

Gregory (S.)

FACTS

AND

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR

YOUNG WOMEN,

ON THE

SELF-INDULGENCE

OF

THE SEXUAL APPETITE,

ITS DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS ON HEALTH, EX-
CITING CAUSES, PREVENTION, AND CURE.

By SAMUEL GREGORY, M. D.

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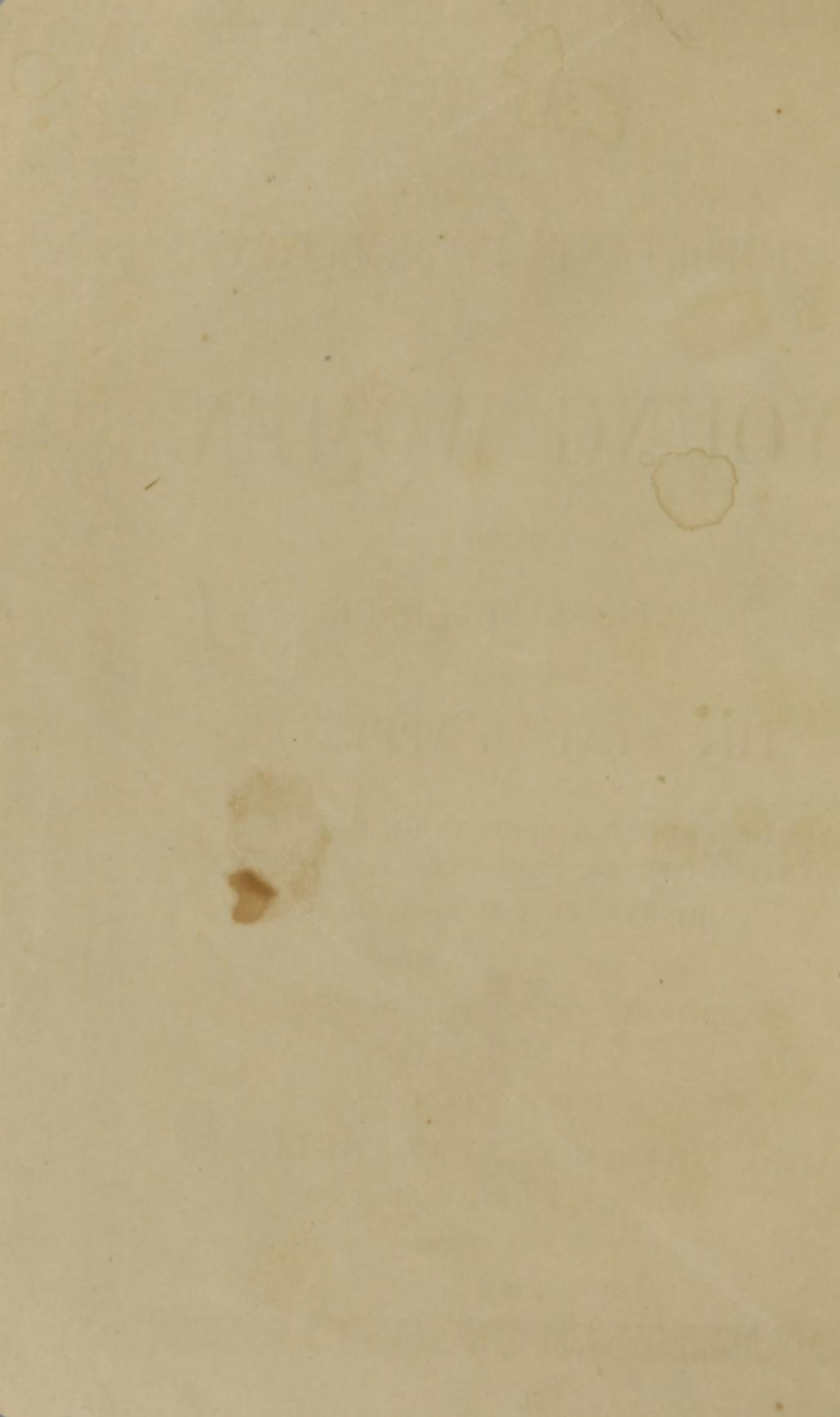
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FACTS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR YOUNG WOMEN

CONCERNING

CONSERVATION

OF THE BODY

AND

THE PREVENTION OF

FACTS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

YOUNG WOMEN

PREPARED

FOR THE USE OF

BY SAMUEL BACON, D.D.

BOSTON

AND GREGORY, PUBLISHERS

FACTS

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FOR

YOUNG WOMEN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

MASTURBATION;

WITH HIS

CAUSES, PREVENTION, AND CURE

BY SAMUEL GREGORY, M. D.

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YOUNG WOMEN

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By GEORGE GREGORY,

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P R E F A C E .

WITHIN a few years, many physicians, particularly the superintendents of our hospitals, in their unwearied efforts to learn the true causes of disease and insanity, have ascertained that masturbation, or unnatural indulgence, holds a prominent place among the sources of bodily and mental infirmity. Hence, in the Reports of those institutions, where the subject has been most faithfully investigated, we find a fearful proportion of the cases of insanity attributed to this secret and fatal practice.

While a prudish delicacy has covered up the subject, and seemed shocked at the bare mention of it, this under-current has been wearing away the health and happiness of individuals and the community, till it absolutely forces itself upon our attention, and calls loudly for a remedy. Silence and ignorance have been tried, and they are found to favor the evil ; the only reasonable course, then, is to diffuse knowledge in regard to the matter. Let all have light ; let the evil be thoroughly exposed, and proper motives be brought to bear against it, and its prevalence will soon be sensibly diminished. The writer makes no pretensions to originality ; indeed, this has been purposely avoided, as a collection of testimony from various

authorities will have more weight, and exert a *greater* influence, than the best production of a single author.

The object of the following pages is, to aid in spreading such information as may serve to *prevent* and *restore*. The work is brief, and in a cheap form, that it may be the more extensively useful. Its favorable reception is proved by the fact that, within ten months since the appearance of the first edition, sixteen thousand copies have been published, and more than ten thousand sold.

This is an extensive field for benevolent exertion, and one that has been almost entirely neglected. On no subject is there more need that the public should be enlightened. The interests of virtue and humanity demand it. It is hoped, therefore, that benevolent individuals, who are aware of the importance of the subject, will interest themselves in spreading information so necessary to the physical and moral well-being of individuals and the community.

S. GREGORY.

BOSTON, *July*, 1847.

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FACTS AND INFORMATION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE subject of physical education is justly occupying a share of public attention, and people are beginning to learn that there are organic laws to be obeyed, and that obedience is best secured by a knowledge of those laws and the penalties attached to their violation. Most of the topics of physiology have been freely treated in works designed for popular reading; but there are subjects which a false and fastidious notion of refinement has carefully excluded from such works, — subjects, too, of all others the most important, because they relate to the strongest impulses of our nature, and an ignorance of which may lead to the most disastrous consequences.

But it is gratifying to see that correct sentiments are gaining ground in the community in regard to this matter, and that authors whose talents and judgment command public confidence are willing to speak out, for the benefit of their fellow-beings.

“It is a very common error,” says Mr. G. Combe, “to imagine that the *feelings* of the mind are communicated to it through the medium of the *intellect*; and, in particular, that, if no indelicate objects reach the eyes, or expressions penetrate the ears, perfect purity will, necessarily, reign within the soul; and, carrying this mistake into practice, some are prone to object to all discussion of the subjects treated of, under the ‘Organic Laws,’ in works designed for general use. But their principle of reasoning is fallacious, and the result has been highly detrimental to society. The *feelings* have existence and activity distinct from the *intellect*; they spur it on, to obtain their own gratification; and it may become either their guide or their slave, according as it is, or is not, enlightened concerning their constitution and objects, and the laws of nature to which they are subjected.”

The Boston Quarterly Review, for April, 1842, in speaking of Mrs. Gove's "Lectures to Ladies, on Anatomy and Physiology," says: — "She has ventured to treat some matters on which many have thought it most prudent to be silent; but, while we have been keeping silence, the evil has been growing; and we know no reason in the world why we should not struggle to save the community from the deplorable effects of pollution, especially self-pollution, which extends far, and is practised by those whose moral principles would recoil with horror from what Mrs. Gove calls *social* licentiousness. Masturbation does more than any other cause, perhaps than all other causes combined, to people our lunatic asylums; and sincerely do we thank Mrs. Gove for daring, in our falsely-delicate society, to raise her warning voice, which she has done, and in tones which can offend nobody."

Wm. C. Woodbridge, in the "Annals of Education," speaks of this as "a topic in physiology which artificial modesty has covered up, until a solitary but fatal vice is spreading desolation through our *schools* and *families*, unnoticed or unknown."

CHAPTER II.

A FEW PROMINENT CASES.

A FEW cases will here be given to show the existence, and some of the effects, of this vice.

A distinguished teacher in this state relates that, recently, a lovely and intelligent young lady, of a wealthy family, attended his school. She, at length, began to lose her health, and became exceedingly nervous, and partially insane; it was then ascertained that she was given to this secret and fatal habit, and that this was the cause of her illness.

A gentleman, a few miles from Boston, states that "A young woman, about 17, has been sick for six months, and, of late, under the care of a physician. Perceiving no good effects from his prescriptions, I asked him if he knew the cause of her sickness. He said he did not, and that she was beyond the power of his skill. I told him I suspected masturbation was the cause, and requested

him to ascertain. He questioned her, and she confessed she was addicted to the habit. He then prescribed abandonment of the ruinous practice, vegetable diet, cold bath, a hard bed, &c. She afterwards told me she was instructed in this vice by an acquaintance, and had continued the practice ever since. She was a professor of religion, (as was the girl who taught her,) but said she was ignorant that the habit was injurious to the health, or morally wrong. The other girl also was sick much of the time."

A lady in Providence, R. I., writes as follows: — "Being on a visit in the country, I had an opportunity of witnessing the ruinous effects of this vice on one of the family, a young woman in the spring-tide of life. I looked on the person with suspicion, not being positive of the reality. I kept a strict watch, and soon saw enough to convince me of it. The doctor was attending her, but was in complete ignorance of the cause of her disease. He was treating her for consumption. I charged her with the practice of masturbation, in such a manner as to convince her that I was acquainted with the fact.

She acknowledged it at once, but was ignorant that it was injuring her. She promised to abstain from the practice entirely, and wished me not to disclose it to her parents. We kept it a secret even from her attending physician. She gradually recovered her strength; what was thought to be consumption left her. In time she became quite well, and the doctor obtained credit for skilfulness.

“PROVIDENCE, *January*, 1841.”

A physician, in the same city, said he was consulted for a person who, by self-indulgence, had become a perfect slave to an imperious habit, and was tormented by a sort of libidinous mania, which deprived her of modesty and decency.

Another physician there stated that a rich young lady, a patient of his, probably came to her death by this unnatural practice. Another physician said he could tell of many who labor under incurable diseases, caused by this vice.

Last fall, I saw a young woman, in a town in Massachusetts, who had made herself an idiot by masturbation. A most miserable creature she was! Her looks and gestures

were indescribable; licentiousness, like a foul plague, had blasted every thing beautiful in her face, every thing noble and lovely in her soul. Her father said she was troubled with horrible dreams, and sometimes so much frightened as to scream out and seem to suffer the most excruciating torment.

A short time since, a physician gave me an account of a female patient who was shockingly addicted to this habit. He thought she would recover her health, since they had discovered the cause of her disease. He also mentioned several other cases.

A physician of this city (Boston) gave me the case of a patient of his, of a most respectable family, who, by the same cause, had reduced herself to a miserable and degraded condition.

Dr. Woodward, the distinguished superintendent of the Hospital at Worcester, has done much to bring this subject before the public, in his Reports of the Institution, and in other ways. I shall here quote a few remarks, and the three following cases, from Dr. Woodward's "Hints for the Young," a highly valuable little work.

“That the evil is wide-spread, and exceedingly injurious to the young, cannot be denied or doubted. Its effects upon physical strength and constitutional stamina are very prejudicial.

“Its influence in prostrating the mind is no less appalling. Consumptions, spinal distortions, weak and painful eyes, weak stomachs, nervous headaches, and a host of other diseases, mark its influence upon the one: loss of memory and the power of application, insanity, and idiotism, show its devastating effects upon the other.

“It is equally opposed to moral purity and mental vigor. It keeps up the influence of unhallowed desires; it gives the passions an ascendancy in the character, fills the mind with lewd and corrupt images, and transforms its victim to a filthy and disgusting reptile.”

CASES FROM THE ABOVE-MENTIONED WORK.

“About two years ago, a young woman, aged twenty-two years, came under my care, in a state of the worst form of insanity. She was furious, noisy, filthy, and, apparently,

nearly reduced to idiocy. She had been in this condition many months, and continued so for some time while with me. She was pale and bloodless, had but little appetite, frequently rejected her food, and was reduced in flesh and strength. Finding her one day more calm than usual, I hinted to her the subject of masturbation, and informed her that, if she practised it, she could not get well — if she abandoned it, she might. She did not deny the charge, and promised to follow my advice strictly. In two or three weeks from this time, she was perceptibly better; her mind improved as her health gained; and both were much better in the course of a few weeks. The recovery was very rapid in this case. At the end of six months she had excellent health, was quite fleshy, and became perfectly sane; and has continued so, as far as we have known, to this time.

“In the spring of 1837, I was consulted by the father of a young woman who had, for four years, been in the worst possible condition of health. She had consulted many eminent physicians, who had prescribed remedies and regimen for her without

benefit. On first seeing the patient, I was impressed that the cause of her illness had not been understood, which had rendered all remedies unavailing. Upon inquiring of the patient, I found that she had been the victim of self-pollution. I cautioned her to abandon the practice, prescribed some remedies, and saw her no more.

“More than a year from the time of seeing her, I heard directly from her parents, who sent me word that she had entirely recovered her health and energy of mind, and that my prescriptions had entirely cured her.

“Not long since, a case of periodical insanity came under my observation, the subject of which was a young lady. The disease had existed ten years without any material change. Suspecting that masturbation was the cause, I directed her mother to ascertain, if possible, and inform me. Some months after, I received intelligence that my patient was better, and that my suspicions of the habit were confirmed by the observation of her friends. The case is not without hope, although of so long standing, if the cause is removed.

“Three or four similar cases have been under my care recently, in which individuals of the same sex have been reduced to the same degraded state. They are now, and will continue to be while life remains, a melancholy spectacle of human misery, without mind, without delicacy or modesty, constantly harassed by the most ungovernable passion, and under the influence of propensities excited to morbid activity by a vice far more prevalent than has been supposed. A large proportion of the ‘bed-ridden’ cases, of which there are so many in the community, will be found to have originated in this cause.”

It is a fortunate thing for the human race that the discovery has been made, that insanity is *not* “a mysterious dispensation of Providence,” but a necessary consequence of an adequate cause — the violation of physical laws. If people, through ignorance or folly, pervert the designs of nature, prostrate the nervous system, and destroy the brain, — the organ of the mind, — they become deranged or insane; but they are not *moon-struck*, although we talk about *lunatics*

and *lunatic* asylums. In some of these institutions alcohol is considered prime minister in working insanity, and masturbation second in rank; but the temperance revolution is about to depose the premier, and then masturbation will be "by merit raised to that bad eminence."

I shall here make some extracts from Mrs. Gove's "Lectures to Ladies, on Anatomy and Physiology," — an excellent work, by the way, and one that every female would do well to read.

"No form of nervous excitement is so injurious as solitary vice. * * * That the unnatural, precocious, or excessive development of the sexual instinct is disease, as much as fever, and should be treated as such, I am fully persuaded.

"About eight years since, my mind was awakened to examine this subject by the perusal of a medical work that described the effects of this vice when practised by females. This was the first intimation I had that the vice existed among our sex. Since that time I have had much evidence that it is fearfully common among them

“There is reason to believe that, in nine cases out of ten, those unhappy females who are tenants of houses of ill fame, have been victims of this vice in the first place. Were this the peculiar vice of the low and vulgar, there might be more excuse for the apathy and false delicacy that pervade the community respecting it. But it invades all ranks. Professed Christians are among its victims.

“Our boarding and day schools are sources of untold mischief. A short time since, two sisters, ladies of the first respectability, informed me that, when very young, they were put to a female boarding-school, where this vice prevailed, and the practice was explained to them. They were blessed with parents who were willing to converse with and warn their children, and they escaped the contamination.

“The following statement,” continues Mrs. G., “was given me by a lady of great worth and intelligence :” —

“MY DEAR MRS. G. : You request an account of my case. I little thought once that I should ever communicate my fearful experi-

ence to any one. But a sense of duty to my fellow-creatures makes me willing to give the facts in my case ; and if only one is warned, and saved from the misery it has been my lot to endure, I shall greatly rejoice.

“ My early education was religious and guarded in the extreme. I was taught early to repeat a prayer every night ; and the Holy Scriptures were my almost constant companion. My parents never warned me against licentiousness, either social or solitary. It is true, social licentiousness was alluded to as a very shameful thing. Solitary vice was never mentioned. My parents being people of property, I was delicately reared, and took very little exercise ; doing little work, with the exception of nice and very laborious embroidery. I have little doubt my sedentary habits were a great injury to me.

“ My parents were very luxurious in their mode of living, using much animal food and large quantities of the different condiments. As nearly as I can recollect, I became addicted to solitary vice at about the age of nine years. I was never taught the vice. Previous to this time, I think I had enjoyed

as much health as most children — perhaps more, for my constitution was always considered unusually firm.

“ At about twelve years of age, my health began to fail ; I became dyspeptic and nervous. I often awoke in the morning bathed in tears ; and the most indescribable and horrible sinking of spirits was my portion during the forenoon. If I committed any little mistake or fault, the recollection of it would haunt me for days, and make me superlatively wretched. I became pale as death, weak, feeble, and emaciated. I had severe palpitation of the heart, pain in the side, and many symptoms of consumption. I had also, much of the time, distressing pain in the head. I had much dizziness, and my sight would often become entirely obscured, especially when I stooped and rose quickly. My parents were much alarmed about me, and the best medical advisers were called. They termed my disorder *chlorosis*, and they gave me different powerful medicines — calomel, brandy, and iron, and let blood till my arms were frightfully scarred.

“During all this time, I was practising solitary vice to a great extent. My conscience often told me it was wrong, but the force of habit prevailed against my better feelings, and I continued to commit this sin against my body and soul. Social licentiousness I had learned to consider as a dreadful crime, and I should have recoiled with horror from the deed. O that some one had arisen then, like yourself, to warn young women — to tell them that solitary vice was sin, was adultery, as well as social licentiousness! O, how much misery I should have escaped, and not I alone, but numbers of others, had this been done! But no one raised the warning voice.

“For several years I continued in wretched health. My father travelled with me, and spared no pains or expense in purchasing gratifications, and in procuring the attendance of physicians. But at last relief came. God, in his Providence, raised up that blessed man, Dr. Graham, and opened his mouth to speak on this subject. No words can express my gratitude to this devoted philanthropist. He stepped between me and death, temporal, and, for aught I know, eternal. ‘The blessing of

him that was ready to perish ' is emphatically his. Though he, like yourself, may have to bear slander and reproach for the blessed cause of purity, yet your reward is sure."

A correspondent in the "Library of Health," after speaking of the prevalence of the evil, and referring to some remarks by the editor, says: "With you, sir, I do not believe that every town in New England is afflicted in this manner; but I do believe that the manufacturing population in this country, throughout, is affected, more or less, in the same manner that we are. In conversation with some of our most intelligent citizens on this subject, since the publication in question, they have stated it as their belief, that what I said was not only true of this village, but substantially so, as to its principal facts, of more villages than one in this commonwealth. And, in fact, since I wrote the article inserted in your November number, one of the best educated and most accomplished females of my acquaintance has fallen a victim to this monster vice."

In the number of the "Library," for June,

1841, is an account of a young lady, the only child of a widowed mother. She was educated, as it seems, with pious care, and grew up in purity to the age of sixteen. She then learned this practice of another female. The vice became a habit; it soon prostrated her health; and as her mother and the physician were ignorant of the fatal cause that was constantly wasting her life, she soon went down to the grave. "Thus we see," says the writer, "that the young, the beautiful, the virtuous, and the lovely, are not exempt from this dreadful scourge."

"I knew a female," says a medical writer, "who was affected for many years with extreme debility and entire loss of appetite. A slow fever every evening had rendered her extremely thin; her eyes were pale and sunken; her skin was very hot, and it was highly painful for her to stand erect; a profuse discharge weakened her still more, and she was in an advanced stage of marasmus. All the active remedies, as preparations of iron, decoctions of cinchona, and mineral waters, were tried without success. She died in a most deplorable state of consumption. I at-

tempted, by questioning her as to her mode of living, to discover the cause of this disease, but unsuccessfully. A month before her death, however, she told me, with tears in her eyes, that she brought her debility upon herself, by indulging constantly, and for many years, in a secret and murderous habit."

Another author states, that "a girl ten years old, of strong constitution and good muscular developments, had been addicted to masturbation since she was two years old. She was taught it by her nurse, who remarked that she was quieted, when crying, by her manipulations, in which she was soon imitated by the patient. The habit finally caused great moral and physical degeneration. At first, the cause of her wasting away was unknown; but when it was discovered, the parents tried every method to break her of it. Their vigilance was in vain — she still continued it. Her mind remained unaffected, but not so with her physical constitution. Mechanical means were now employed, but without success, and she was in danger of becoming idiotic. She was cured by a surgical operation."

“I know a young lady,” says Tissot, “twelve or thirteen years of age, who, from this detestable practice, has the appearance of being in a confirmed consumption. She is afflicted with fluor albus, and incontinence of urine; and, although her case has been relieved by remedies, yet she continues in a languid state, and we are fearful of fatal consequence.”

CHAPTER III.

EFFECTS OF MASTURBATION.

THESE are physical, mental, and moral. Some of the physical effects have been brought to view in the cases given, but it may be well to be a little more particular.

The habit, when commenced, as it often is, at an early age, is much to be dreaded, as it prevents the growth of the body and the formation of a sound constitution, and consequently the *possibility* of enjoying good health. Deslandes, a medical author on this subject, says, "This vice compromises both the present and future health of the body; the present, by the diseases with which it is accompanied, and the future, by those for which it prepares. Hence, if the young escape with life, they are, as it were, loaded with a tribute of ills which they must pay before long, and perhaps always. Thus the indirect influence of masturbation, in producing human suffering, is enormous. If, then, premature indulgence cause so much injury, it should be one

of the most interesting duties of humanity to prevent children and young persons from abusing themselves."

In speaking of some of the symptoms, the same author says: "The countenance, instead of the vermilion glow of health, is pale and without freshness, or of a yellowish, earthy, leaden, and livid tint; the lips lose their color; a bluish circle surrounds the eyes; the eyelids are puffed out with œdema; the flesh is soft and flaccid; the pulse is small and feeble; slight exercise causes shortness of breath, panting, and palpitation of the heart."

"The countenance," says Tissot, "that faithful mirror of the soul and body, is the first to indicate these internal derangements. The healthy appearance, and the color, which unite to form that air of youth which alone can supply the place of beauty, and without which beauty itself produces no sensation but that of cold admiration, disappear first; emaciation, lividity of the countenance, and roughness of the skin, immediately follow; the eyes lose their lustre, and indicate, by their languor, that of the whole system; the lips

lose their redness, the teeth their whiteness, and, finally, the development of body is not unfrequently checked, and the figure deformed.”

The diseases caused by masturbation are a fearful catalogue. As this indulgence undermines the general health and strength, and deranges the nervous system, it may, of course, induce almost every disease, and hasten to a fatal result those that already exist.

Mrs. Gove, in her Lectures, before mentioned, says: “I am unwilling to leave this subject, without calling attention to the diseases which are caused by this habit. There is hardly an end to these diseases — dyspepsia, spinal disease, headache, epilepsy, and various kinds of fits, which differ in their character according to the degree of abuse and consequent disease of the nervous system. Impaired eyesight, palpitation of the heart, pain in the side, and bleeding at the lungs, spasm of the heart and lungs, and sometimes sudden death, are caused by indulgence in this vice. Diabetes, or incontinence of urine, fluor albus, or whites, and inflammation of the

urinary organs, are induced by indulgence in this practice. Indeed, this habit so diseases the nervous system, and through that the stomach and the whole body, that almost every form of disease may be produced by it; though these disorders may arise from other causes, and may afflict those who never indulged in the habit."

"Consumption, or phthisis tubercularis," says Deslandes, "is, in fact, one of the diseases caused most frequently by masturbation. It is commenced, in most cases, exactly at that age when the chest enlarges in every direction, and which phthisis seems to prefer. How many young persons have been victims to their unhappy passion! Physicians find those every day who remain imbecile, or are so enervated, physically and morally, that they barely drag along a miserable existence; others die with marasmus, and many with phthisis pulmonalis. Those persons who indulge in this practice are generally remarkable for the imperfect development of their thorax, and for the promptitude with which the least exercise renders respiration difficult and hurried. Almost all these individuals contract chronic

catarrhs, or more serious affections of the pulmonary organs; and finally perish in a complete state of phthisis.”

Of course there are numerous other causes of consumption; but the fearful prevalence of “lung complaints,” at the present day, should lead physicians to regard every thing productive of this wide-wasting disease.

Nervous diseases. — All medical authors agree in considering this and kindred abuses a fruitful source of nervous affections. Deslandes remarks, that “Diseases of motion, sensation, or of intelligence, — that is, of the faculties which are situated in the nervous system, — are in fact the most common consequences of masturbation. How many persons, of every age, complain of being extremely nervous! Some know that this depends upon their own conduct, which they deeply regret. Interrogate them, and many will admit the excesses of their youth. I have rarely neglected to verify this remark, and the responses have generally confirmed my suspicions. — These individuals are seldom free from disagreeable feelings, from pain and inconvenience of some kind. Their symptoms may vary

extremely, and change very suddenly, but they are generally or always indisposed, one way or another. This can be readily imagined: every thing affects them — cold, heat, dryness, moisture, rain, snow, food, drink, exercise, rest — in fact, all these modifying circumstances find in them an organization ready to be acted on.”

An English author, in speaking of those addicted to this habit, says, “It renders them stupid, dull, and melancholy, and destroys all their vivacity, cheerfulness, and health; it brings on consumptions, weakness, barrenness, and all that dreadful train of *nervous* complaints, which makes them timid, whimsical, and ridiculous.”

Dr. Hutchins, of Brooklyn, remarks in a letter as follows: “In my own practice, I think I have seen the following results of masturbation: — prostration of strength, paralysis of the limbs, hysterea, epilepsy, strange nervous affections, dyspepsia, hypochondria, spinal disease, pain and weakness in the back and limbs, costiveness, — and, in fine, the long and dismal array of gastric, enteric, nervous,

and spinal affections, that are so complicated and difficult to manage.”

It would be absurd to intimate that these and other diseases mentioned are *always* caused by this degrading vice ; but that they *often* are, there is abundant evidence to show.

Diseases of the heart ; palpitation and convulsions, dilation and rupture of the vessels ; also, rupture of the vessels of the lungs ; suffocation and instant death ; determination of blood to the brain ; and death by apoplexy ; have been caused by continued excitement and excessive abuse of the reproductive system.

“ Another convulsive affection, St. Vitus’s dance,” says Deslandes, “ has sometimes been caused by this habit. Inflammation, also, and the fluor albus resulting from it, is, most generally, at least in young girls who have not arrived at puberty, a consequence of self-abuse. I am convinced, too, that if it were possible to arrive at the facts, we should find that the cause of fluor albus in adults was either recent or former abuses. Whenever I have addressed females on the subject, to ascertain this fact, my conjectures have been verified.”

This agrees with Dr. Woodward's opinion. "In females," says he, "leucorrhœa or fluor albus is often induced by masturbation, and, I doubt not, incontinence of urine, strangury, prolapsus uteri, and many other diseases, both local and general, which have been attributed to other causes."

No part of the system seems more readily affected than the eyes, by this nervous excitement. They become weak, irritable, and painful — incapable of enduring the fatigue of reading or study; the sight becomes dim and obscured; dark specks appear before the eyes; the optic nerve is sometimes paralyzed, and blindness succeeds.

All that has been said respecting the effects and diseases caused by self-abuse, will apply with equal force to *every excess*, though legal and natural.

Were the physical evils which result from this source confined to those who cause them, it would be a matter of less consequence. But it is not so; posterity suffers

Mr. Combe, in his excellent work "On the Constitution of Man," has the following judicious remarks: "An organized being is

one which derives its existence from a previously-existing organized being — which subsists on food, grows, attains maturity, decays, and dies. Whatever the ultimate object of the Creator, in constituting organized beings, may be, it will scarcely be denied, that part of his design is, that they should enjoy their existence here ; and, if so, the object of every part of their structure ought to be found conducing to this end.

“To render an organized being perfect in its kind, the first law that must be observed is, that the germ from which it springs shall be complete in all its parts, and sound in its whole constitution. If an agriculturist sow corn that is weak and damaged, the plants that spring from it will be feeble, and liable to speedy decay. The same law holds in the animal kingdom ; and I would ask, has it hitherto been observed by man ? Notoriously it has not. Indeed, its existence has been either altogether unknown, or in a very high degree disregarded by human beings. The feeble, the sickly, the exhausted with age, and the incompletely developed through extreme youth, marry, and, without the least com-

punction regarding organization which they shall transmit to their offspring, send into the world miserable beings, the very rudiments of whose existence are tainted with disease. If we trace such conduct to its source, we shall find it to originate either in animal propensity, or in ignorance, or more frequently in both. The inspiring motives are generally mere sensual appetite, avarice, or ambition, operating in the absence of all just conceptions of the impending evils. The punishment of this offence is debility and pain transmitted to the children, and reflected back in anxiety and sorrow on the parents. Still the great point to be kept in view is, that these miseries are not the legitimate consequences of the *observance* of the organic laws, but the direct chastisement of their *infringement*. These laws are unbending, and admit of no exception; they must be fulfilled, or the penalties of disobedience will follow."

If this doctrine is true, — and there is no doubt that it is, — every thing that tends to entail misery on future generations should be religiously avoided.

The mind suffers no less than the body by

this baneful habit. This cannot be otherwise ; for if the brain and nervous system are weakened or deranged, the mind is affected accordingly. "Masturbation," says Deslandes, "often produces a very marked debility of the mental faculties, and particularly of the memory. Young persons, who previously showed considerable vivacity of mind, and aptitude for study, become, after being addicted to this habit, stupid and incapable of applying themselves. This debility of the intellectual faculties must not always be considered as irremediable ; in fact, these individuals sometimes regain their original acuteness, when the habit which had enfeebled them is discontinued before the deterioration is of long standing. Unfortunately, the simple cessation of the practice is not always sufficient to efface its effects completely ; and many persons preserve, through their whole existence, a certain feebleness of mind, which arises from the excesses of their youth. The debility of the intellectual faculties does not always stop at the point indicated ; it may extend almost to idiocy — to the most complete stupidity."

Another author gives a case in which the mental faculties were more affected than the bodily health. The patient thus writes:—

“My enthusiasm is sensibly diminished; my perceptions are very dull; the fire of imagination much less vivid; every passing event appears to me like a dream; I have less power of conception, and less presence of mind. In a word, I feel as if I am wasting away, although my sleep, appetite, and countenance are good.”

Masturbation has been alluded to as an efficient cause of mental derangement. It is not only a fruitful source of insanity, but, according to the reports of the hospitals, its victims are of the most hopeless description—the disease often assuming the form of idiocy, dementia, or a destruction rather than a derangement of mind. In the cases of insanity where no mind is left, there is little chance of restoration, as neither reason nor shame remains to appeal to; and the patient sinks into the most loathsome and degraded condition, and is sent home as *incurable*.

The effects of this vice on the moral feelings and sentiments are no less deplorable. A

secret consciousness of the vileness and depravity of such conduct fills the mind with shame and self-contempt ; renders the criminal dejected, embarrassed, and unfit for society. The imagination, accustomed to dwell in lascivious reveries, becomes imbued with uncleanness, to the exclusion of every thing pure and noble. "The empire which this odious practice gains over the senses," says Tissot, "is beyond expression. No sooner does this uncleanness get possession of the heart, than it pursues its votaries every where, and governs them at all times and in all places. Upon the most serious occasions, and in the solemn acts of religion, they find themselves transported with lustful conceptions and desires, which take up all their thoughts."

Nor does this tyranny of polluted thoughts and imagination cease with the waking hours. In sleep, when reason and judgment are suspended, the imagination flows on in its accustomed channel, rioting amid libidinous images, and exciting obscene and frightful dreams, which increase and perpetuate all the mental and bodily ills with which the unhappy sufferer is afflicted.

Thus, day and night, are these miserable victims haunted with an unclean demon of their own creation; and even when serious efforts are made at reform, they find themselves *unwilling* captives to its power. No repentance can bring back purity of mind, no tears can wash out its deep and lasting stains. Tormented with the idea of their wretched condition, and that they themselves are the authors of it, they have been driven to the keenest remorse and despair, which rendered life itself intolerable. This is a fearful thought, and sufficient to deter every one from taking the first step towards such a depth of degradation and misery.

An objection must here be noticed which has often been urged, and which will probably be made on reading the foregoing pages — “This is all exaggeration, or, if it is true, the descriptions refer only to extreme cases; therefore there is *commonly* but little danger to be apprehended.”

As to the prevalence of the evil, it may be stated that the testimony has been obtained from those who have had the best means

of knowing, and have improved these means to ascertain the true state of the case. It is not a matter of opinion, but of observation and fact. So far from overrating the extent of the evil, the probabilities are all the other way. The intimate friends of the sufferer are generally ignorant of the real cause of the disease; and if the physician suspects it, he may not obtain from the patient an acknowledgment of the fact. Hence the cases that come to light are doubtless but a small part, although the number is very large.

It is true, also, that physicians themselves, as a general thing, have much neglected this subject, and, without taking pains to ascertain, many are ready to accuse writers of exaggerating the evil. Others credit the testimony of responsible authors, as to this cause of disease; but, through fear of wounding delicacy and giving offence, they so far forget the duties of the *physician*, as to let the patient suffer and die without a friendly warning.

As to *extreme cases*, it is true those recorded in medical works, and those that come under the observation of the physician, are usually

of this description, because only such become known. But the inference is that, if extreme cases are so numerous and so dreadful, cases of all minor degrees are vastly more numerous, and are injurious to health and the mind in exact proportion to the degree

CHAPTER IV.

CAUSES, PREVENTION, AND RESTORATION

THE disclosures of the preceding pages, and the delineation of the dreadful effects of masturbation, will, it is hoped, have some influence in preventing the formation of this habit, and in checking it when formed; but there are a few suggestions which it is important to make.

Parents, who are properly informed on the subject, will see the necessity of taking a judicious course with their children. There is no greater folly than to suppose there is safety in silence and ignorance. If this ignorance extended to things that ought not to be known, as well as to those that ought, it would be different. But it is not so; children become contaminated at an early age. Depraved habits are learned by instinct or accident, or are taught by corrupt associates. Nurses and domestics have been the secret instructors of children in this vice. The world is full of depravity, and the young cannot but come in

contact with it ; and if exclusion from all vicious influences were possible, there would then be no safety in trusting to blind instinct ; the only hope is in enlightened reason.

A judicious author, in speaking of this propensity, makes the following remarks : “ There is no instinct in regard to which strict temperance is more essential. All our animal desires have hitherto occupied an undue share of human thoughts ; but none more generally than this. The imaginations of the young, and the passions of the adult, are inflamed by mystery, or excited by restraint ; and a full half of the thoughts and intrigues of the world have a direct reference to this single instinct. Neither human institutions nor human prejudices can destroy the instinct. Strange it is, that man should not be content rationally to control, and wisely to regulate it.

“ It is a question of passing importance — How may it be regulated? Not by a Shaker vow of monkish chastity. Assuredly, not by the world’s favorite regulator, ignorance. No. Do we wish to bring this instinct under easy government, and to assign it only its due

rank among human sentiments? Then, let us cultivate the intellect; let us exercise the body; let us usefully occupy the time of every human being. What gives to passion its sway, and to desires their empire, now? It is vacancy of mind; it is listlessness of body; it is idleness. Develop the moral sentiments, and they will govern the physical instincts. Occupy the mind and body usefully, intellectually, and the propensities will obtain that care and time only which they merit.

“ Upon any other principles, we may doctor poor human nature forever, and shall only prove ourselves empirics in the end. Mortifications, vestal vows, bolts and bars, prudish prejudices — these are all quack medicines, and are only calculated to prostrate the strength and spirits, and to heighten the fever, of the patient. If we will dislodge error and passion from the mind, we must replace them by something better. They say that a vacuum cannot exist in nature. Least of all can it exist in the mind. Empty it of one folly, cure it of one vice, and another flows in to fill the vacuity, unless it find it already occupied by

intellectual exercise and common sense. Parents, your fears, your jealousies, have hitherto been on the stretch to watch and guard. Reflect whether it be not pleasanter and better to enlighten and trust."

A little information and admonition may prevent, but the most rigid methods do not always suffice to break up the habit. In this matter, if any where, is prevention better than cure.

As to the manner of instruction, it should be easy, kind, and frank ; not cold, moralizing, or morose. Children are to be looked upon as innocent until informed of the impropriety of such conduct ; and, of course, they should not be treated as criminals, nor even should shame be excited, till other means fail.

If parents or teachers find it inconvenient or difficult to converse on this subject with the young, they can easily put into their hands the necessary instruction and admonition.

Good instruction must be seconded by correct physical education, and proper attention to diet and regimen. An extract will here be made from a highly-recommended work, by Dr. A. Walker.

In speaking of the period of puberty, he says: "The habits contracted at this age are very powerful, and intimately connected with future health or disease. Hence, at this age, the importance of *useful guidance*.

"Every effort ought, of course, to be made, so to direct young persons, that they may be least exposed to the evils that now beset them.

"Those who are too robust should be occasionally confined to a more meagre diet; and all exciting substances which accelerate precocity should be carefully shunned, — such as chocolate, ragouts, meat suppers, and vinous or spirituous drinks. The latter are indeed, of themselves, quite sufficient to produce, at any time, the worst habits; and the parent who has suffered their use, has no right to complain either of precocious puberty, or of unnatural indulgences.

"The habit of cleanliness, practised from the earliest youth, becomes a valuable corrective at puberty. Cold ablutions diminish the sensibility, which must otherwise do mischief.

"An important subject of observation is

clothing, and the necessity of habituating young people to cold. Young persons should not be permitted to lie on down beds; nor, if long sedentary, to sit on soft chairs, to which rush or wooden-bottomed ones are greatly preferable. Neither should they be allowed to remain in bed longer than requisite, or to lie down needlessly on couches.

“To young women, exercise will be frequently necessary, to prevent attachment to fanciful objects, as well as the tendency to dwell on those subjects which it is desirable to avoid. Activity, so necessary to an equal distribution of the nutritive juices, must be fostered by all means. It is evident that if, in youths, the superabundance of the nervous power were carried off by exercise, they would be rendered more tranquil and more attentive to instruction, and would consequently make greater progress in knowledge.

“If a young person gives unequivocal signs of excessive sensibility, all books depicting exaggerated sentiments must be withheld. The reading of fashionable novels is sure to falsify the judgment of the young, by the most absurd exaggerations; to render their

duties distasteful; and even to predispose to disease.

“Even the study of the fine arts may render the imagination too active. Of these, drawing is the least objectionable; and music, being the language of passion, is the most dangerous, especially music of the more impassioned and voluptuous nature.

“A better means of discouraging the passions, is the cultivation of the intellectual faculties. Great advantage would result to a young girl from the study of history, geography, and the various branches of natural history, — pursuits which at once dissipate the passions, and are useful to rural economy and many of the arts of industry.

“For the sake, indeed, of the powerful influence which maternal education has on progeny, all the faculties with which reasoning, calculation, the mechanical and various positive sciences are associated, should be in some degree employed; and, on such subjects, habitual exercise of the memory would usefully engage much valuable time, and prevent all injurious use of it.

“ On the important subject of example, it need scarcely be said, that young persons are sure to observe and interpret any loose joke, or indecent language, that coarse-minded people utter before them; nor less carefully ought the example of improper conduct to be guarded against.

“ For similar reasons, education in boarding schools is highly dangerous, especially at this period. Intimacies spring up between pupils nearly of the same age; they repose confidence in each other as to their most secret thoughts; and they endeavor to verify the conjectures they have formed. Meanwhile, some other friend in the confidence of this *tugendbund*, who had returned home and seen the world, visits the unfortunates still remaining at school, when a speedy disclosure takes place of all her discoveries made as to the subjects they have so often discussed; and, to show that her generosity is commensurate with her new importance, she occasionally supplies those works whose amorous pages have been kindly made known to them by the most positive interdiction of the teach-

ers. Hence the barriers raised up by modesty are surmounted, and depraved habits are contracted.

“ When, in spite of the best management, a young girl exhibits change or irregularity of character, becomes subject to sighs and tears, of which no cause is apparent, and betakes herself to solitude, then, muscular exercise sufficient to produce slight fatigue, agreeable society, and powerful diversions, are means that must be adopted.

“ It is equally foolish and dangerous, in parents and others charged with the education of girls, to try to conceal from them all knowledge as to the results of the position in which they are placed by the circumstance of nubility; for girls, in spite of watchful vigilance and every obstacle, are soon enabled, by natural instinct, and by unremitting observation, to instruct themselves in those false notions which are most likely to be followed by fatal results.”

O. S. Fowler, in his excellent pamphlet on “ Phrenology applied to Matrimony,” speaks of some of the causes of sensuality as follows: —

“The *diet* or food of the young prematurely develops amativeness. There unquestionably exists a reciprocal relation between the body and the *animal propensities*. We have no room to introduce the *proof* of this principle, although it is indispensable in order to enforce the inference that tea, coffee, tobacco, snuff, candies, flesh, &c., stimulate the animal propensities, and excite amativeness. The position, however, is undeniable, that *whatever* artificially excites the body, thereby stimulates the animal propensities more than the intellectual and moral faculties. Tea, coffee, flesh, spices, &c., are unquestionably highly stimulating — much more so than cold water, bread stuffs, vegetables, &c., and therefore kindle the animal propensities; and as the relation between the body, and especially the *stomach*, and amativeness, is more direct and powerful than between the other parts, the inference is inevitable, that they proportionally kindle impure desires. Children, therefore, should never be allowed to indulge in them; nor are they exactly proper for young ladies. And if you desire to know

how to subdue this feeling, avoid these kinds of food and drink, and employ cold water, bread-stuffs, and vegetables. The cold bath is excellent. But, above all, do not allow your mind to run on this class of subjects.

“Want of exercise is another means of exciting improper desires ; and labor, of subduing them. The principle just alluded to applies here with increased force. As the energies of the system are constantly accumulating, they must have *some* door of escape. Labor carries them off through the muscles ; but when this avenue is closed by fashionable idleness, their next way of egress is through the animal propensities. Who are the most virtuous classes of society ? The laboring ; whilst those who are too delicate, too fashionable, to work, retire to indulge the nightly reveries of their fancies, mingled with unclean thoughts and stained with impure desires. Envy them not. Labor, or at least vigorous exercise, is as indispensable to moral purity as breath is to life. All who break this law, even though they may be fashionable ladies, must abide the consequences, one of which is a depraved imagination, full of unclean desires

But they who obey this law thereby promote their own happiness, and reap a rich reward.

“To *children*, this principle applies with increased power. Keeping them in-doors, and from play or labor, prevents the free circulation of their blood throughout their bodies, and, of course, sends it up to the brain, and especially to its *base*, to ripen this feeling prematurely. Hence it appears two or three years earlier in the city than in the country; and four years younger, there, than nature ever designed. A city is no place to bring up children. It is a hot-bed for all the passions; ripening all the powers too early, and causing their decay proportionably early. Pictures often do much injury in this respect.

“To other similar causes — such as theatres and theatre-dancing, balls, parties, fashionable boarding-schools, fashionable music, (especially the verses set to it, being mostly love-sick songs,) and many other like causes, all directly calculated to awaken these feelings — I have barely time to allude.”

Another cause of early maturity, and of effeminate habits, is too much confinement in over-heated rooms; burrowing, over winter,

in a torrid atmosphere. - And, quite as bad is the common habit of consuming eight or ten hours, of the twenty-four, in the confined and suffocating air of sleeping apartments. Add to this, the enervating effects of soft beds. "Being buried every night in feathers," says Mr. Lock, "melts and dissolves the body, and is often the cause of weakness, and the forerunner of an early grave." Another author remarks that "lying on soft beds is undoubtedly wrong, as they absorb too much of the juices, enfeeble the frame, and have a remarkable tendency to give a pain or weakness in the small of the back." "Young persons should not be suffered to sleep on feather-beds, but on mattresses stuffed with horse-hair, straw, or dried moss. Neither should their pillows be made of feathers, which are too heating to the head, and produce catarrhs, defluxions, and apoplexies."

Female *fashions* are another exciting cause of licentiousness, not only in the community, but among the fashionables themselves. Those who practise their arts upon others are destroyed by their own weapons. This system of corruption is kept up by the constant im-

portation of the latest styles from France — designed by *French* taste, and dictated by *French* morality. Nor is this influence confined, as formerly, to our cities, these “Latest Fashions” are spread all over the land, by our popular magazines, or periodical picture-books. Thus is public virtue tainted, not only by *following* these immodest fashions, but also by *exhibiting* them in engravings. Yet these things are sought after with avidity by young ladies, and parents furnish them to their daughters; but are they aware that they tend to excite the passions, till they become ungovernable, and break out in open licentiousness or self-pollution?

Tight lacing* has some connection with this subject. Although it would seem that other evils, chargeable to this pernicious custom, are as numerous and direful as could well be effected, even by this foolish, disgusting, and murderous practice, yet to its other effects must be added that of tending to vicious habits. This strangling process of

* O. S. Fowler, New York, has written and published a pamphlet on “Tight Lacing,” in which he has given some *facts and important information* respecting this abominable and suicidal practice.

compressing the waist prevents the free circulation of the blood, and confines it too much to the lower portions of the body; it deranges and displaces the internal machinery; prevents the expansion of the lungs, the full inspiration of the vital air, and, consequently, the purification of the blood. This constrained and tortured state of the body renders exercise disagreeable or painful; and the interference with the functions of the heart, the lungs, and the circulating system, causes that languor, listlessness, and morbid state of body and mind, which are far from being favorable to chastity.

There is no better way to prevent those habits and abuses which are destructive to the health and constitution than to study Physiology — the science of the human system. Hence every female should inform herself upon this subject, as one of the utmost importance to the well-being of the present and of future generations.

Mr. Combe, when lecturing in this country, related an incident illustrating the beneficial effects of such knowledge. He said he had often cautioned some of his female pupils

against the habit of compressing the waist ; but they paid little or no regard to his advice. At length, at a convenient opportunity, he took occasion to show them the internal structure of the human chest — the heart and the lungs, with their delicate texture — and explained the effects that compressing the waist had upon them, and the fatal consequences to which it might lead. It had the desired effect. The young ladies *saw* and believed, and he had no further occasion to admonish them.

If such is the value of a little personal knowledge, by all means let our females be thoroughly enlightened upon Physiology* and the laws of health.

But, notwithstanding the importance of

* There are many works on this subject of much value, and designed for general reading. Among them are Mrs. Gove's "Lectures to Females on Anatomy and Physiology ;" Dr. Andrew Combe's "Physiology applied to the Preservation of Health ;" George Combe, "On the Constitution of Man ;" Dr. Alcott's "House I live in," or the Human Body ; and the "Library of Health, edited by Dr. A. ;" Hayward's "Outlines of Physiology ;" Smith's "Class Book of Anatomy ;" Dr. Caldwell's Thoughts on Physical Education ;" Comstock's "Physiology ;" &c

correct physical education, still more important is purity of mind ; for the body is but the servant of the mind, and will obey its dictates. Vicious conduct never appears till the mind has become corrupt. Numerous causes tend to deprave the feelings and pollute the imagination — conversation, books, pictures, the light reading that covers the land in the form of novels, magazines, papers filled with stories, tales, verses, all spiced with love or grosser sentiments, to adapt them to the popular taste.

The only safety amidst such influences is in an earnest desire to escape contamination, a sincere love of virtue, and a firm determination to check the first risings of impure thoughts, and to avoid every thing that may excite them. Usefully employ the mind, cultivate virtuous principles and purity of heart in the sight of Heaven, and bring all the motives, physical, moral, and religious, to aid in establishing the nobler sentiments in the mind.

The restoration of health, when lost by this cause, must be effected by such means as will remove nervous irritability, repair the

nutritive functions, and increase the tone and vigor of the system. In ordinary cases, if indulgence be totally avoided, and rigid self-government be maintained over body and mind, the evils will be arrested, and health restored without the employment of any special remedies. But if disease has progressed too far to be removed by the cessation of the cause, particular attention must be paid to the food and drink, to wholesome air, bathing, exercise, and rest.

As to *food*, it should be simple and unexciting, digestible and nourishing. "The best mode of reparation," says Deslandes, "is found in diet. The body must be recruited by food; and, inasmuch as only those things are nutritious which are digested, the first rule to be observed is, that all the conditions of good digestion are properly attended to. In patients debilitated by this indulgence, the digestive organs are always deranged, or are liable to be so. The slightest error in diet may aggravate this state considerably, which is in itself an evil, and may add to the trouble of cure.

"Every article of food which is difficult to

digest should be forbidden ; and, among articles which can be digested, those should be selected which contain the most nourishment and are the least exciting. Thus condiments, which are but slightly nutritious, and are very exciting, ought never to be used, unless they are indispensably necessary to digestion, and then only in very small quantities. Milk is very nutritious, and does not excite."

"The *drinks*," says Tissot, "are a part of the regimen almost as important as the food. We must omit all those which may increase the debility and relaxation, diminish the slight digestive powers that remain, render the humors acrid, and cause greater debility in the nervous system. All warm drinks have the first effect ; they coexist in tea, coffee possesses the last two, and should therefore be avoided. Great quantities of any drink should be avoided. It weakens the gastric juice, and enfeebles the digestive powers by relaxing the stomach."

Salubrious *air* is as necessary as wholesome food. "The air has the same, and even more, influence upon us than water has upon fishes. The weak have more need of pure

air than others ; it is therefore a remedy that should not be neglected. The air in an open country, where vegetation flourishes, is most conducive to health. The air of the city, constantly inspired and expired, is loaded with infectious vapors, and not only possesses less exhilarating effects, but is filled with injurious particles. The atmosphere of the country is pure, and is loaded with the most volatile, the most pleasant, the most cordial parts of the plants, and with that of the earth, which is also salubrious.

“ But it would be useless to reside in a healthy air, if you do not breathe it in bed-chambers ; which must be thoroughly ventilated, and the air constantly renewed. It is also extremely important to breathe the morning air. Those who deprive themselves of it, by remaining in a close atmosphere, voluntarily renounce the best, and perhaps the most strengthening, of all remedies. The freshness of the night restores the vivifying power ; and the dew, which gradually evaporates after being loaded with the perfumes of the flowers on which it had rested, is truly medicinal. A feeling of health and of fresh-

ness, of strength and appetite, is a proof of the invigorating powers of nature.”

Bathing is an important auxiliary. It tends to remove inflammation and nervous irritability, and causes the healthy action of the skin. Dr. Andrew Combe remarks: — “The warm, tepid, cold, or shower bath, as a means of preserving health, ought to be in as common use as a change of apparel, for it is equally a measure of necessary cleanliness. If the bath cannot be had at all places, soap and water may be obtained every where, and leave no apology for neglecting the skin.” Daily washing or sponging of the body with cold water, or, in winter, slightly warm, is a good substitute for the bath, “especially when care is taken to excite, in the surface, by subsequent friction with the flesh-brush or hair-glove, the healthy glow of reaction. A rough and rather coarse towel is a very useful auxiliary in such ablutions.”

Exercise is indispensable as a remedial agent. A want of it will make a healthy person sick, and, of course, will prevent a sick person from recovery. It causes an active and equal circulation of the blood, and

greatly increases the strength. To be most beneficial, it should be taken, as much as possible, in the open air. It should be moderate at first, but may be gradually increased as strength returns.

Care must be taken to render *sleep* tranquil and refreshing. For this purpose, slight fatigue, from exercise, is beneficial. Let the suppers be light, and never taken late. Avoid all mental and nervous excitement in the evening, and let every improper thought be banished from the mind. A mattress should be used instead of feathers, and the covering be neither too warm nor too cold. Hot feather-beds are sure to weaken the system, and render the sleep feverish, restless, and dreamy. Retire to rest, not till inclined to fall asleep, and rise betimes, to inhale the morning air.

If, in peculiar circumstances, the aid of active medicine is necessary, it should be prescribed by an experienced physician. But if recovery is *possible*, a resolute perseverance in the remedies mentioned above will generally be blessed with a return of health.

VALUABLE TESTIMONIALS.

THE object of this little work is to spread information in regard to the dangerous, and oftentimes fatal, consequences of the habit usually denominated Masturbation, or Solitary Vice; a practice known to be exceedingly prevalent among all classes of the community, and most desolating in its effects on the body, mind, and moral principle. If any doubt the propriety or necessity of circulating knowledge of this kind, they will be better able to judge after a perusal of these "Facts;" till then, the following opinions may suffice.

DR. BELL, the Superintendent of the M'Lean Asylum, in Charlestown, in the preface of a small work on this subject, thus remarks: "We do not fear overstocking the public demand with works urging on the temperance reformation; and why should we fear in regard to this matter, when it is discovered that there is a foul plague in our midst, cutting off, amongst the young, the beautiful, and the promising of our land, well nigh as many victims as strong drinks?"

DR. WOODWARD, Superintendent of the State Lunatic Hospital, at Worcester, in one of his Annual Reports of that institution, remarks as follows: "It is the vice of ignorance, not of depravity; and the interests of humanity imperatively demand that something should be done to rescue the most moral, conscientious, and sometimes the most promising youth of the state, from the mind-wasting ravages of an indulgence of whose terrible consequences they have never been forewarned."

Extracts from the Minutes of the Twelfth Annual Conference of the Fifth Free-Will Baptist Convention, in North America.

"Resolved, That it is as absurd to think of abolishing unchastity, without giving general and thorough instruction on its nature and consequences, as to think of abolishing intemperance, slavery, or any other sin, without giving the necessary light severally upon them; and therefore,

"Resolved, That, of all the forms of this sin, (unchastity,) none is more vicious in its consequences upon either sex, and therefore none more to be dreaded, than the habit, so often formed in youth and chil-

VALUABLE TESTIMONIALS.

dren, known under various names, such as 'Solitary Vice,' 'Sexual Self-indulgence,' 'Self-pollution,' 'Masturbation,' &c.

"Resolved, That we recommend two pamphlets, 'FACTS AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION,' &c., on the subject of unchastity, to the patronage of our denomination."

The following highly-valuable testimonial is from Prof. Stuart, Rev. Dr. Woods, and Prof. Emerson, of the Andover Theological Seminary, and Rev. Drs. Brazer and Emerson, of Salem.

I have read a pamphlet entitled "Facts, etc., from distinguished Physicians and other Sources," respecting a vice which is undermining the health and happiness of many, and degrading them, in some respects, below the brute creation. I think there is nothing in the manner of this pamphlet which can be matter of just offence to any considerate mind. I am persuaded that, delicate as the task may be, the time has come when benevolence demands that some efforts should be made to enlighten the public mind on the subject of which this pamphlet treats; and both the remarks of the pamphlet, and the facts stated in it, seem to be well adapted for this purpose. Most heartily do I wish success to that benevolence which is willing to undertake a task so delicate and so difficult as this. It is time for those who love the purity, the well-being, and the most interesting relations of human society, to speak out upon a vice which is dangerous in proportion to the secrecy and silence in which it has been involved.

M. STUART.

We fully concur with the above.

L. WOODS,	R. EMERSON,
D. BRAZER,	B. EMERSON.

The following was added by Dr. Woods: "P. S. — Would it not be important for teachers of youth, in Colleges and Academies, to recommend the above-named pamphlet to their pupils, and to adopt measures to circulate it among them?"

From Clergymen of Lowell.

We concur most fully with the sentiments expressed by Rev. Prof. Stuart, in his recommendation of "Facts," &c.

A. BLANCHARD,	N. THURSTON,	O. SCOTT,
J. BALLARD,	U. C. BURNAP,	W. H. BREWSTER.

From L. Coleman. Principal of the Teachers' Seminary; Messrs. Gray and Wells, Associate Instructors; and S. H. Taylor, Principal of Phillips Academy, Andover.

We, the undersigned, have examined a small work entitled "Facts," &c., and consider it well adapted to awaken attention to the subject of which it treats. It exposes an insidious vice, which is exceedingly injurious in its effects upon health, mental vigor, and moral purity. We commend the pamphlet to the attention of parents and teachers, as well as to the young themselves.

L. COLEMAN,	A. GRAY,
S. H. TAYLOR,	W. H. WELLS.

VALUABLE TESTIMONIALS.

From Pres. Edwards, of the Andover Theological Seminary.

Having read the "Facts," &c., I am satisfied that it is adapted to do good, and wish that it may have an extensive circulation among the youth of our country.

J. EDWARDS

FACTS, &c. — This little work relates to a secret habit that blights body, mind, and soul, more effectually than any other vice. Few are capable of treating a subject of such extreme delicacy with caution, and yet with sufficient explicitness. The present work, we think, will satisfy the judicious teacher or parent. — *Zion's Herald.*

From the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

"Facts and Information." — Such is the title of a little pamphlet, by George Gregory, who has collected what is thus presented, from the writings and cases of eminent physicians, the whole relating to the vice of masturbation. Books on this subject have become somewhat numerous of late; and that they may exert a good influence in opposing the stealthy march of moral and physical pollution, is devoutly to be hoped.

From the Boston Recorder.

"Facts and Important Information from distinguished Physicians, and other Sources." This title leaves the reader quite in the dark as to the subject of the neat little book it announces, — and we shall not take off the veil; our readers can easily and cheaply do that for themselves if they wish. It is enough for us to say that it is strongly recommended. * * * On a careful perusal of it, we could cheerfully add our own recommendation of it, were it not superfluous.

From the Boston Daily Mail.

TO THE FRIENDS OF YOUTH. — Dow & Jackson have just published, in a very cheap form, a little work entitled "Facts and Important Information from distinguished Physicians, and other Sources," on the subject of Solitary Vice, with directions for the restoration of health when destroyed by this cause. It is written in a careful manner, and is highly recommended. The extreme cheapness of the work will commend it to the attention of the friends of youth, who may wish to disseminate information on this important topic.

From the Charlestown Chronicle.

"Facts and Important Information from distinguished Physicians, and other Sources," is the title of a valuable work for young people.

VALUABLE TESTIMONIALS.

From the New England Christian Advocate.

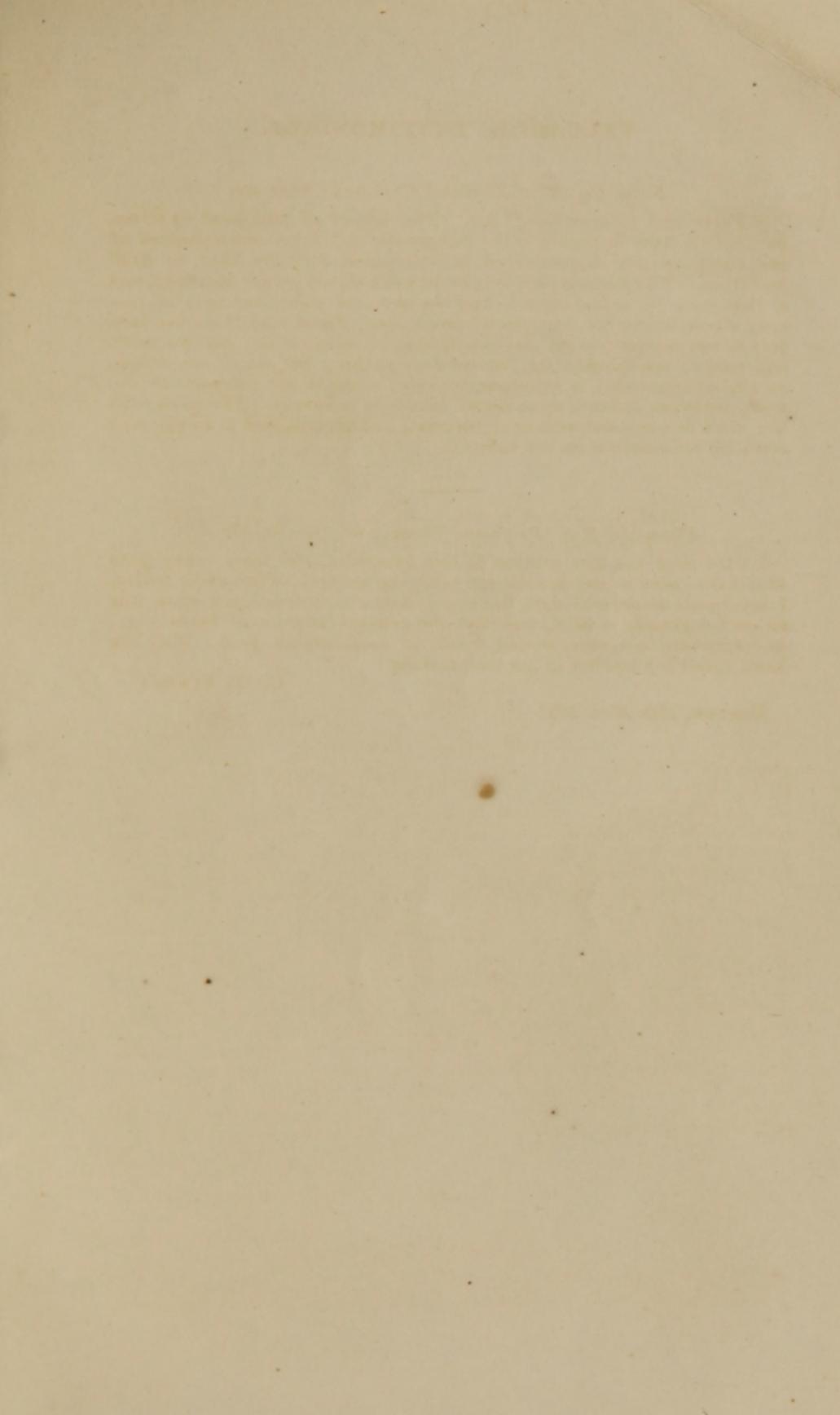
"Facts and Information," &c. The object of this work is to impart information in regard to the dangerous and fatal consequences of the habit usually denominated Masturbation, Solitary Vice, or Self-pollution. The facts which this little work develops are startling, and if they may be relied upon — and we have no doubt but they may — they should alarm the community generally. Some may think the subject is too delicate to be discussed, or even alluded to; but we think otherwise; we should "be ashamed of nothing but sin;" no crime, no evil practice that is injurious to body, mind, or the interests of the soul, can be so delicate as to forbid efforts to reform it. We have read the work in question with deep interest, and recommend it to all who wish for information on the subject.

From the Rev. Professor Finney, of Oberlin, Ohio.

I have read the first edition of this pamphlet, and from many facts that have come to my knowledge upon the subject of which it treats, I am deeply impressed with the conviction, that information upon this subject is greatly needed, and that the general diffusion of knowledge, in respect to this vice, would result in incalculable good. May the Lord speed my brother in his undertaking!

C. G. FINNEY

Boston, 16th Nov. 1841



LETTER TO LADIES,

IN FAVOR OF

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