am apt to squeeze them, and comes a white matter, then follows a water; I have had several upon my members as big as grey peas. I am troubled with sad dreams, so that I cannot get my natural rest. I have had nocturnal pollutions about six times, all within these twelve months, none before. My memory I find is somewhat shorter than usual; my secrets are very weak to what they used to be, and I have

have not such a force with my water as usual; my nut under my foreskin is full of small pimples, about the bigness of pins heads; it is very sore, and very much inflamed. I have had for this year and half, a great scalding in my water, and is generally very foul, and small things swimming about in it. I feel no manner of pains about my body, which makes me to think it is much the better. I am now about my twentieth year; it is about three years since I have followed this most horrid practice, sometimes twice a week, sometimes thrice, sometimes twice a fortnight, and sometimes once in three weeks. O abominable sinner against my blessed Maker! Therefore as I do here, in the presence of Almighty God, solemnly and truly declare, I never will follow that detestable practice any more; if I had but known the consequences of it, I never would have done it. Sir, I beg that you would be pleased to give me what directions you think proper for the cure; there is a great many good directions in your book, I do believe; but Sir, if you please to tell me how many bottles of Tincture will do, or whether I need use all the things that your book mentions. Sir, I am an apprentice, and have a year and a half to serve of my time; my friends will allow me but little money, but I have saved up two guineas in my apprenticeship; herein, Sir, I have inclosed half a guinea to you, hoping that you will be pleased to accept of it, and when I am out of my time, I will

will be fure to make you amends; and you shall ever have the hearty prayers of

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT, UNKNOWN,

J—— C——.”

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TO THE INGENIOUS AUTHOR OF  
*ONANIA. These.*

“ HONOURED SIR,

“ **I**T is one of the greatest afflictions of my whole life, that I am forced to acquaint you with the melancholy circumstances of a near relation and friend of mine, occasioned by the vile practice of Self-pollution, which she has continued in for a long time; and I fear her case is too like that of the young woman mentioned in the clergyman’s letter.

“ She has for a long time been very much out of order, and I could never guess the reason till I found her reading your book, since which time she has been extremely dejected and cast down, and I fear it will affect her reason if not timely prevented; and therefore, Sir, I hope you will be so good as to consider her case, and if there is any help for her, to let me know.

“ I shall, in as brief a manner as possible, let you know all the different symptoms, in hopes of your best advice.

“ She has long complained of lowness of spirits, and pains in the head, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other.

“ And

“ And with violent pains juſt before the courſe of nature, though thoſe are much abated to what they have been ſix months ago; and what frights me moſt is, a pain in her noſe, and a violent itching all over her body, but chiefly in her head, and the extreme parts. When ſhe told me theſe pains wandered about her body, I adviſed her to have a phyſician, but ſhe declared ſhe would die firſt, and ſuffer all the tortures ſhe could undergo: and this made it neceſſary for me to apply myſelf to you, which I hope, will be a ſufficient excuſe for this trouble.

“ Beſides this, ſhe has had a weakneſs occaſioned by the whites, which laſted two or three days, but no longer, nor any time before.

“ At preſent ſhe has a ſhortneſs of breath, and a cough, and a conſtant running at her noſe, with loſs of appetite; but whether that proceeds from her great concern, or the malignity of the diſeaſe, I ſhould be glad to be informed.

“ I have ſent half a guinea by the bearer, which I beg you to accept of, and another for a bottle of the Tincture, and ſhall order a perſon to call for your anſwer on Monday; and beg you will let me know what medicines will be beſt for her, and what they will come to, and when I ſend for them, I will order the money.

“ It may be neceſſary to inform you, that ſhe is thirty years of age, and I think began that vile practice as early as any ever did, and I know ſhe has been a very great offender that way. I cannot get her to be more particular in this matter.

“ I beg

“ I beg, Sir, you will be so good to excuse this long letter, and to let me know what may be the worst consequences of her present condition; and it would be a further favour to know, if there is any visible sign of this vice in any part of her face discoverable by others. Thus complying with this request, will be a great obligation to

YOUR UNKNOWN HUMBLE SERVANT,

SARAH R——.”

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*THIS FOR THE GOOD AUTHOR OF
ONANIA.*

“ SIR,

“ **P**ROVIDENCE has been so kind, as to direct me to your excellent book called Onania, I seeing an advertisement of it in an old newspaper by chance; but it was a great while before I could contrive how to send for it, and then there was none to be had; I sent three or four times for it, and at last I got one, and read many cases in it something like my own case, but yet of none of my sex that begun the wicked practice of Self-pollution so soon as myself, for I began with it at eleven years old, by the devil's leading me to it I think, and followed it till I was married; which was before I was quite seventeen, but was always pale and weakly when a girl, and never had the course of nature but twice till I married; and I must own my farther wickedness, which was, that
I used

I used that base and cruel practice after I was married, and had a great deal more pleasure in it than when my husband lay with me, although he is a young brisk man; and till I read your book, I followed it almost daily, and have been married four years, but never was with child, nor been in order as women should be, and as no other women are; and have never been right well in health all my marriage, though I have took abundance of physic; but now, by reading your wonderful good book, I see what the cause is, and thank the Almighty I have left it off. I am troubled very much with the vapours, and a fluttering and trembling; and I used that practice the oftener, because it always helped me in the vapours, and the trembling and fluttering; but then I thought it increased the pain in my back by what used to come away from me, and my bearing down my womb also, which is very much sometimes; and I have great slipperiness of the womb, as midwives and doctors have told me, but none of them could ever do me any good; but I hope, Sir, that you can without seeing me, for I can never see you after telling you my condition, if I die for it. I entreat you to assist me, and will pay whatever the charge is, for I would be cured, for my husband wonders what is the matter with me, for I have not the least desire he should lie with me, nor the least pleasure in the act when he does; and my womb is so slippery, that I am told I shall never be with child till that is cured, and I want to have a child. I was sadly put

to it how to send privately to you; and the woman that brings this is employed by another woman, and she does not know me neither; and I have sent you a guinea fee by her, and pray let me know if you can cure me; and direct me what I must do, for I am sometimes at my wit's end that I should be so lustful, and foolish, and wicked, as to bring myself into this sad condition; and my husband knows nothing of the cause of it, but knows I am not as I should be. I must desire you, Sir, to send me back this letter, with your answer, and seal them up safe, and the woman shall call at the book-feller's for it on Wednesday morning next without fail; and you will oblige,

SIR,

YOUR MOST DISTRESSED

UNKNOWN HUMBLE SERVANT,

A. Q."

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA,

"SIR,

"I THINK I had rather die than make my case known; but as we cannot do that when we would, I must now make my complaint to you, in hopes of relief. Some time since I had a very great inclination to be married

ried, and was, as I thought, very near it; but as my fortune was small, and the offers I met with not very extraordinary, my friends would not consent to any of them, though it would have been better for me; for my desire after being courted some time, grew very strong, and I could not help in some measure encouraging it; which God forgive me! that being, I think, my own fault. I never used any thing but my own hands. I have now been under the physician's hands this half year, though never the better, I think worse: Indeed I never could tell them my case, nor could I to you, were I to speak it. I have had weak nerves many years, and a good deal of the rheumatism; if I lean on my elbows or use any strength with my hands, they are then benumbed, and my fingers will catch, and draw up like the cramp; my stomach seems outwardly swelled, and I have a racking pain in it, which often makes me feel as if I should choak, and appears to me as if I were inwardly fore from my throat to my navel. I have also a racking pain in my back, between my loins and under my shoulders; if I offer to pull myself up, all my bones will snap, you may hear them if you stand by me. If at any time I turn my head a one side, or offer to talk much, it hurts me mightily: the hollow of my stomach, and under my shoulders, seems inwardly swelled, and full of pain: my hands are seldom warm, and the bones of my instep by night seem much swelled, and full of pain: whenever I sleep I wake with a great numbness in my arms; and

if I happen to lie on my back, with a great pain in my heels. If at any time I lean on my elbows they then will be much numbed and my sides full of pain, that I can hardly set upright: if I offer to walk, I am ready to die with a numbness in my loins, and pain in my stomach and middle of my back: My shoulders sometimes feel as if they were stuck full of pins; it really hurts me to put my hands to my head, so that I fancy I have strained something within me. After I have had the pain all the day, towards night I fall into prodigious flushings in my face, which makes a thousand pulses in my head, and almost blinds me, it so weakens my eyes. In a morning I awake very dry, and my tongue white; and have a great inward heat and draught, and am apt to vomit and am very giddy, and often subject to have sick fits; the pain in my body is very great, but I do not wonder at it; I dread an ulcer in the womb or kidneys, for I am, I think, always upon the rack. Nothing ever comes discoloured from me, only my water is generally very thick and high coloured, when it stands some time it is like curds and whey, or else a cloud in it. If you think you can help me, let me know by a line; but be sure you seal it up, this friend not knowing what is the matter with me, and very likely may send her maid to you. I live forty miles off the person I send, so it will be some time before I can have your letter. If you think the Strengthening Drops I have bought of the bookseller proper for me, send me word what I shall

shall take them in, and if any particular food be good for me : I am apt to be very costive, and whenever I go to stool it strains my right eye as if it would blind me.

“ If I had been so happy to read your book before, I had never done this, but did not think it so great a sin : I am sure I shall never fall into it again, I so much abhor it. I could not venture to take the bottle of drops without your advice ; though at present I am mistress of very little money ; however I have here sent you a guinea ; if I can recover this great disorder, I shall soon have it in my power to oblige my friends ; and assure yourself, if I find benefit by what you order me to do, you then shall hear of me. I am where I cannot take much things, and if I do not soon find benefit, I shall have very little courage.

“ S I R,

“ I AM a young woman, that have been in a surprize near this twelvemonth, not knowing what was the matter, till reading the news, found therein an advertisement of a book, which I bought, and found great part of my distemper described, and accordingly sent for a bottle of the tincture ; and finding that do me good, I took a second, which has restored my nerves and spirits almost as good as ever, but has flung it more upon a certain part, which makes me very uneasy, and indeed frightens

me very much; for if I had ever any private conversation with a man, I should think it the foul distemper; but I do assure you I never had; I am as well for a fortnight or three weeks after a certain time, as ever I was in my life; and I was still in hopes it would have gone away, but it is quite the reverse, for I am worse, and would willingly take your other medicines, if you think it proper to leave a line at the shop, with your advice sealed up with them, if I may take them safe, and you will for ever oblige,

YOUR SERVANT,

MARY SM——

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TO THE INGENIOUS AUTHOR OF  
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ IF you continue your thoughts of re-printing the supplement to the book of Onania, and if the merit of this letter can contribute in the least to the dreadful appearance of this odious sin, I should be obliged to you, good Sir, to let it find a place in your next edition.

“ As to Self-pollution, I was very easily persuaded to the guilt of it; your book did no more than confirm my doubts, which were not great enough to confirm any resolution, notwithstanding the ill consequence that attend it

as to my body, had given me to think it not so natural as using the seed in the way it was designed for, which had made me almost abandon the practice, but not before I had very much abused myself with it, and I believe should a great deal more, had I not reflected on the manner of doing it in private, which gave me suspicion (though I was very young) of the uncleanness of it, and the indecency of acting it, which was all I could imagine might be meant in scripture of Self-pollution, by the name of uncleanness; but then again I was not satisfied there was any such thing practised in those days: as to the text you quote of Onan, I never could look on that but as his disobedience to God.

“ So as this was a little pleasure to me, I used to practice it as I found my body would bear it, once a week, or so, till I was so happy as to see your most excellent thoughts on the subject; nor was I long before I perused it through, with a serious consideration on every page, and am as fully convinced of my guilt, as I am of the hurt I have done to my body; the particulars of which I should not relate, but do affirm, I really believe, those cases that have been sent you may be very true; and, as to the other sex, I was very well acquainted with a young woman that followed that detestable practice till she was wore to an anatomy; her skin was as yellow as saffron, and so short-breathed she could hardly go, and at last died in a most miserable condition, not much unlike the young woman you gave the particulars of:

and the wretch that taught me the way to pollute myself, has made himself a spectacle to the world ; and I had injured myself very much before I knew what I did, but am now, I think, almost come to my natural constitution, and as strongly resolved never to be guilty any more of this grievous sin of Self-pollution, and, by this entire reformation, I do not doubt but to bring my body, &c. into a right disposition ; I a little doubt if so right as if I had never known this wicked sin.

“ And as to nocturnal pollution, I believe they will never hurt my body, nor lay any weight on my spirits, as knowing they are owing to thoughts and dreams, which we are not masters of, if we are of our hands ; as to the method of preventing it, I cannot comply with at all.

“ I am in so good a way at present, that I want no advice ; but if I should, I will send a gratification. I desire you would add this to the Supplement ; and if I have erred in any part, I desire to be convinced, which you may very easily do, I having so good an opinion of you, good Sir, and am your

SINCERE ADMIRER,

AND THANKFUL SERVANT,

Z. B.

“ GOOD

“ GOOD SIR,

“ I HAVE received your last edition of the Onania, and in the several letters sent you, I read somewhat of my own deplorable, wretched condition : I hope thousands will have cause to bless God for so necessary and laudable an undertaking, *viz.* the exposing (in my opinion) one of the most vile and abominable of practices. As to my own case, I think it far exceeds all that are mentioned in your book, that if it might be of service to any one person in the world, to deter them from so heinous and hurtful a sin as that of Self-pollution, I should be glad on that account, though I own, as to myself, I think my case remediless ; for the circumstances, to which my sin has brought me, as to the world, are so low, that I cannot expect relief, and the horrors of my conscience, upon the reflection of a life spent in defiling myself this way, I cannot express, and in my opinion is the beginning of that worm that never dies, and that fire that never shall be put out. To represent my case as short, and yet as clear as I can, it is this : When I was about fourteen years of age, and then at school, I was very subject to listen, and give great attention to any filthy, nasty discourse that I heard from my school-fellows ; this I nourished and cherished, and though to my knowledge, I do not remember I met with any instance of any lad guilty of the commission of the act, yet in a little time, from frequent and vile thoughts,

I went

I went to the practice of this sin ; and it is almost incredible to think (as it is terrible for me to write of) how often in a day I was guilty of this : At this time I must own I had little if any notion of this practice being sinful, my chiefest concern was, to take care I was not seen by any persons at the time of my committing this act ; and though I had a very good education, and religious parents, and so was preserved from other vices, yet this I never heard them or others speak of, at least in its proper or particular name. In the frequent practice of this I continued while at home, and about a year and a half after I came to London, and was put 'prentice to a linen-draper, where I met with (from my fellow-'prentice) assistance in this vile practice. Some occurrences falling out, I was removed from thence, but I still found my inclination strong to that vile sin, not yet imagining any evil in it, having never read nor heard of Onan's sin till I saw your book about eight or nine years ago, whilst I was a 'prentice ; after I had read it I was under great concern of mind, and wanted relief of both body and mind, but knew not how to represent my case to any one. I was all this while subject to coughs, and other illneffes, and grew very little in stature. I had not your book long before somebody in the family found it, but I never knew who it was, nor durst I ask after it. For some time I strove hard against this vile practice ; I promised and vowed I would not be guilty of it, and used all the means I could think

think of to prevent this sin, but so strong and violent was my propensity to it, that it was hard to keep from it one week, and I afterwards had the misfortune to meet with some persons that pleaded a necessity of nature for this practice, but after this I could not be brought to think it was no sin. I have made several attempts to alter my condition, and to enter into a married state, but have been disappointed. I now write to you, good Sir, under great extremity, my body is brought very low by this vile practice; I have for a long time had a violent cough, and have frequent reachings, though I bring up but little; my head is often in pain, as also my back, and great weakness in my limbs, my head also is very cloudy, and eyes weak and dim. I have not lately been guilty of this vile practice; but I look on this not as the effect of virtue, but rather incapacity. Sir, it would be a deed of charity, if you might be prevailed upon to assist me in your advice, as to my body and mind: my circumstances are very mean, but if ever I should be in a capacity to requite you, I shall not be ungrateful: I must perish without some assistance, and I know not whom to apply to in this sad and sorrowful case if you refuse to help me: for the sake of my poor soul I intreat some advice from you, that I may not be brought to that dilemma to conclude there is no hope for me, but that I must perish. Pardon my importunities; it proceeds from the sense I have of my miserable case, and that readiness you have shewn to relieve persons

persons in distress. If you think this account of my case may be of any service, you have my free consent to publish it.

I AM

YOUR SORROWFUL PETITIONER,

ONAN.

“ P. S. If you will favour me with an answer, direct for Thomas F——, and I will get a friend to call for it in a few days.”

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“ S I R,

“ GOING into a coffee-house the other day and taking up one of the news-papers, the first that offered to my view was the advertisement of your excellent book called Onania, which I read over with great attention, and too well knew myself guilty of the most abominable sin you there treat of. My curiosity did not here end, for I went the same day, and bought the book at the publisher’s, and at night read it through with great circumspection; and, on thorough consideration of the many arguments you there make use of, I resolved never to commit the crime any more, having practiced it very frequently, till within this week, for about these three years; sometimes once, other times twice or thrice a day, just as my inclination suited, not thinking it was so great

great an offence to the Almighty, as I am now convinced it is; though indeed I must confess I generally had some terror on my conscience, either before or after the act; but that, and my corrupt nature, admitting of a parley with each other, the latter generally came off the victor: but now I hope God will have mercy on me, and, with my own endeavours, endue me with sufficient grace to withstand this, and all other evil temptations for the future; and likewise these sparks of virtue, which already I find kindling within me, that they may become a consuming flame to destroy all the wicked allurements of Satan, which tend to nothing but damnation.

“ This accursed practice was taught me when I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age, by my then bedfellow; before which time I had not the least thought of any such thing, he telling me it was as great a pleasure as lying with a woman, which he had no sooner mentioned, but my sensual appetite took the hint, and put it in practice, my only inducement being mere curiosity, little thinking then it would prove of so dangerous a consequence as I now find it has, both to soul and body; the former for certain being not (while this sin is followed) concomitant with any thing divine, since the apostle St. Paul says, “ that the holy Spirit will not dwell within a polluted mind:” and as for the latter, that does and has sufficiently suffered, (and I pray to God that may be its only punishment) since my constitution is wholly spoiled,
and

and my joints enervated; for in the first place, I am troubled with a prodigious trembling all over me, especially my hands and arms, together with pains in my head, loins and back, as well as about those parts that have been most contributing to this detestable wickedness, not omitting the almost continual emittance of urine, I have likewise been troubled with for these nine months past, though but a small quantity voided at a time.

“ I shall always hold myself infinitely obliged to you, though unknown in person, and for ever acknowledge the great service done my soul; but I hope you will have some compassion too on my body, it being in the condition I have related, by prescribing some more particular rules than specified in your book for my common diet, (since my circumstances will not permit the following your physical directions) whereby I may abstain from any thing that may be detrimental to me hereafter. If I am so happy as to have my request fulfilled as to this point, I beg you will be pleased to direct your letter with the initial letters W. S. to be left at the publisher's till called for.

“ If you think proper, I am very willing this, or any part of it may be inserted in your next edition of Onania, that by this my example others may be deterred from the like enormity; which perhaps, had I not the good fortune to have seen your book, might have suddenly brought me to the grave, which would have been a sad thing for one of my age, having
not

not as yet seen eighteen years.—Pray, Sir, excuse this trouble, and believe me to be, with much sincerity,

“S I R,

YOUR MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

UNKNOWN.”

*TO THE INGENIOUS AND LEARNED
AUTHOR OF ONANIA.*

“WORTHY SIR,

“**T**WO twin-brothers, among the many of your scholars and patients, make bold to trouble you with the following lines. It was but very lately since we happened to see an advertisement in the daily papers, of a book intitled Onania, which led us to a further curiosity of buying it; and having diligently perused it, are thoroughly convinced how great our error has been, in thinking the sin you so finely treat on but an innocent diversion: there has been so mutual a love between us even from our infancy, which obliged us not to keep or conceal any thing from each other.

“We were about seventeen years of age when first we practised the sin of Self-pollution, we being now full twenty; it came to us at first entirely through nature, not by any evil conversation: the first time we perceived our seed it

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surprized

surprized us very much, yet the uncommon ti-
tillation was pleasing to a great degree; but then
it growing customary to us, and our manhood
riper, we used it more frequent, and thought it
much berter to quench our lustful desires, than
carnally having to do with the female sex; and
we believe that was the only motive that induced
us from that sin, and we were willing (as we
thought) of two evils to chuse the least: we
have neither of us used it to excess, but are
both of weakly constitutions, except in our
manhood. We do verily believe, had not your
excellent book been published, we had always
been ignorant of the prejudice we did our
bodies, as well as our souls, by committing that
heinous (yet undesigned and unknowing) a
sin.

“ The occasion of our giving you this trou-
ble is, we are both troubled with several pains
and ailments, not usual, and now we perceive,
by many instances in your book, from whence
they proceed. We have, till now, kept the
matter a secret, and not made any body ac-
quainted with it, which are as follows:

“ I am troubled with a violent weakness and
pain in the small of my back, which is to that
extremity, that if I stoop down at any time, I
am scarce able to raise myself up, and a small
faintness and weakness all over me, and a pain
and swelling in my testicles; and ever since I
left off the practice, which is about ten or twelve
days, I am very often troubled with, I think,
nocturnal pollutions, that is, wasting my seed

in my sleep, especially when I have a pleasant dream, and when I rise, my back is worse, and then I find a pain (though not violent) in my groins.

“ My brother has a violent weakness and pain in his groins, accompanied with large kernels not usual, and a flushing in his face, and other small weaknesses.

“ Both of us are very spare and lean, though pretty tall; and I believe this practice has been very detrimental to our growing in bigness.

“ And, good Sir, as you have writ your book for the good of mankind, we desire your speedy answer, with advice according to your real sentiments of each of us, in a letter left at the bookseller’s for us.

“ Our names must be concealed, therefore I hope, without offence, we may subscribe ourselves, though with the utmost sincerity,

S I R,

YOUR MOST HUMBLE SERVANTS,

CASTALIO AND POLYDORE.”

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*TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.*

“ S I R,

“ I AM one of those young persons who have brought themselves into such circumstances, as greatly to stand in need of those directions of  
 H. 2. which

which you are capable of giving. I have offended the Almighty God, and wronged my own body, by that abominable and odious sin of Self-pollution: since you have allowed others to lay open their cases before you, in order to give them your assistance, I likewise take the same liberty, hoping you will be pleased to afford me your assistance. Sir, I shall lay my concerns open to you, that you may be the better judge of them, which I shall do as briefly as is possible. I have committed that heinous sin four times; the first time was about six months ago, the other three times a month followed each other; no ill effect succeeding, only after every commission of it I found a stoppage in my head, and a pain in my back, as if I had a great cold, which continued four or five days: but the last time that I committed it, the stoppage in my head was attended with a great pain in my back and testicles, which turned to a great pain in my left-thigh. I applied myself to an apothecary of my acquaintance about six weeks ago, (which was before I met with your book) who advised me to take some diet-drink, which I did about a gallon, which purged me pretty much, but did not remove the fixed pain in my thigh, and made me so weak, that I had nocturnal emissions twice a week, and the next day, after each emission a pain in the back; but now the emissions which I have, which are about once a week, are not attended with any pain. I find myself weak and faint, and have a weakness in my privy parts, so that when I make water it does not  
 come

come away with so great force as it used to do. I have a sharpness in my back, which shifts from one place to another; and I have sometimes the pain in my thigh and back. My intellectual faculties are much impaired, and my memory is very bad, and my nerves are weak, and have often a trembling: I have a stupid pain in my head, and a giddiness, and am apt to be drowsy and low-spirited; my voice is not so strong as it used to be.

“ I thank God I am brought to a thorough sense of my sin, which is, in some measure, owing to the reading your book.

“ I have inclosed half-a-guinea: I shall call at your bookseller’s for an answer, hoping you will be pleased to give me directions for my cure.

“ I should have taken the tincture according to your directions, but, having taken the diet-drink, I did not know whether it might be so proper without your advice.

“ If you please to give me your opinion, whether in time I may recover my former vigour and strength if I refrain from committing that foul sin, which I promise to do, divine assistance accompanying my endeavours. Sir, pray pardon the freedom which I have used.

I AM,

YOUR UNKNOWN HUMBLE SERVANT,

THOMAS D——.”

THIS FOR THE GOOD AUTHOR OF  
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ **I**T was a long time before I could get one of your books after they were published in the news-papers, although I sought carefully; for finding myself in such a bad state of health, and could get no help from our country apothecaries, to whom I applied myself, but concealing (as I now believe) the real cause from them, found no help from their medicines, but still growing rather worse, thought myself in a sad deplorable condition, when being at Oxford at our last assizes, met with one of your little books; the reading of it was some satisfaction to me, it so nearly hit my case, which is as follows:

“ I lived to the age of two-and-twenty very chaste in all respects whatsoever, when, by mere accident, found the way of Self-pollution, which I followed for near seven years, finding no other harm to my body than lowness of spirits, heaviness, and some pains in my head and back, and a weakness in my hams, all which I really believed was occasioned by fatigue of business, and the ill-managing myself, never being of a strong constitution, but now I believe otherwise; for about two years ago the gonorrhoea seized me, which was attended with pains in making water, and held me near a month,  
then

then stopping of its own accord; after which, for some short time, I was pretty well, but then followed (and ever since I have been afflicted with) pains in my head, bowels, and stomach, but very much in my back, which is got up to my neck and throat, which is sometimes sore, and both my neck and throat, attended with pains; the pain in my back shifts itself in divers manners and places, likewise my arms at sometimes are in such pain, that I can scarce lift them to my head, beginning at my shoulder-joints, and runs down my sinews to my wrists and knuckles; also inward tremblings, palpitation of the heart, and I had a small gleet ever since the gonorrhœa stopped, but clear and thick, besides inward sharpness in my body, and of late have observed an inward pain in my body, which moves downwards to my testicles, as a weakness, with pain in my knees, which pain goes down to my ancles by my shin-bones; and I have had a scorbutic humour all over my skin for near seven years past, and cannot get rid of it, though I used means several times for that purpose, and I think all the parts of my body are out of tone.

“ I own I had carnally to do with a woman once, and that was about a month before the gonorrhœa ceased, but very slightly, for I believe she was a virgin, and I went no farther than for a man to do with the purest as ever was the first time of trial, and I never touched a woman before nor since; unless the redoubling the strokes injured me, I am at a loss to know what did in that coherence.

“ So you see what a bad state of health I am in, and cannot be relieved, therefore entreat your favour to form a right judgment of my case, and do all you can to relieve me; for if you should fail, I cannot expect any help from any other person.

“ For I have applied myself to a physician, and told him my case, who believed I had received some hurt from a foul woman, and gave me physic accordingly, but had not the desired effect; so whether it is owing to the first-mentioned cause, or partly the latter, I leave that to your judgment, for I have left nothing out as might inform you in order thereto.

“ The person that bears the letter to you being an intimate friend of mine, knows the whole matter; so if there be occasion, you may ask him what questions you please concerning me; for I could write more of the oddness of my complaints, but think I have been somewhat tedious already; conclude myself

YOUR VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

AND THE MUCH AFFLICTED;

ONAN.”

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TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ WORTHY SIR,

“ IT is not above a week ago since your excellent treatise concerning Self-pollution came first into my hands; After a perusal of it with

with some attention, I could not forbear wishing with the gentleman of Dublin, that I had met with so good a discourse on that subject seven years ago. As you have, Sir, approved yourself the *Æsculapius* of the distressed in this way, I beg leave to lay before you my case, which, in short, is this :

“ I am one of the many unhappy young fellows, who, without regard to conscience, health, or reputation, have very greatly injured myself by that abominable practice you have so justly condemned. It is now more than five years since I first defiled myself with it, at which time I frequently practised it, and continued in the vile drudgery with small intermissions for a considerable time ; but, being naturally of a good constitution, I did not very soon perceive any prejudice : I cannot say to a nicety when I became first sensible of injury done myself, but I believe it is more than three years ago, when it discovered itself by a weakness in the small of my back, and in my hams and toes after but moderate walking ; besides I laboured under involuntary nocturnal emissions, foulness of urine, whose colour I have observed to be sometimes wheyish, and at others brown, or a little inclined to blood : I am now near twenty-three years of age, and have, for the last year or more, in a great measure, left off that vile practice ; and oh ! that the sad effects of it had likewise ceased ; but alas ! they still remain, and get force : My urine is generally pale or foul, my head very much disordered and confused,

which

which is always a prodigious hindrance to study, and sometimes an utter disqualification; my memory is particularly affected, an exceeding faintness of spirits in general, which (excepting some few intervals when it abates) renders life itself irksome. I should not omit to inform you, Sir, that for a long time, in a greater or less degree, my testicles have been lax, and cold to the touch for the most part, and the left more particularly impaired in bigness. There is a particular in my case, which I think I ought not to conceal from you, because I did not meet with it in all the representations sent to, and published by you: It was usual with me after masturbation (which I cannot now reflect on without the greatest horror) to check the emission of the seed intirely. You cannot but imagine, from the detail of symptoms I have given (and more I might have reckoned up, as shooting pains, difficulty of breathing, &c.) that my condition is as deplorable as it is deserved; but I hope it is not irretrievable.

“ Being in the country part of the last Winter and all the Spring, I took the Balsam of Capiyi, and oil of saffrafas, two things which I observed to be recommended as good for a gonorrhœa; my urine was much mended as to its foulness for a time, but it is since returned in a great measure. Pray, dear Sir, be pleased to take my complaints and case into a serious consideration. I have already lost too much time, therefore I beg that immediately upon receipt of this you will favour me with an answer, with

with your thoughts upon my case, and directions as well, what medicines are proper, as in point of diet, exercise, sleep, &c. at what distance of time the Strengthening Tincture and Prolific Powder are to be taken from each other, and any thing else you think necessary. I hope you will be able to judge of my case without my coming to London, which I would not do if there be not an absolute necessity for it: I would not have too great a quantity of the medicines sent till I have found their efficacy; but this I shall leave to your discretion. If you think fit, I should desire quantum sufficit of the three essences, and volatile salt, with chocolate, and confection of Alkermes, to make a cordial draught; as likewise some of the delectable Balsam ready prepared. I earnestly wish for a speedy answer (which may be left at the bookseller's in order to be sent with the medicines) and beg your acceptance, Sir, of this small fee, my circumstances not permitting me to present a greater. I hope your goodness will excuse the tediousness of this letter, and that it will find you as willing as you are able (through the blessing of God) to relieve

YOUR MOST DISTRESSED

UNKNOWN HUMBLE SERVANT,

T. N.

“ Pray give me your opinion of cold baths; I shall be ready to follow any directions.”

TO THE WORTHY AUTHOR OF
ONANIA.

“ SIR,

“ I HAVE read your book with much pleasure and satisfaction, though not without the greatest concern for the unhappiness of mankind, many of whom are ignorant of the sin, and I believe the greatest part of the fatal consequences that attend the thing you treat of; a thing detestable in the sight of God, destructive of themselves, and ruinous of all posterity.

“ As to the first: Never any crime was punished in a more exemplary manner, the first that it is recorded to have been guilty of it being struck dead upon the spot; and though no doubt there some particular aggravating circumstances in his case, yet abstracted from these, there is sufficient to let us know the Almighty’s abhorrence of the act itself, and therefore the extreme danger of ever committing it. As to the second: The many instances you have given, and the thousands more that might be produced, too plainly demonstrate the truth of it. And as for the third, this follows from the foregoing; for if we destroy our own Being, at a time when we are capable of, and should be giving it to others, or which is all one, if we incapacitate ourselves from the continuing our species, there is most certainly the ruin of posterity, and a period put to the future existence of mankind.

mankind. Now what can there be of a more monstrous nature? In what view soever we consider it, whether from scripture, experience, or reason, it is every way shocking, and includes in it the most comprehensive guilt. It were easy to expatiate, and shew the infallibility of these assertions at large, but this is not my business or design; and if it was, it would be needless after what you have said upon the subject. In short, Sir, your excellent treatise, if a proper regard be paid to it, I take it to be an effectual antidote against a reigning vice, that has done more mischief than perhaps all other vices together. There may be books of more art and cunning in the world, but I question whether any have done more real service. Sir, I heartily wish you well, and you shall be sensible ere long that I do, and that I am both able and willing to serve you; at present I can only subscribe myself,

YOUR SINCERE FRIEND, &c.

J. P."

TO THE *INGENIOUS AUTHOR OF*
ONANIA.

" SIR,

" **A** BOUT a month or six weeks ago I very opportunely met with your treatise on Self-pollution, which, in my opinion, is the
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best that ever has been wrote on the subject: For I find throughout the whole passage of that little book, you have had a very special regard to modesty, insomuch that the chastest person living may read it, without receiving the least prejudice or offence. You have represented the heinousness of this sin, together with the agonizing circumstances to which it is inseparably annexed, in the truest light, and your arguments being grounded on the most strong and convincing reasons, must necessarily make a deep impression on the minds of your readers, be they ever so much abandoned to vicious inclinations, and fill them with a horrid sense and detestation of this abominable sin, which very evidently appears from the multiplicity of letters sent to you by persons mourning under the consequential afflictions of Self-pollution, who have earnestly recommended themselves to your care and compassion. In short, your book is an invaluable performance, and ought to be esteemed so by every body who have the least concern left for their present or future condition; for I verily believe there is no crime under heaven by which our supreme Creator is more frequently incensed than this: And what still makes it more deplorable is, that in this one particular case, Satan hath so blinded the understandings of men, that they have little or no apprehensions at all of their affront to God, the abuse of themselves, and the terrible judgments impending over their heads, and ready to be executed on them every moment of their lives. Were all

to meet with the same unhappy fate as Onan did, (who in all probability was the original tranfactor of this sin) I am inclinable to think this world would soon be reduced to its primitive Chaos. Therefore a book wrote in opposition to a vice so flagrant, and common among us, deserves an universal esteem, and bespeaks the author a man of singular integrity, and one truly solicitous for the promotion of virtue in this wicked and degenerate age.

“ I could, with abundance of pleasure, expatiate upon the usefulness of your compendious treatise, but would by no means intrude upon those happy minutes of yours, which are beyond all dispute, daily employed in doing benevolent acts to others: For which reason I think myself obliged to desist from such an undertaking, and shall now proceed to lay before you a state of my own miserable case, in as concise a manner as the nature of the thing will admit of.

“ Know then, most ingenious Sir, that I am a youth of nineteen years of age, who have, to my great shame and confusion, for the space of five annual revolutions, more or less, addicted myself to that odious practice of masturbation, which being attended with a pleasing titillation, I pursued the more vigourously, committing it frequently every day, and seldom omitting it longer than two or three months. During which time I cannot say that I found any great disorder upon me till about the first day of January last, when I began to have a violent and ex-

cessive gleet, which encreased more and more upon me for fifteen days, and then abated. While this distemper was raging, I had occasion to make water every hour in the day: The quantity was small, and came forth with such exquisite pain, that one would imagine pins and needles, if it were possible, were forcing their way along with it. After the voidation of urine which seemed to be pretty much fomented, there followed a Seminal Emission, as I take it to be, by the contamination of my linen: For if I shifted myself in the morning, the greater part of the fore flap of my shirt by night was stained and vitiated by the immense running that came from me. I laboured about a fortnight under this terrible affliction, after the expiration of which I found my pain gradually decrease, and could make water much more easily than before; the running is likewise much extenuated; but the course of nature is still accompanied with a radical moisture, which I believe, cannot be prevented without the application of proper remedies. I have other complaints besides this of a much longer standing, which I should never have imputed to my sinful habitation, had not the like instances occurred to me in the perusal of your book.

“ I am perplexed with frequent aching pains, dizzinesses and noises in my head, the latter of which is seldom perceptible but when I lie down: If I am ever so much inclinable to read or write, I begin to be tired and stupified; and if I read aloud for any considerable time,

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my mouth is thirsty, and my head seems to be confused. Sometimes I have inward tremblings and palpitations; sometimes a chiliness seizes me, and passes through every part of my body, and if I lean upon any place, my arms are presently benumbed, and feel as if they had no vital warmth left in them. But what still enhances my grief is this, imagining it to be an antecedent sign of a consumption, I have an ugly rising in my throat, which when I hawk up, appears to be a thick phlegmy sort of spittle. The repeated commissions of this detestable practice has certainly prevented my growth, and not only so, but has tended very much to the diminution of the spermatic parts; though as to my growth I have often flattered myself that it is natural, my parents being both of a small stature when living. I thank God, I do not find my memory is in the least impaired, but am frequently troubled with lowness of spirits, which makes me unfit for conversation. My sleep is generally sound, and seldom disturbed with dreams; and I do not remember that I ever had any involuntary emissions of seed in the night time. I commonly have a good appetite for my breakfast and dinner, but very rarely for supper. My usual breakfast is green tea, and hot rolls and butter, and my dinner butcher's meat of any sort. I give you an account of my diet, that I may be the better informed whether it will be repugnant to the means of my cure.

“ Having now given you a true account of my deplorable condition, I questioned not, that, by this time, you are able to form a right judgment of it, and are thoroughly convinced of the indispenfible neceffity I lie under for your advice. Therefore I moft earnestly beg and entreat you, for God’s fake, to let me have your answer by Saturday morning, directed for T—R—, at which time I will call at the bookfeller’s for it. I fhall very readily fubmit to your prefcriptions, being determined to obferve whatever you think will be inftrumental to the reftitution of thofe feminal juices which I have fo unhappily deprived myfelf of. Be pleafed to fignify in your answer, if walking is any ways prejudicial to me; for I go frequently abroad about bufinefs for a friend of mine, who is beftowing upon me an education in a commendable fcience, and with whom I fhall continue to live, till I am in a capacity of procuring my own maintenance. I have fent you inclofed half a guinea, and hope that the fmallnefs of your fee will not make me a lefs object of pity; for I do affure you I would, with all chearfulnefs, be more generous, did but my prefent circumftances permit me fo to be: And if there are peculiar bleffings referved for good men (which is a truth chriftians are infallibly affured of,) I doubt not but that deficiencies of this nature will be made up with a more valuable compenfation than mortality is able to beftow. It only remains that I once more entreat
you

you (if ever you were moved to pity a poor repenting Onan,) seriously to consider my melancholy case, and hope that that diffusive goodness, so experimentally conspicuous in you, will be now extended towards me in the same compassionate degree, as it hath been to other unhappy youths of this nation, who have involved themselves in the like dismal extremity.

I AM,

WORTHY SIR,

YOUR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

T—— R——.”

“ S I R,

“ **A**FTER long and continued uneasy thoughts, and tedious ails, I am perfectly free from all those pains, &c. which heretofore I have complained of. I took the two gallipots as you directed, and found a surprizing alteration in me for the better, after taking the last of them. I am now as brisk and lively as ever; my emissions are regular and pretty frequent. I am strong, and of a healthy disposition, but have not the least inclination to masturbation, having so dearly paid for it in body and soul. I am afraid I am surfeited of marrying;

marrying; for if the forcing the seed from me has caused such disorders in my feminal vessels, and contiguous parts, I am persuaded that, in coition (as I suppose is oftener than once a month, which was the time I ceased between each action) there is a greater quantity of seed necessary, and consequently it must occasion greater pains. I have had many thoughts about it, (not that I have any proposals of marriage) therefore a line, either in the negative or affirmative, will highly oblige,

YOUR MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

UNDER MANY OBLIGATIONS,

T. D."

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

" MOST WORTHY SIR,

" **I** Received yours, &c. in the basket, all which I have since made use of, do still continue to be better, more strong, active and lively. I have a good appetite to my victuals, and sleep well; but still there remains a heat in my urine, which I hope in time will wear off. My teeth are bad with the scurvy, I do suppose, being loose, and the gums very much ate away. I desire you to send me whatever more may

may be necessary for me though I am unspeakably better in every respect, yet I am sensible I am capable of better health by your advice and medicines, which I hope by the blessing of God I shall soon see. Was I well, I have a great desire to enter into the married state; do desire to know how long it may be proper to stay before I engage in it. I heartily thank you for your care and trouble, and do desire that the medicines may be packed close up, at the bookseller's, against Tuesday morning, by nine o'clock, at which time the bearer will come and pay for them, as wrote on the direction. I am, as before,

YOUR FOR EVER OBLIGED,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

ONUS, A. D.

“ I have pollutions but very seldom, but very often strong erections.”

TO THE AUTHOR OF ONANIA.

“ WORTHY DOCTOR,

“ **T**HIS comes in behalf of a patient, who says he was above forty years old before he saw that choice book Onania. He is wonderfully recovered, as to the vigour of his body and blood in general, by your medicines therein recom-

recommended ; but as there still remains a great weakness upon the parts, you are desired to give your advice, whether at this age, you think their tone is recoverable : And if the means can be used with secrecy, and sent into the country, you shall hear again from

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT,

N. N.

“ In the mean time a gentleman shall wait on you for an answer.”

On my sending this Doctor my opinion of his patient's case, and that I had known several of a greater age than he restored, he writ me as follows :

“ S I R,

“ **Y**OURS for N. N. of the 16th instant is come safe. Your patient gives you a thousand thanks, he praises God, and prays to him for you. He begs you will provide the medicines you propose as soon as possible ; only let them be well boxed, corded, and sealed with your own seal, for a very long carriage, and you will greatly oblige

YOURS, WITH GREAT AFFECTION,

N. N.

“ Have you known any such afterwards marry ?”

Many

Many more Letters might be added, but what has already been inserted, is sufficient to shew the anxiety of mind, and injuries to the body, which the practice of that filthy titillation has (by their own confession,) been the occasion of in both sexes.—I shall conclude with the opinion of an eminent Physician (at this time in practice in London,) upon Onanism; he expresses himself in this laconic manner:—“It is a dirty subject, but unhappily very general.”

Many that have injured themselves by this practice, may not chuse to apply to a Medical Gentleman that has any knowledge of them; for the convenience of such proper medicines may be had at No. 97, *Golden-Lane, Old-Street.*

F I N I S.

Med. Hist.

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