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21
SELF PRESERVATION,
MANHOOD,

CAUSES OF ITS

PREMATURE DECLINE,

BEING FACTS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

TO THE

MARRIED AND UNMARRIED;

ALSO

USEFUL HINTS

TO

LOVERS, HUSBANDS,

AND

WIVES.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE greatest moral writers, as well as medical authors of all times, have laid down certain rules for the preservation of health, and it were well for mankind in general, if that great system could be made to form a more permanent feature of modern education. The Spartans and the other warlike people of ancient history inured their offspring, from earliest infancy, to those laborious exercises which gave a tone of healthful energy to the mind as well as to the body; hence originated that strength of intellect which was the glory of those ages, and which commands the admiration of our own times.

The connecting sympathy between the mind and the body renders each the repository of the other's maladies; and a shrivelled emaciated frame is seldom stored with a mind of gigantic energy, because the habitual infirmities of the flesh, its ailments and agonies, naturally engender, something like a corresponding imbecility in the intellectual faculty. There are many exceptions to this rule, but the theory is perfectly maintainable. Luxurious habits effeminize the body and unfit the mind for the noble exercise of its functions; they are the mildews which feed upon the blossom of intellect, rendering that distorted which was originally perfect, by destroying at the same moment both the *Vis Vitæ* and the beauty which gave it embellishment.

In truth, the foundation of a flourishing maturity, and healthful old age, may be easily laid, and it does appear to us, that this basis is the province of the *guardians* and *tutors* of young persons, proper explanations of the causes which create disease and shorten life, enforced by the judicious blending of such examples as are best calculated to impress the memory, awaken the fears, or to excite the disgust of the pupil, could not be otherwise than productive of a beneficial change in the habits of the rising generation. On the contrary, while the juvenile mind is carefully kept in ignorance of the baneful consequences of those practices and indulgences which are too common amongst youth, (and which, "like a worm in the bud," feed upon the constitution, even whilst it is forming itself,) the few apprehensions which may now and then arise are treated as mere speculative terrors, and gradually die without producing any effort to check the insidious mischief.

To the neglect, however, of those explanations and admonitions which would exhibit at one view to the young votary the nature of his indiscretions, with the long chain of evils extending to the last stage of protracted existence, may be charged the awful catalogue of human victims who have sunk under complicated maladies, the source of which was confined to their own bosoms. To the same cause, also, may possibly be attributable, the many unfortunate beings, who, in the very meridian of their years, with all the florid appearance of health and promise of a lengthened age, have been suddenly arrested, as by some hidden canker, and precipitately reduced from the high career of vigorous enjoyment to the extreme of vital impotency. How many are the instances of premature decrepitude; how frequent are the examples of manhood sinking gradually to the grave, while the natural web of life is yet but half spun; how numerous are the youths who are chained to obnoxious indo-

lence by a general imbecility, which medicine, in its *general* application, can scarcely reach, and which sympathy has no power to relieve.

Surely, then, the attempt to introduce a method of prevention of *all* those lamentable evils cannot be unworthy the notice of those, upon whom devolve the formation of the minds and morals of the growing community. Excesses likewise of every kind are injurious; it is an abuse of that reasoning faculty with which a benevolent Providence has endowed us to suffer it to remain an inert privilege, while the passions run riot and wanton in the most mischievous prodigality of appetite. *Instinct* directs the beast of the field and forest when to indulge and when to refrain, and he submits himself to its dictation; how does man, therefore, degrade himself in the scale of animal creation, when, with all the faculties of taste and judgment, he acts utterly regardless of consequences, in direct opposition to the suggestions of his intellectual self, and falls into absurdities from which irrational nature is free.

The moral and political consequences of vicious indulgences open a very extensive field for philosophical discussions, but they come not within the immediate scope of the objects of our attention; we wish only to note the effects they produce upon the body, and also the mind, as far as regards its influence upon corporeal disease.

The reader will find in the subsequent pages a classification of the disorders growing out of youthful indiscretion, or imprudent maturity, for it is not to be concealed, that erring man cannot always, in his growth in wisdom, keep pace with his increase of years; on the contrary, we have had an occasion to observe, that age is no security for indiscretion; nor can the moralist command a greater privilege of indemnity from the consequent maladies than the youthful prodigal. It is to be remarked, however, that where the foundation and fabric of the constitution have been well laid and tempered, disease must certainly take a slighter hold, and produce less important changes.

As we proceed in one undertaking it will be seen, that our object is not to promote empiricism, or the circulation of any new or equivocal remedy. The medicines we employ and endeavour to make efficacious, are those of *long established* reputation, and such as are regularly administered in the practice of men of science and incontestable skill, under whose professional auspices our own knowledge of their effects has been acquired, and by whose kindness our subsequent medical education has been assisted. The only merit to which we lay claim is, an originality in their application; and as our peculiar treatment has acquired a reputation which amply rewards our labours, we have been induced to offer the present observations to the notice, and we hope to the commendation of the world.

PART I.—SECTION I.

On Debility.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.—MUSCULAR ACTION.—DIET, &c.

EVERY individual who presumes to call the attention of the community to a system, which is scarcely considered as entitled to a scientific distinction from its more general subject, *Medicine*, ought to feel convinced that its theory and

practice are likely to accord—and, secondly, that if they should be found to harmonize, the adoption of such a system is likely to promote the welfare of society at large.

We shall endeavour to show, in a publication confined to the subject, that the venereal disease can be removed, even where its inveterate and appalling grasp has nearly annihilated the victim; but the main and important truth that we wish to impress on the minds of our readers is, that under the present effectual and mild arrangements of medical science, *that disease* may be said to exhibit such rare instances of its former malignity as almost to allow the contemplation, at no very distant period, of the obliteration of such a curse from the endurance of human infirmity. Certain it is, in our extensive practice we have found this prospective satisfaction gradually ripening itself into an assurance of reality.

May not an endeavour, then, to remove, or rather to correct, *sexual debility*, be equally conducive, especially in all those instances where self-depravity has nearly immolated its victim. We shall attempt to prove, that sexual debility can at all events be materially, if not entirely, remedied; and as muscular action may be said to be the prolific basis on which the animal economy depends for its support, we shall enter into some observations respecting it.

Plutarch, speaking of Herodius, says, “being a school-master, he had also an opportunity of introducing into his academy the art of Gymnastic Physic; that is, of exercising the body into health; and having observed that this art might be divided into three parts, the *Military*, the *Athletic*, and the *Medicinal*, he left off the *two* former, and applied himself to the study of the *latter*, prescribing rules to be observed, and setting down particular exercises to be adapted to particular cases; and we find also from the writings of Galen and later authors, that the practice was found so beneficial in removing various chronic debilities, that sumptuous edifices were erected for its cultivation and improvement.

When we reflect that among the various functions the human body has to perform, scarcely any can be accomplished without the aid of muscular action, and that not merely the secretions and excretions, but the equally important offices of respiration, perspiration, and vision, nay, that the formation of chyle and the circulation of the blood are intimately connected with, and depend on, muscular action, it would be needless to dwell on the necessity of general exercise.

The learned *Sydenham* remarks, “In writing the history of chronic diseases, I occasioned the worst fit of the gout I ever had; for so often as I returned to study, so often the gout also returned,”—&c. &c. *Feeny* and *Dr. Cheyne* coincide in this effect; and the fathers of medicine have advanced their opinions also in *favour* of exercise.

Galen remarks, that we must sometimes rouse the timorous from their beds, and force the lazy and the sluggish.

Hippocrates says, exercise gives strength and firmness to the body, and vigour to the mind.

Cornaro has observed, that we must give an equal life to all parts of the body, and not apply to the fluids, and neglect the solids; for the grounds of most mistakes in the practice of Physic may be imputed to a want of this distinction.

But *Sydenham* goes to say, “In nervous cases, I never saw any success without exercise; it is the *sovereign remedy in relaxation*.”

Addison says, “As I am a compound of soul and body, I consider myself as obliged to a double scheme of duties, and think that I have not fulfilled the

business of the day when I do not employ the one in labour and exercise, as well as the other in study and contemplation."

In fact, the healthy observance of exercise will, by distributing the blood through the minuter vessels, excite perspiration; it improves the health by removing fulness and morbid congestion.

Having premised the utility of exercise we must observe, that there is a great necessity for its classification; here we shall borrow from Dr. Wallis's opinion, he says, "for those who are subjects of gravelly affections or indigestion, riding on horseback will be most salutary, but to those who are liable to gout, &c., walking is recommended.

"Such as have a strong muscular stamina, with a sluggish circulation, and coldness of the extremities, derive benefit from the exercise at cricket, tennis, fencing, or running, whilst for those who are subject to *melancholia* or *hysteria*, hunting, shooting, driving, &c., are recommended as diverting the mind to pleasing associations."

The second most important point will be, to direct the attention to *diet*. How wonderful it is to reflect on the power of the stomach, in so quickly dissolving, assimilating, and disposing of the aliment. But extend the research, and the conception of these processes will become as sensible as striking; and we shall find that the purpose of aliment is not merely to administer to the growth and repair of the body, but by its bulk and peculiar stimulus, to maintain the exercise of the organs essential to life.

Our primitive nature would make man the heritor of a strong and powerful instinct, to direct his intelligence to the adoption of what is most salutary to him; and this instinct would also protect him from all injurious food; simpler laws than what reason and philosophy enforced would have sufficed, had not the tyrant, civilization, opposed the laws of nature, and left him at the control of artificial refinements.

The benignant author of our creation has accommodated the nature of man to every species of aliment, and if he travels into different regions, he will readily accustom himself to the diet, or rather, to the produce of the various countries. Yet, his nature will yield to *quantity*, which, if insufficient, his strength decays—if excessive, disease attacks him.

Although simple diet be the best calculated for supporting the body in health, yet, variety may be occasionally indulged, provided the appetite does not range beyond the limits of temperance. Through the wonderful agency of the digestive organs, animal and vegetable substances of discordant natures are happily assimilated into one bland homogeneous chyle; but these organs themselves will soon indicate the effects of abuse, and prompt an immediate return to simple regimen. It will be even found that what may be considered wholesome at one time will be injurious at another; so true is the old maxim, "*Modus utendi ex veneno facit medicamentum; ex medicamento venenum.*"

"The manner of using makes poison medicinal, or medicine poison."

Invalids are often subject to a false appetite, owing to the morbid piquancy of the juices in the stomach, urging them to eat more than nature requires.

Bread, meat, vegetables, and light pudding, may be *all* eaten at a meal—provided the sum total does not exceed the quantity necessary for digestion.

Fruits, destined for our pleasure as well as comfort, should not be taken *after a meal*, but instead or part thereof.

Wine should be allowed, chiefly, during a repast, and the bottle dismissed immediately on the conclusion of it.

Sir William Temple had a saying to the following effect, as a rule for drink-

ing: "The first glass for myself—the second for my friends—the third for good humour—and the fourth for my enemies."

Beer, if mild and well brewed, may be retained as a beverage, when it *agrees*, but water is the valued privilege of our natures, and should be preferred.

Spirituous liquors, except as an article of medicine, ought to be scrupulously avoided.

Tea and coffee have their several claims upon our notice—and, being generally introduced, have become necessaries of life.—Neither of these should be used strong nor sweet.

On the state of the stomach will depend the quality of supper, which, in some valetudinarians, may be recommended—but its rejection from general custom is among the improvements of the present generation.

The powers of digestion differ in various persons—some are seldom incommoded with quantity, or the most heterogeneous qualities of their food. But how often are medical men consulted by complainants of this or that diet, when perhaps it is the unnatural load of variety, rather than the disagreement of a particular food that causes their sufferings.

Could *Diogenes* (the philosopher, who on his way home met a youth going to a feast, and took him to his friends—declaring that by such conduct he had saved him from imminent danger), but witness a modern meal, consisting of soup, fish, fowl, flesh, salad, pastry, confections, fruits, and the almost numberless *et cetera* that are offered to the pampered appetite of a fashionable party, he would quickly discover the prolific source of gout, apoplexy, fevers, &c. &c.

Doctor Reed has the following judicious remarks on over-feeding. "When the table may be said to groan under the load of luxury, it is no wonder that the stomach should also feel the burthen; what are called dispeptic and bilious diseases may, for the most part, be attributed to some error in diet, or excess in epicurean indulgence. They are to be found principally amongst persons who sin against the stomach, an organ which always sufficiently revenges itself on those who impair or trifle with its texture."

Hippocrates tells us, that he who eats and drinks little will have no disease. By receiving too much into the stomach we obstruct the process of assimilation, and the general frame may be thus staved by an excessive as well as by a defective quantity of the ingesta.

Doctor Fothergill reduces the varieties of necessary diet to the *how much*, and the *too much*—leaving the patient to regulate himself by what agrees with him.

The doctor relates a conversation between a medical man and one of the first Earls of Macclesfield, who frequently interrogated his friend on the subject of diet, "Doctor, is this wholesome?" "Does your lordship like it?" "Yes." "Does it agree with your lordship?" "Yes!" "Why then it is wholesome!"

This, perhaps, is the best direction that can be given, provided we can caution the inquirer against the *too much*.

SECTION II.

On Sexual Debility in Men. Its causes—natural or acquired by Onanism or Intemperate Indulgences, and its baneful effects, as producing Impotence, &c., described.

"Sperate miseri cavete felices."

"Let those who weep cast off the weight of care,
And those secure of happiness, beware."

The following are among the more general causes of sexual debility:—

1st. *The excessive indulgence in venereal engagements*; or the compulsive abstinence from them altogether, until circumstances shall wear an appearance more favourable to indulgence, or inclination become more potential; but when this period arrives, the effect of so long and unnatural an interdiction exhibits itself in incompetence.

2d. *The frequency of Nocturnal Emission*.*

3d. *Venereal Disease*; where the treatment has been injudiciously conducted, removing the disorder itself, but leaving the grander functions of nature exposed to the effects of mercurial influence. *Gonorrhœa*, by the mismanagement evinced in those who cure themselves, is made a precursor of sexual incompetence, from the organic changes it produces under such inauspicious attempts.

4th. *Constitutional Imbecility*.

5th. *Peculiar Formation*.

6th. *Intense Study*.

7th. *A long residence in warm Climates*.

8th. *All the preceding causes*, though not infrequent in their occurrence, are rare instances, when compared to the multitudinous victims of impotence, who owe their degradation to the solitary intemperance of passion, which is more generally known by the term *Onanism*. This, therefore, is an acquired disease.

SECTION III.

Excesses are always criminal, because they are always injurious; that gift when moderately used, is fraught with advantage, when abused, becomes the prolific source of mischief. Drunkenness, gluttony, lewdness, are but extremes of certain duties, which, within a prudent scope, are beneficial and even necessary to existence. But those particular excesses are productive, perhaps, of a greater latitude and severity of misery to the human frame, than any other of which man, in the abuse of his intellectual greatness, has been convicted.

Nature is sufficiently explicit as to the legitimate purposes for which the seminal liquor was given; and she has been no less perspicuous in defining its proper end than she is severe in the punishment of its abuse; visiting any misapplication or excess by a variety of inflictions, well calculated to effect the object of future impotence. The consequences of excessive venery in newly married persons have been copiously discussed and aptly remarked upon, by many writers—in such a manner as to repress every disposition to excessive indulgence in all those persons who are endowed with sound judgment, and capable of appreciating the following sentiment of *Celsus*. "*Rarus concubitus corpus excitat; frequens solvit.*"†

Deviations from this grand rule stand on record as beacons over the graves of those who have *been sacrificed* on the shrine of passion.

He to whom nature or education has given a lascivious disposition, ought to be perpetually on his guard to repress its slightest emotions, and to oppose desires with a resolution founded upon a view of the consequences that inevitably await upon exuberant gratification. The sanguine temperament and habit of youth, indeed, present a formidable obstacle to the exercise of judgment, and a fatal

* Termed by Dr. Cullini, *Gonorrhœa dormientum*.

† The bodily powers are excited by occasional coition; by frequent repetition they become relaxed.

"While temperate pleasure spurs the lazy blood,
Excess unstrings the nerves, and dries the flood."

tion must be most firmly rooted, if it cannot be arrested by observation of the dismal calendar of those who have *destroyed* themselves by excess.

Hippocrates describes the effects of excessive lasciviousness in young married persons in a manner sufficiently alarming. A slow but gradual waste of the bodily and mental power, perpetual spasms, a spontaneous discharge of the seminal liquor, even during the evacuation of nature, an inability to procreate, excessive fatigue upon the slightest exertions, shortness of breath, disorders of the head, deafness, and, to finish the tragic enumeration, to all these succeed the *Tabes Dorsalis*, or consumption; thus completing the sad catastrophe.

Surgeon Morris details, as some of the attendant evils, disorders of the brain and nerves; and instances a case of a sudden fatal termination of life, by excess of venereal indulgence on the night of marriage.

Pliny also adduces two instances of death in the act of coition.

Ætius numbers this excess among the causes of palsy; and gives a gloomy picture of its more immediate effects.

In short, it is not possible to exemplify the diversity of dreadful complaints arising from so fruitful a source of evil; afflicting the sufferer with such agony as to make an appeal to death the only relief from torment.

M. Tissot is undetermined whether to identify the seminal liquor with the animal spirits, or to consider them as distinct from, although invariably acting upon, each other. It does appear, from many facts which observation furnishes, that they have scarcely a separate existence. Examples have been quoted of persons, who, on arriving at the age of puberty, and having their testicles removed, return to the situation of childhood, losing all energy of mind and activity of character, and becoming, suddenly, objects of pity to those very individuals who had before sought and esteemed their society.

The following instance furnishes a striking evidence to show the clear connection between the animal spirits and seminal liquor:—

A young gentleman, endowed with all those qualities which attract the love and respect of mankind, became an inmate in a family of the first respectability. In this situation, the elegance of his person and the superiority of his mental acquisitions had so influenced the affections of a young lady, a niece of the master of the house, that a proposition of marriage was made to the subject of this anecdote, through the medium of the uncle. Sensible of the advantageous nature of the connection perhaps, and actuated by a reciprocity of esteem, the youth betrayed a strange but powerful emotion. It had been frequently observed, that, in the midst of the most agreeable parties, this young gentleman would often fall into fits of abstraction and melancholy, which, with his constant habit of avoiding all explanation of the cause, convinced the uncle of the lady that he was the victim of some potent, but mysterious sorrow.

One evening, a pleasant party had assembled, among whom was the young lady designed for his wife; but on this occasion he was unusually abstracted, nor was any attempt to rally his spirits crowned with success; he retired in a state of melancholy, and in the morning his patron received a letter from him covered with blood and a portion of his brain. The mystery was, in that letter, developed—he was *impotent!*—and a sense of his distressing situation, under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, impelled him to *suicide*.

Some writers have asserted, that, by a postponement of venereal enjoyment until the individuals have reached an advanced period of life, the common mischief which results from excessive venery would be prevented:—they tell us, it was in consequence of the intermarriages of the ancient *Germans* never taking place until the thirtieth year, that those people excelled in bravery, energy, and

endurance, every contemporary race of man. And as a proof of an opposite system, the same writers instance the indolence and effeminacy of the Asiatics, who contract and consummate marriage at the age of ten or twelve years. It is clear, however, that nature has defined the age at which sexual intercourse may be indulged with impunity, and as she herself has imposed the checks and penalties of excess, she is the best authority to be consulted, and reason will uniformly support her decision, be it what it may.

The effects, however, of wicked propensities may, as far as regards bodily inconvenience, be, in a measure, counteracted by a uniform habit of temperance, and a strict regularity of diet and medical regimen. The mischiefs which are laid to repose by a pertinacious adherence to this plan, are revived and reproduced by every excess. An indulgence in bacchanalian pleasures, where the constitution has been seriously injured in early life, is like the application of poison to a sore, entailing upon the individual who indulges, a series and succession of evils, from the influence of which it will require a long interval of temperance to renovate him:

Very many discussions have taken place upon the nature of the seminal liquor and the causes which render its too frequent, and too copious emission, productive of such important consequences to the human frame. "The seed of man" said *Hippocrates*, "arises from all the humours of his body; it is the most valuable part of them." The fluids, from every part of the human frame, appear to rush to the genital organs, to give greater effect to the first act of nature.

All the powers of the body seem concentrated to one point during the time of coition. *Galen* says, when a person loses his seed, he loses, at the same time, the vital spirit; so it is not astonishing that too frequent coition should enervate, as the body is thereby deprived of the purest of its humours. It has been described by *Aristotle* as the excrement of aliments, having the faculty of reproducing bodies like that which produced it. Others have described it to be a portion of the brain, and have pointed out certain ganglions which form the communications between it and the testicles; it is termed by *Plato*, a running of the spinal marrow; and by *Epicurus* it is called a part of the soul and body.

The distribution of the seminal fluid is said to extend to all the nerves of the body, like the animal spirits of the brain; and again it has been termed the essential oil of the animal liquors; and a number of organs are placed in requisition, as ducts and channels, to convey it from the source to the object of its secretion. The office of the testicles is to separate the seed from the blood, each side receiving one artery from the aorta, a little below the emulgents, which, unlike all other arteries, arise small and dilate in their progress, that the velocity of the blood may be sufficiently abated for the secretion of so viscid a fluid as the seed; the *vasa deferentia* are excretory ducts, passing from the *epididymes* of the testes to the *Vesiculæ Seminales*, or seminal repositories, for the purpose of conveying the latter, the elaborated seed. In the *vesiculæ seminales* themselves, the seed is reposit against the time of coition, during the process of which, it passes from the vesicles through the prostate gland into the urethra; and the urethra itself is lined with several glands for the purpose of guarding it from the action of the fluids which pass through it.

It thus appears clearly, from the complicated machinery employed in the conveyance and distillation of the seminal fluid, that nature has intended its importance to be fully understood by those, for whose use and pleasure it was created. Now, in the too frequent and prodigal emission of this liquor, it is

manifest, that all this variety of organs must be called into unnecessary action; and in nature, as in art, the constant friction of the minuter parts of the machine must tend to its rapid waste.

The seminal fluid is sometimes forced back into the bladder, there consequently results not only much difficulty, but a painful labour in the *Oesterum Venerum*, attended with a very slow as well as a deficient ejection of the remaining semen. The irritation in the bladder from the seminal fluid causes much uneasiness. In a healthy man the secretion of this liquor is constantly made in the testes; it repairs to the reservoirs, the limits of which are very confined, and cannot, perhaps, contain all that is discerned in a day; nevertheless there are continent men who do not evacuate for whole years. What would become of it, if it did not continually return into the vessels of circulation? a return which is very much facilitated by the structure of all the organs, which assist in the secretion of this humour in conveying it into the proper channel, and in its preservation. The veins are then much more considerable than the arteries; and this in a proportion that is not found so great elsewhere, so is it probable, that this return is not only made in the *Vesiculæ Seminales*, but that it previously took place in the testes, in the epididymes, and in the *vasa deferentia*.

Haller says, "the semen is kept in the *vesiculæ seminales* until the man makes use of it, or nocturnal emissions deprive him of it. During all this time, the quantity which is there detained excites the animal to the act of venery; but the greatest part of the seed which is the most volatile and odoriferous, as well as strongest, is absorbed into the blood, and it there produces, upon its return, very surprising changes; it makes the beard, hair, and nails to grow, it changes the voice and manners, for age does not produce these changes in animals; it is the seed only that operates in this manner, and they are never met with in eunuchs."

Cases have been known, in fact, where individuals, after arriving at the age of puberty, have undergone amputation of the testicles—and what were the consequences? the beard disappeared, the voice, from manly strength, returned to the shrill piping of childhood, and all the properties and definitions of manhood disappeared. This circumstance tends to place in a strong point of view, the importance of the seminal fluid, as regards its influence upon the whole frame; and that, in its absence, the vessels want their natural stimulus, the fluids are more slow in their motion, the circulation is more languid, nutrition more irregular, and the other functions are performed with less order.

The sensations which accompany the emission of the seed may be adduced as another evidence of its vast importance; all other evacuations are easily expelled, when the frame is in a state of sanity; but a sort of epilepsy attacks the whole system when this liquor separates from it. A general motion, a convulsion of all the parts, an increased quickness in the circulation of all the humours, is necessary to give it freedom. The languor which immediately succeeds emission shows how much the body loses when it parts with this important fluid; all the energies of manhood are necessary to replace it, and instances have been frequent in individuals who have reached a very advanced age, when, in consequence of a deficiency of animal fluids to supply the loss sustained in coition, instant death ensued.

It is not many years since that an old gentleman, who had suddenly taken offence at the whole circle of his relations, resolved, notwithstanding his advanced age, (being no less than eighty,) to marry, in the hope that he might have an heir to inherit his property. His wealth and respectability soon in-

duced a young female, scarcely of age, to acquiesce in the proposals he made to her. The union took place, but so violent was the exertion made by the hoary bridegroom in the act of coition, that he expired immediately after its completion; the remainder of the anecdote, although somewhat irrelative to this essay, deserves mention. The relations, among whom was the heir at law, in default of a natural heir, were not a little delighted at the result of the old man's measure of vengeance, and a claim was immediately put in for the family estates; their intentions, however, were doomed to a severe disappointment. The widow proved with child, and nine months after the marriage and death took place, a natural heir made his appearance, and put the question at rest forever.

Plateros gives an instance of a magistrate of a Swiss city, who married a second time, at an advanced period of his life, and when he was endeavouring to consummate his nuptials, he was obliged to discontinue. The like accident happened to him every time he made the same attempt. He applied to a variety of quacks. One assured him, after he had taken several remedies, that he had nothing further to apprehend. He ventured a fresh essay, upon the faith of his *Æsculapius*, the event was immediately the same as before, but being resolved to go through with the operation, he died in the very act, in the arms of his wife. These instances are sufficient to confirm the position, in corroboration of which they are quoted.

There is a danger, however, which is not peculiar to age, which arises out of the increase of the quantity of blood in the cranium, during the act of coition, the consequence of which has been apoplexies, in some instances; and where it fell short of that mortal extent, it sometimes produced insanity. The influence of this accumulation of blood in the head is strikingly felt throughout the whole nervous system, which becomes proportionably weakened, and incapacitated from lending its support under the extraordinary exertions of the body.

One of the most common effects of excess is a deprivation of the digestive powers, which are gradually diverted from that regularity of action which is essential to health; and when the task of digestion is inadequately performed, it is impossible specifically to define the disease which may ensue. The powers become gradually diminished; the memory and the understanding refuse to perform their functions; every description of Chronic disorders is produced; and all the bodily faculties are impaired and hurried to premature decay.

To prove the truth of this assertion, and to evidence the consequences which result from indigestion, it is only necessary for the reader to recur to his own observation, and to recall to mind the symptoms which, under such circumstances, have passed before his eyes. All the powers of the frame seem to be suspended, and the universal weakness is materially aggravated by a general restlessness of imagination.

But as *M. Tissot* says, "What is the least to be comprehended, or rather what is quite inconceivable, is the prodigious weakening of the faculties of the soul. The solution of this question must arise from another, which we are incapable of solving, that is, the influence of the two substances, one upon the other, and all we can have recourse to, is the observation of the phenomena. We are equally ignorant of the nature of the spirit, and the nature of matter; but we know that these two parts of man are so intimately united, that all the changes which the one undergoes are felt by the other. A circulation more or less of our aliment, the same quantity of one aliment before another; a dish of coffee instead of a glass of wine, sleep more or less interrupted, a stool a little more or less abundant, too strong or too weak perspira-

tion, change our whole manner of seeing and judging of objects. The revolution of our machine from one hour to another makes us feel and think quite differently ; and as they prompt us, vice and virtue change their nature, and fresh principles take place.

That many instances of sexual debility owe their existence to causes totally foreign to the preceding, does not admit of a doubt, and, when compared, are hardly to be considered disease, although they trespass severely upon the comforts of domestic happiness when they occur in married life, and darken the prospects of such as are entering into that blissful station.

SECTION IV.

OF GONORRHEA, DORMIENTIUM OR NOCTURNAL EMISSION.

Some glands act independently of the will, while others will be greatly excited by it, as the Testes ; perhaps there is no man *desireless* of the sexual compact, and this very wish is a stimulus upon the generative organs.

As the seminal vessels will not allow distension, emission becomes a natural wish of secretion, and nature will sometimes relieve herself of the superabundance by nocturnal efforts, the frequency of which is prejudicial.

Nocturnal Emission, as the natural act of healthy vessels will in those who are continent, and live in a state of celibacy, happen occasionally, such discharge then, is not to be termed disease. It is only the frequent occurrence of it which demands medical attention, because, in that case alone it is likely to interfere with the functional tone of the generative organs. When this is the case, cautious measures must be taken to regulate the system, as otherwise a seminal gleet will inevitably result, giving rise to a most perplexing series of symptoms analogous to Gonorrhœa,—as mucal discharges, &c.

SECTION V.

VARIOUS OTHER CAUSES OF DEBILITY.

Sexual debility, arising from Venereal diseases, or from Gonorrhœa, is to be removed only by a very discriminate reference to such source ; it is, however, to be cured, and generally is more easy of relief than any other cause of incompetence.

Incompetence to hymenial rites arises sometimes from *constitutional imbecility*, as well as from *intense study*. It is only to be observed, in such instances, that a weak habit may be strengthened and improved into the more vigorous relations of health. Here it will be found that the patients labour under *frequent* nocturnal emissions. A well arranged regimen, both of diet and medicine, will soon produce convalescence, and unless aggravated by the effects of *Onanism*, the patient very soon recovers.

Sexual debility may arise from *Organic Malformation*, in which a knowledge of the peculiar circumstances can alone allow an opinion to be hazarded ; as to the likelihood of relief, all that can be said, is, that in many instances the natural actions may be materially assisted ; and although it is impracticable to metamorphise the aberration of nature in perfection, yet the healing art is competent to render the generative functions both susceptible and communicative of mystic enjoyment under almost any impediment.

Intemperate living, and *long residence in warm climates*, are amongst the frequent causes of loss of procreative energy. We have studied the change of atmospheric influence in various climates, and we feel sufficiently acquainted with the circumstances that tend to depress the energies, so as to offer effectual relief to such as labour under any of these disorders.

Gonorrhœa Laxorum, so termed by Dr. Cullin, is a pellucid discharge from the penis while the mind is under the influence of venereal thoughts when awake ; its presence argues a weakness in the muscularity of the organs, and is usually attendant on the studious, or those who have been enervated by the effect of warm climates.

SECTION VI.
OF ONANISM.

But if the effects of excess be thus dreadful, still more so are those which emanate from the practice of unnatural pollution, to which the youth of all ages and countries are too fatally addicted. The opinion of the All-Wise upon the enormity of this offence against reason and nature, this dereliction of the legitimate purposes of man's existence, is sufficiently marked by the signal punishment of *Onan*, the second son of Judah, in old times, and needs no comment.

The origin of this abuse has by some been referred to the idolatrous worship of the northern Venus, named Frego or Fraga, in oblation to whom her votaries were accustomed to shed their seed.

The importance of a well-regulated youth to the production of a vigorous old age, was generally remarked upon in the introductory chapter to this work, and a reference made to those prevailing practices of the rising generation which tend to the demoralization of all the faculties of body and mind ; leading, by a slow but unerring progress to those fell diseases which first undermine all the enjoyments of existence, and finally make life itself yield to the torture with which it is assailed.

That learned physician, Boerhaave, has given a touching account of the effects of these excesses, which, although frequently quoted, we cannot omit in this place. In the 776th section of his institutes, he says, "The loss of too much semen occasions lassitudes, debilities, and renders exercise difficult ; it causes convulsions, emaciation, and pains in the membrane of the brain ; it deadens the senses, particularly the sight, gives rise to dorsal consumption, indolence, and various other disorders therewith connected. I have seen a patient decay inasmuch as to destroy the whole corporeal frame—he felt a pain even in the membrane of the brain—a pain which patients call a dry, burning heat, and which incessantly burns internally the most noble parts. I have also seen a young man afflicted with dorsal consumption, his person was very agreeable ; and though he was frequently cautioned not to give way too much to pleasure, he nevertheless yielded to its impulse, and became so deformed before his death, that the fleshy substance which appears above the spinal apophysis of the loins was entirely wasted ; the brain itself in this case appeared consumed. Patients in this disease grow stupid. I never perceived such loss of power brought on by any other cause ; and the eyes became dull, even to the loss of sight."

Other instances have been quoted *from authority*, where violent pains in the limbs have been succeeded by extreme inward cold, inasmuch that while the *external skin* preserved its natural heat, the patient was complaining of the bitterest sensation of shivering, and could not be compelled to leave an immense fire, even during the summer season, but this sensation of cold was accompanied by a singular feeling, viz. the continual rotation of the testicles in the scrotum.

The loss of memory is not the least remarkable symptom in the history of this peculiar debility. Young men who, previous to the influence of self-

pollution, were gifted with a retentive memory, have been afterwards suddenly deprived of its use, and instead of communicating the interchange of social reflection, have been metamorphised into characters little above actual *idiocy*.

What a gloomy object of contemplation to the susceptible mind is a youth, in the full vigour of life, and apparently in the perfect possession of his faculties, enduring the complicated and dreadful consequences of this wretched infatuation, a mass of animated fatuity, exciting the compassion of those who are unacquainted with the cause of his decay, but attracting only the contempt of others, who, either from information or suspicion, impute the malady to its real source. To himself, on the other hand, his situation is still more disgusting than to others. Deprived of all the internal powers of consolation, the anchor of his hopes lost, the prospects of existence clouded, a blank, a blot in creation, upon what resource can he draw for strength and fortitude to resist the gigantic encroachments of despair, or to dissipate the horrors of a mind wrecked on the billows of impious passion. Does he fly to his books for solace? Alas! they can afford him neither amusement nor instruction, his memory has no power to retain the impression it receives, and morbid imagination identifies with its own situation every circumstance of gloom and despondency which passes beneath his notice. The melancholy which disturbs him in the closet, haunts him in the banquet-room—the spectres of his deceased, his murdered energies, rise upon his fancy—even when the dance is jocund and the revel loud, and every struggle to emancipate himself only serves to rivet the spell of misery which enchains him; for him there is no interchange “in the feast of reason and the flow of soul,” he is compelled therefore to shrink within himself, and what awaits him there? A blasted heath on which no fruit of genius, no flower of intellect can grow, where the atmosphere is poisoned with disease, and the soil parched up with unwholesome and unnatural heat, rendering it barren and obnoxious to the eye.

Here then appears the blessed intervention of loss of memory,—what a burthen of additional misery is prevented, for on the surface of that memory, what a tide of horrific images would rush—the very anguish would beguile philosophy itself of its reason, and existence could not be tolerated.

Fraught as this portraiture is with horror, it is by no means overcharged; it has its originals in existence; even at this moment it is impossible to walk the streets without being surrounded with corroborating truths. How many young persons do we meet sinking into the grave apparently beyond the reach of human aid, at a period too when life is usually developing all its vigour? Without insinuating an illiberal prejudice against the unhappy subjects of disease who may chance to cross our path, is it not possible that many of them have been the victims of their own vices and follies? This infamous practice of self-pollution occasions the sacrifice of more human beings than the fabled hydras and centaurs of antiquity; *men* must be offered up in hecatombs at its shrine, until some mighty moralist shall arise, by whose energies the monster may be destroyed, and humanity be once more rescued from the degradation to which, by its vices, it has been reduced. Were not the extent of the punishments which never fail to follow the commission of crime well understood, it is possible that the monition thereby conveyed might be sufficient.

In whatever manner the seminal fluid is wasted, the waste naturally calls all the energies of the main body into action to repair it; and it is reasonable to infer that when those energies are applied to the reparation of a superfluous and criminal flow, they are completely diverted from their legitimate course of

operation; and the purposes of natural nutrition, as well as the support of corporeal functions are entirely neglected. When this is the case, the mind and the body, sympathizing together, experiencing a complete deterioration of their powers; the intellectual functions of the former, in the first instance lose their activity, and move indolently and inefficiently, until at length they become suspended, and the patient is plunged into a state of irretrievable lethargy. The bodily powers are influenced by a proportionate impulse; the juices are dried up, the sap of existence withers in its trunk, the faculties lose their acuteness, and the whole frame becomes the melancholy subject of an incurable decay.

An indulgence in this horrid and unnatural propensity, also begets a sensation very near akin to actual aversion from all the usual enjoyments of life; and so completely is the devoted victim subdued by the wretched infatuation, that although perfectly sensible of the rapid change that is taking place in his system, he appears to have lost the power of applying a corrective to the malady, or of making the slightest struggle to check its destructive progress, he is led away by his passions which exercise the most complete tyranny over his reason, and is virtually degraded to the level of the irrational part of the creation. Feeling the utter impossibility of participating in the pleasures of society, and deriving from the natural communion of the sexes any of those extatic feelings of delight for which for wise purposes Providence has connected it, he imbibes a gradual, and at length rooted dislike to all conversation with his species, bids adieu to the circle of mankind, and, imbued with a gloomy misanthropy, the result of his own vicious conduct, secludes himself from the world, and, from a useful and perhaps estimable member of society, becomes the solitary sacrifice of a lust horrible in the sight of God and man, and totally repugnant to all the laws of nature. In fact, it is not at all an un-frequent termination of the tragedy, that the wretched victim, weary of life, which no longer teems even with the hope of future pleasures, and wanting resolution to refrain from his malpractices, and to strive by penitence and reformation to restore his mind and body to something like their original composure, profanely raises his hand against his own existence, and finishes his career of offences by rushing with awful temerity into the presence of that Being whose precepts he has disobeyed, and whose wise purposes, in the object of his creation, he has most impiously and unpardonably thwarted.*

Yet, notwithstanding the enormity of this offence is so obvious to the meanest capacity, and notwithstanding the records of the thousands and tens of thousands, who down the precipice have fallen into destruction, the universality of the practice is rendered every day more clear. It is by no means confined to the unlearned and thoughtless part of society; genius and learning are alike infected with its influence, and the most expanded capacity of exalted rank, and the highest qualifications of mind are no fences against this miserable infection. Professor *Zimmerman*, whose name and character bear with him the admiration of mankind, and whose authority is not to be controverted, informs us of an individual of uncommon attainments and profound genius, brought upon himself a settled epilepsy, a fit of which immediately fol-

* Even the heathen abhorred self-pollution, as would appear by the following lines from Martial:

"Hoc nihil esse putes? scelus est mihi

Crede: sed ingeus quantum vix animo concipis ipse tuo."

"You think 'tis nothing—'tis a crime indeed,

▲ crime so great you scarcely can conceive."

lowed every nocturnal emission, as well as every act of self-pollution; immediately after the fit he was attacked by very violent pains in the reins. He was induced, however, by a representation of his true condition, to discontinue this baneful practice for some time; but this resolution was insufficient to support the change, and in a short time he renewed his vicious habits with more violent fits, and was found dead in his chamber.

Although consequences to this melancholy extent do not occur to every one who addicts himself to this unnatural offence, no person who is guilty of it is allowed to escape without a greater or less degree of punishment; the result is materially influenced by the frequency of the acts, the strength of the constitution, (which, in some cases, enables a patient to bear up against a continued series of attacks,) and a variety of other circumstances. The general effect, however, is first a complete depravation of the stomach, which occasions it to reject all manner of food, and to allow the aliment which is forced into it to pass through without effecting the purposes of nutrition; in other cases, where digestion does not take place in any degree, it is attended with the most violent and continued pains, frequent vomitings follow, and no medicine which is administered with a view to check them, produces any beneficial change, until the practice itself is discontinued. In the next degree it produces a difficulty of respiration, occasioned by a weakness in the organs; and this is soon succeeded by coughs, a complete change in the tones of the voice, which becomes weak, shrill, and piping, and a shortness of breath upon the least extraordinary exertion. Thirdly, it gives occasion to a complete relaxation of the nervous system; from these causes, proceed an innumerable ramification of diseases which affect the animal economy in all its parts, and which have been described as follows:

A considerable diminution of the powers; paleness in a greater or less degree; sometimes a slight jaundice, which, however, is continual; afterwards pimples, which go away only to make place for others, and which continually reappear all over the face, but particularly on the forehead, upon the temples, and near the nose; remarkable leanness; surprising sensations at the change of the seasons, particularly in cold weather; a languor in the eyes; a weakness of sight; a considerable decay of all the faculties,—particularly of memory.

One of the common attendants of the baneful propensity is Hypochondriasis, and it is worthy of observation, that when this consequence begins to exhibit itself, the cure of the unhappy patient becomes a subject of hope rather than expectation. This effect, indeed, appears to be the termination to which all others combine to arrive.

Hypochondriasis is, in these cases, frequently accompanied with fits of frenzy,—which so feed upon the brain, as well as upon the bodily faculties,—both of which have been previously reduced to so lamentable a state of imbecility as to leave scarcely any thing for death to accomplish. History gives us many instances of melancholy men, rendered so by the excesses and abuses which have been before described, who on the application of *stimuli* of any kind, have been driven into all the wild ravings of insanity, which have terminated in consumption. Epileptic effects are still more common, and in both sexes have been known to be produced by acts of venery, as well as masturbation; and when they appear in the last case, the disorder is incurable. The neck and spine have frequently been attacked with a suddenness and severity which have rendered medical aid totally inefficacious. And from those parts the stiffness has rapidly ran through the whole frame, arresting the pliancy of the different members of the body, and terminating in death. Instances of this kind are

rare, but where they have been quoted, they are pretty fair and conclusive. We read of one young man who, for some time before death put a period to his sufferings, could bear no other posture than that of lying on his belly in bed, without the power of moving his hands or feet, or of taking any aliment but such as could be introduced into his mouth without any agency of his own. We read of another in whom the disease first assumed the appearance of intoxication, making him stagger as he walked; subsequently it weakened his legs so much as to render them perfectly useless—at the same time so affecting the hand and arm that he could not, without assistance, use either; his voice was then attacked, and it was with difficulty that he could make himself understood. Soon afterwards, his head fell upon his breast, the extending muscles having entirely given way. He was now obliged to pass the whole of the night and day upon a settee in a reclining position, his head dropping every moment upon his breast, with a person perpetually at his side, raising his head, supplying him with food and snuff, wiping his nose, and giving attention to him while he endeavoured to articulate, by pronouncing each letter separately. Previous to his death, he confessed that masturbation was the cause.

One probable cause of the fatal termination which too generally waits upon these excesses is, the secrecy which shame imposes upon the lips of the patient with respect to the real cause of this disorder. The victim of his own imprudence, rather than admit the real source of his ailments, is perpetually anxious to mislead his medical advisers, who are, in consequence, induced to attribute the variety of deplorable symptoms which exhibit themselves in his case to causes very remote from those which have actually produced them. From the misunderstanding which here takes place, an improper mode of treatment is naturally adopted, while the disorder daily makes head against the falsely-directed attacks made upon it, and reaches a fatal height of influence before the unhappy patient has acquired a degree of resolution sufficient to carry him through the shame of an avowal.

It is true, indeed, that some medical men, by the unexpected application of pointed questions, have extracted the fatal truths from the lips of the sufferer, in sufficient time to be enabled to adopt the course of treatment prescribed by nature and the most approved experience. But, generally speaking, medical men are apt to content themselves, (where the symptoms are not immediately alarming,) with a superficial view of the case before them.

Acute disorders are declared to be very fatal in those who addict themselves to the practice of self-pollution; and *Fonseca* expressly asserts, that when the body is weakened by venereal excesses, if at the same time it labours under any acute disorder, there is no cure for it; and he instances several cases of robust persons in the full vigour of youth who have not been cured without the utmost difficulty. No sooner has this uncleanness got the master over the heart, but forthwith it pursues the man everywhere, and keeps its possession of him at all times and in all places; upon the most serious occasions and in the very acts of religion, he ever and anon finds himself transported with lustful conceptions and desires, which incessantly follow him, and take up his thoughts.

The inclination to commit this offence increases with the frequency with which it is committed; it is that kind of lust, or appetite, which grows on what feeds it; and as soon as the infamous practice becomes established, the soul unites with the body to court the repetition of the crime. All the faculties of the body become ready panders to the depraved disposition of the mind; every object of the feminine grace and attraction, by a strange perversion of legiti-

mate effect as it passes through the diseased organs, incites to this unnatural propensity; so that even the active desires, thoughts, and inclinations, with which nature has endued us are completely changed into passions and dispositions which brutify the species by tending to gratifications equally at war with nature and reason.

When the practice of self-pollution has acquired a complete ascendancy over all the natural feelings of the heart, one of its immediate effects is to disgust the individual with those very objects in which Providence has fixed the centre of social and moral enjoyment. The thirst after natural coition is first weakened, and gradually destroyed, in proportion as the taste becomes vitiated, and the bodily organs incapacitated for its enjoyment; for, the perpetual waste of the seminal liquor rapidly leads to impotency both of inclination as well as bodily ability, although the former, in numberless cases, has long survived the utter destruction of the latter. An exhibition of early symptoms and infirmities may indeed, sometimes, by alarming the fears and checking the impetuosity of the infatuated youth, particularly check him in his infatuated career, but the moment these providential warnings disappear, apprehension gradually decays, and the unnatural lust returns to its empire with added power, to tyrannize over the weak judgment.

Conceive the situation of a youth devoted to this horrible practice, when circumstances lead him to the formation of a matrimonial connection, and he is called upon to exchange his habit of filthy propensities for the pure enjoyments of the nuptial couch; in this case, how forlorn is the situation of both individuals. The husband, perhaps experiencing an excitation of a new but extremely powerful description, essays to fulfil the chief end of his union, his passions are inflamed to the highest degree, every faculty appears alive to a sensation of exquisite rapture; but alas! at the moment when he is about to unloose the virgin zone of his expecting bride, a spontaneous emission takes place, the excitement retires, all the lively emotions prematurely decay, and the animal functions suddenly become palsied and utterly incompetent to fulfil the end to which they were excited.

— “Et intus

Palleat infelix, quod proxima,
Nesciat uxor.”

“Something in his breast

Lurks the dark secret not to be exprest;
There must it lurk, there gall his wretched life,
Nor be imparted to his bosom wife.”

The nuptial bed, instead of teeming with a hallowed, extatic; and indefinable delight, is converted into a scene of blended mortification, disappointment, and suppressed anger; and it is now that the mistaken bride is first penetrated with those suspicions which are too soon corroborated by subsequent experience; and if, under such circumstances, the unfortunate female fell a prey to some artful seducer, her offence is not altogether without a justification, and the injured husband may accuse himself as the cause of her unhappy deviation.

Those who are guilty of venereal excesses by addicting themselves to women, have a manifest advantage over the agents of self-pollution, for the joy which the heart experiences, and which is very distinct from that voluptuousness which is merely corporeal, is said to aid digestion, to animate circulation, to accelerate all the functions, and to restore strength and

support. *Sanctorius* says, "After excessive coition with a woman that is beloved, a man is not sensible of the lassitude which should follow this excess, because the joy which the soul feels, increases the strength of the heart, favours the functions, and repairs what was lost." Another ancient writer asserts, "that communication with an ugly woman exhausts much more than with one that is handsome." *St. Chrysostom* says, "That when we excite ourselves against the laws of nature, the crime on that side is much greater than on the other." Nature herself, indeed, becomes in a measure the advocate of those who follow her dictates, inasmuch as she stands forward the stern accuser of all those who act in hostility to the plain impulses which she has sanctioned.

Disorders of the nervous system affect the mind with a rapidity the most astonishing; fits of epilepsy very soon produce total imbecility; the brain is very quickly attacked with an extraordinary weakness; and all the faculties suffer in a proportionate degree. Loss of sight is one of the early consequences to be dreaded, where epileptic symptoms have displayed themselves. In strong minds, as the individuals have surpassed the age of childhood, and the empire of reason has reached a certain established strength, their propensities have doubtless been frequently checked and subdued before they have produced any of those dreadful consequences which have been detailed in a former part of this treatise; but even in these cases, it is impossible to ascertain the boundary of the mischief which may have been done to the constitution. It is in maturer years that this secret will be developed, when the natural energies of the body begin to decay, it is then that the effects of a well-regulated or misapplied youth exhibit themselves, either producing a wholesome and natural decline, cheered with the recollection of moral obligations performed and domestic duties fulfilled, of a youth of promise and a manhood of useful energy; or infecting the autumn of life with troubles and tortures of the sternest complexion, and embittering those hours of more advanced life, which require a serene tranquillity to support the shattered frame of humanity to its last receptacle.

Indolence is, unquestionably, a great cause of the increase of this as well as other vicious propensities; when the faculties are busied in some particular pursuit, and employed in an industrious calling, the temptations that lead to these practices lose half their force for the perpetual recurrence to habits which require secrecy, and during the indulgence of which the bosom must be the seat of continual apprehension from the fear of intrusion; for votaries to this abomination have confessed the subserviency of soul under which they laboured during the tyranny of its overwhelming influence, by which the temper of the intellectual economy has become callous to any appeal of nature or religion.

It is to be lamented that the effect of this disorder has been commonly mistaken and treated as symptoms of other diseases, which, in fact, have in themselves been symptomatic of this grand and unnatural aberration. This fault, however, lies usually with the patient, who, having made up his mind to receive some relief, describes a few most irksome sensations, but conceals the true source of his ailments; the effect of this partial communication is to deceive the practitioner, who, without troubling himself to institute that careful investigation which is frequently necessary to wring from the sufferer a candid acknowledgment, imbibes a speculative opinion, and administers more with a view to experimental result than to the application of speedy and effectual relief. Upon the minds of physicians, themselves, there have been great doubts, as to the proper mode of treating the effects of self-pollution,

even when the true source of the evil has been made known. Various methods have been recorded as successful, but it may be doubted whether the credit of the victory over so malignant a foe was really due to the narrator, or whether nature herself had reasserted her rights, and by the discontinuance of the practice, the patient, under such powerful assistance, had regained a portion of his faculty, and in some measure became enabled to make a successful stand against the disease, and had gradually recovered a part of his original soundness and vigour.

The modes of cure pointed out are various, from the first institutors of medical regimen to the present day; but they are not borne out by any conclusive effects, probably from the limited attention bestowed by the profession upon this state of disease. The causes which induced the great medical characters of our time to show so little regard to distempers of this description are fit subjects for discussion. It has been alleged in justification of their apathy in a matter of such grasping importance, that *empiricism* having taken possession of this branch of the medical department, the *regular* faculty cannot, without professional degradation, descend to enter into competition with unqualified pretenders. This is a false, not to say an inhuman, mode of reasoning, when the life of man is to be outweighed by the silly scruples of professional delicacy; but allowing the momentary weight, were the rays of medical talent to be concentrated to this point, how soon would all the shallow mystery of quackery be penetrated and exposed; were professors of skill and science to apply themselves to the development of this disease, in its causes and through its effects, how very soon would such impostors be driven from the field and disabled from ever renewing their devastations within the sphere of professional science. We are not without hope that as accidental discoveries have furnished medical annals with many of the principal specifics in the cure of diseases, the promulgation of the baneful consequences of self-pollution in this work may direct the notice of the medical world to the subject; and if so, is it likely that ignorant empirics can long withstand the united competition of the *science, skill,* and the *principles of integrity,* which form the substantial foundation on which a just practitioner claims to establish a reputation for useful respectability and scientific distinction.

Let us then, in all cases of this nature, distinguish between reason and report; vulgar opinions and the sense of capable judges, the practice of quackery, and the principles of physical deduction. True it is, that some popular remedies have found their way into the established pharmacopeia, and deserve to be there retained, because men of learning and sound sense have sanctioned their admittance. In Physic, as in Chemistry, the effect is often a matter of experiment, upon which wise men reason and assign the use, although the first discoverer of the remedy may have been an individual of whose professional acquaintance they might have felt ashamed. It is one thing to prescribe rationally, and another to be lucky in cures.

Hoffman and *Boerhaave* were the most opposite persons to *Paracelsus* and *Van Helmont*, who, notwithstanding, have been justly recorded as extraordinary men. The truth is, that by far the larger part of the practice of physic is empirical, being founded upon collections of observed facts, happy discoveries, or perhaps, upon instinctive propensities.

To ourselves it is a matter of congratulation that our professional studies have been directed to this decried and neglected branch of practice, and much credit do we demand for the success which has, almost exclusively, been the result of our own efforts; because, in the first principles of medical education, professors seem purposely to exclude even a reference to the subject. The

fruits of our long and industrious application we now lay before the world, actuated by the broadest motives of general philanthropy. For some time we beheld victims consigned to the desperate grasp of unprincipled quackery, before we could mature our intention to interfere between the ignominious empiric and his prey, and to make at least an attempt to snatch from destruction a portion, however diminutive, of our fellow-beings.

At length we carried our purpose into operation, and the most *decided*, the most *extensive*, and the most *eminent* success has crowned our exertions. But artifice was indispensable to the accomplishment of our object; it was necessary to foil these *would-be* members of the *medical art* with their own weapons—in public advertisements we have asserted our qualifications, as being *educated* to the profession and authorized to practise it. And the consequences have been such as to bring no discredit either on that education or on that authority. Numbers have been snatched from the error of their way, and re-established in health and energy; and the impression made upon public morals by our exertions, has been, we hope, in an equal proportion. Certain it is, that such horrible instances as a few years since came daily under our knowledge, are becoming gradually less frequent. Patients of this description require the most anxious participation in their feelings; a wounded mind is not to be goaded by reflective monitions; the medical consolation must flow from hope, that cheering beacon to a throbbing heart; for only by sympathy of common feeling can the anguished soul be beguiled of its torment. When this maxim is made the rule of professional conduct, the case soon displays symptoms of improvement; but where this delicate consideration for the patient's feelings is neglected, the medical attendant injures more than he relieves.

The shaft of envy, however, has assailed our successful attempt; yet there is a self-satisfaction which is at all times equal to repel any invasion of just principles. It has been insinuated that our reliance is upon *stimulants*, but the method of treatment on which we have so effectually relied, from the commencement of our medical career, is directly opposed to that system of pernicious excitement which has been so often productive of the most disastrous effects; and against which we have entered our decided protest.

The application of stimulants may cause a spurious resuscitation of power, a momentary revival of the nervous energies, but reason will show that such an impulse is evanescent; that instead of communicating benefit, it actually contributes to the rancour of disease, by impelling an accelerated operation, as an expiring fire may be made to emit a luminous exhalation, but the very effort tends to its speedier extinction, and it dies, as the unnatural flame subsides.* We surely cannot be required to go farther into such a subject.

Parents and tutors should have a strict eye to youth; recollecting, that upon its purity depend all the future prospects in life, in every point of view. It is by this practice of Temperance, not merely in eating and drinking, but in other sensual pleasures; and by a total ignorance of, or abstinence from the sinful practice of self-pollution, that at the commencement of life the constitution is so settled and strengthened, as to bear up well against the storms which occur during the winter of age; this maxim cannot be too deeply enforced on the minds of the aged, that it may be by them impressed on the understanding of the young.

* We are here alluding to a systematic employment of stimuli, and not to their occasional use.

And further, when there shall be observed by those to whom the care of youth be entrusted, any sudden changes of the complexion, any morbidity of the system, any dereliction of the faculties, any abstraction from usual habits, or any alteration of disposition; let them reflect that the effects must arise from some cause; a few artful questions, apparently undesigned, will soon detect the mischief, especially if critical observation be paid to the countenance of the suspected individual. For this purpose parents, and guardians, and instructors, ought to be well acquainted with the symptoms here detailed, and it is a duty imperative upon them to apply early assistance, that, while they themselves impress upon the youthful mind the religious and moral obligations which demand its restriction from a practice so degrading to all social duties, they may, at the same time, adopt a method to assist the constitution by an immediate check, and ultimately restore it by the extinction of this propensity.

SECTION VII.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS, OR VEGETABLE AND ANIMAL LIFE, MENTAL IRRITATION, AS AFFECTING THE VENEREAL ORGANS.

Physical observations concerning the generation, nutrition, organization, life health, sickness, and death, of *animated nature*, would lead to more discussion than is here convenient; we shall therefore briefly advert to some particular points connected with our immediate object.

We cannot help quoting a few lines on the subject of generation from Dr. Scouler's very ingenious paper on this most intricate subject,—its simplicity removes much of the difficulty which many previous disputants have raised,—“Generation (writes Dr. S.) or the production of a living being, consists, if we separate it from all accidental circumstances, in the separation of a portion of the parent animal, which is endowed with independent vitality. This portion is formed in the ovarium of the female before she has any intercourse with the male, and the principal effect of the spermatic fluid is to excite the dormant powers of the germ into action, and to modify its form.”

Physiology is that branch of physical science which treats of the different functions and properties of living bodies, or such as are by a certain organized structure, enabled to grow and propagate their kind. By this definition, physiology must necessarily have for its object the explanation of that internal organical economy in plants and animals, which nature has provided for the preservation of the individual, and for the continuation of the species. These functions and properties are generally classed under the following heads, viz. digestion, nutrition, circulation, respiration, secretion, generation, irritability, and sensibility.

Attending minutely to a body which has escaped from the seed, the egg, or membranes of the parent, and which must for the future depend upon the operation of its own organs, we may observe, that in order to live it must be allowed the free use of air or *respiration*; in order to grow, it must have an adapted supply of food, which is to be prepared by *digestion*, taken up by *absorption* distributed by *circulation*, assimilated by *nutrition*, and the whole carried on by *secretion*. To these things we may add, that these functions are all dependent on a general principle, *irritability*, by which the system is rendered, through *stimulus*, susceptible of motion, accommodates itself to different circumstances by *habit*, alters its form by successive transformation, produces the species by *generation*, and when the business of life is finished, becomes, after

any a languid affection from the influence of sleep, at last subjected to the fate of all living bodies—death.

Nature, in her gift of active life to vegetables, exhibits the power of perception very forcibly. Many plants turn, with abhorrence, from that which is hurtful to them; others experience convulsions of their stamina, upon being slightly touched. The class called *Heliotropæ*, in daily presenting their surface to the sun, seem as desirous of absorbing a nutriment from its rays, as a bed of muscles doth from the water, by opening their shells upon the afflux of the tide.

“The roots of trees, in approaching the foundations of a wall or rock which they cannot penetrate, turn aside at a short distance, before they arrive at the obstacle. If a tree stand by the side of a ditch, the roots will not pursue their usual horizontal course so as to become exposed; but they suddenly dip down perpendicularly on approaching the bank, until they get below the bottom of the ditch, when they resume their horizontal tendency. The leaves of the *Dionda Musicapa* are beset with thorns, and their surface secretes a sweet liquor, very attractive to flies; at the instant when the insect touches the surface of this treacherous apparatus, the two lobes of the leaf approximate, and the thorns, crossing each other, pierce the unfortunate fly in a manner analagous to that execrable engine of selfishness and cupidity, the man-trap.”

It seems, too, that a communication of sexes, in order to produce their species, belongs to vegetables as well as to animals. Anatomists, like botanists, dispute as to their respective views of conception, whether it be accomplished *ab ovo* femello, or a *vermiculot* in *semine maris*, in reference to animal product; or the peculiar manner of the *Perina fecundans*, as contributing to vegetable existence—these doubts are unimportant. An egg,—unless the female hath had commerce with the male—cannot become vivified by incubation; nor will plants grow unless fecundated by the pollen of the male. The puberty of plants is indicated by their efflorescence, when they become capable of propagating their kind; the flower, or corolla, being analagous to the pubes of animals; and Linnæus, persuaded of this analogy, intended also to have classed the varieties of the animal kingdom according to the structure of their generative organs. A regard for decency alone prevented him. In the most noble animals there takes place a change in the functional force of organs—and a revolution of instincts and habits, at the epoch of puberty—which bears some analogy to the metamorphosis of insects, when the intestinal power gives way to the generative influence which then regulates the morals of the animal. Still the prerogative appears to exist in the female, (both of the vegetable and animal kingdom,) of producing that, which, when excited by the male, becomes capable of continuing active in eventually forwarding the birth of a living being.

How wonderfully has nature classed her subjects, giving them the strongest propensities, but limiting those propensities to individuals of the same class. She has also made mules, in general, unprolific, that her laws may be clearly defined. In animal life, the sexual organs are excited by temporary causes; hence we have the breeding season, and other objects of our particular observation. “The luminous secretion of the female glow-worm is a supplement to the defect of wings in its organization, to obviate the impossibility of its seeking the male in the regions of the air.”

But, in women, the peculiarity of the monthly uterine secretion is indeed an important subject. The most philosophical physiologist of his age* has justly

* The Great Surgeon, Abernethy, of London.

inferred, that while it relieves uterine irritation, it mitigates the extreme of sexual desire; thus enabling them to conform to the laws of morality, and the social compacts that are established between us."

In the sacred volume are strong admonitions on the immorality of sexual intercourse during this monthly sickness; the penalties by the Mosaic laws are awfully great—they will be found detailed in the book of *Leviticus*, ch. 20; and by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, ch. 18.

Repose is as necessary to the mind as to the body. The exhaustion of muscular power in effecting bodily fatigue will cause a debility of mental energies; and, by a parity of reasoning will the exhaustion of nervous power, by debilitating the mind, weary and fatigue the body. Alternate motion and rest, as well as sleep and watching, are necessary conditions to health and longevity, and should be adapted to age, sex, and temperament, &c., the source of disease being the excess on either hand. Thus we observe many persons bloated and relaxed with slothful indolence, and others emaciated by watching, fatigue, hard labour, and exposure to atmospheric transitions.

Born into a world—exposed to sorrows—our bodies liable to various sufferings—of what importance it is to possess a spirit, firm, vigorous, and manly, and which tends to produce self-possession and inward strength? Yet stoicism, by enjoining resolute self-denial, establishes the dominion of the mind over sense, and thus often fails in elevating the passions to their noblest objects.

To account for the union of the soul and body would agitate innumerable chimeral questions; we know, however, that the mind is a powerful agent in bodily impulse. In early life this union is not so intimate. It gradually ripens itself, but has interruptions; to which may probably be referred numerous contrarieties, the positive source of which is hitherto concealed from human explanation. The affections of the mind must therefore be accounted as most essential to life—the due regulation of the passions contributing greatly to health and longevity. The enlivening emotions, such as joy, hope, love, &c., when restrained within due bounds, gently excite the nervous influence, promote an equal circulation, and, by preserving the essential spirits, conduce to strength; while the depressing passions, such as anger, rage, jealousy, fear, grief, and despair, produce a contrary effect, and lay the foundation of violent diseases.

A morbid state of the mind will readily engender a corresponding effect in the body, yet self-examination may easily correct the evil. In the stories of American life, by Miss Mitford, there is one applicable to our views:—it is called, "The sick man cured," from which we make the following extract:—"I used to feel very faint on drawing a cork out of a bottle; my new monitor, experience, whispered that this was nothing but apprehension, which, when it becomes a habit, and gains a certain mastery over the mind, produces a sensation allied to fainting. It embarrasses the pulsation, and that occasions a feeling of swooning; the *mental* causes the *physical* sensation. I was never so happy in my whole life, as when I received this lesson of experience. I was no longer afraid of dying off-hand of the exertion of drawing a cork."

This quotation is a happy commentary upon the experience derived from exertion; perhaps, however, the talented authoress is hardly aware that many a person has *severely* suffered by the extreme force that is sometimes required in drawing a cork.

So powerful an instance of the sympathy of the body and mind cannot be

adduced as in the generative economy; for, as the animal spirits and the secretive powers of the testes may be considerably identified, there is a union of energy necessary for due effect. The mind is often childishly capricious, and the action of the body, though naturally vigorous, will become literally subservient to the impulse of fear. The very idea of not being able to perform sexual duties will render a man incompetent to the attempt. In the same reasoning, a man's perfect confidence, under the proud impression of his ability, will so redouble his power, as to give an increased gratification, to the object of his enjoyment. We here witness the consequences of allowing the mind to invade the powers of instinct for a state of nature. The amative passion would probably in man, as in other animals, require to be excited by the presence of the female.

It will be necessary to distinguish between cases of impotency which depend on the mind, and those resulting from the want of correspondence in the actions of different organs. The parts of generation in man are either essential or accessory; the *Testes* are the acting,—the *Membrum Virile* the accessory. If these correspond, health is denoted. The want of correspondence is two-fold; where the accessory acts without the essential,—as erection of the penis, in which, neither the mind nor the testes coincide—and where the testes perform the act of secretion without the erection of the penis. *Hunter* says, “Copulation is an act of the body, the spring of which is in the mind, but it is not volition; and according to the state of the mind, so is the act performed.” How necessary then it is to investigate the feelings of this powerful auxiliary, for many cases may be charged wrongfully to a want of bodily power; nay, so contradictory are, frequently, the circumstances of failure in coition, that the very wish to please, especially a selected object, operates in the reverse; yet the same man may leave a woman, so selected, for a stranger whom he can powerfully enjoy.

It has been strongly recommended, by former writers, to employ the perspiration of young girls, in case of sexual debility occurring in advanced years. King *David* is said to have received his health by sleeping with a young female.* *Mr. Philip Thicknesse* particularly recommends, that old men should sleep with young and healthy women, for the purpose of renovating their vigour. For this assertion he was much ridiculed by the ingenious authority of “*The pursuits of Literature.*” But, it may be asked, if the perspiration of young women is able to effect this great change in the constitution of aged persons, on the other hand, does not the unwholesome perspiration received by the female from her bed-fellow prove to her an injury more than adequate to the benefit she imparts?

This, however, is taking up the subject in a controversial point of view, and must be left to those who wish to enter into those topics; the remedy, as a restorative, has abundantly succeeded in some instances, whilst, in others, it has produced no visible change. But it must be remarked, that whenever this restorative has been employed, it was in cases where the extreme debility of the man completely removed all apprehension, and indeed, possibility, of an abuse of the restorative by coition. An act of coition, under such circum-

* But the King knew her not. 1 Kings ii. It has been secretly recorded, that a young virgin so taken can recall heat and life into an old man; but if he should use this artificial vigour as though it were a natural one, he may possibly give life to another, but it will be at the expense of his own. (Vide page 1—7.) Nature here warns us that there is a time to abstain, on the same indulgent purity of feeling that she has previously stimulated man to the procreation of his species.

stances, would not merely counteract the object for which the trial was suggested, but might probably prove immediately fatal to him who had the temerity to attempt it. If, in a case of health, an effort of this kind has been mortal, how much more likely is it to prove so under an emaciated state of debility? (vide page 17.) In another work we have noticed the causes and effects of sexual debility in women; and as many cases admit of a mixed opinion, a perusal of that work will be useful in removing doubtful inferences.

ON all her animal and vegetable subjects, the bounty of nature has bestowed the power of reproducing its own species. In the minor classes, the application of this power is operated on by mere instinct. In man, the monarch of the whole, the propagative effort is an act resulting from intellectual and corporeal combination, an effect as much spiritual as sensual, a full and complete reciprocation of mental as well as bodily energy, for the perfection of that superior order of beings, to which Heaven has delegated the visible government of the whole.

By this economical arrangement, the All-Wise has provided for the continual maintenance of the universe, without the necessity to a perpetual recurrence to that immediate interference of his own power, which first erected inert and unconscious atoms into the noble edifice of man. With this active faculty he has united, in the human frame, a controlling judgment to direct its operation, and to detect all those abuses of its energy which would degrade and destroy it.

The preceding pages sufficiently develop the punishments attending the prostitution of virility—punishments awful enough to deter those in whom virtue is not an inanimate principle; so wisely, indeed, are the generative organs constructed, so intimate in their union, so sympathetic in their action, so responsive in their susceptibilities, so connected, so complicated, so co-operative, and withal so sensitive, as to be simultaneously affected by every error and excess.

The matters advanced in the the preceding "Commentary" and which may be considered as copious explanations of the truths now laid down, are by no means to be received as the wild hypothesis of a speculative mind; they are the results of long and laborious experience. We profess not to have discovered any new modes of venereal infection; we have added none to the catalogue of symptoms generated by it. If we may be allowed to arrogate any superiority of medical attainment, it is in the more intimate acquaintance with the causes, progress, and effects, of that *constitutional debility*, which results from either local causes or habitual imprudences, and to which is attributable that distressing inanity which too frequently mildews the happiness of the matrimonial state.

In this department of disease, our efforts have gradually restored the exhausted fluids, regenerated the depressed functions, reinvigorated the impotent organs, and reproduced that healthful vigour which is essential to the fulfilment of the great purpose of existence. A more perfect knowledge of this subject has been, and continues to be, a *desideratum*, but in seeking that knowledge, (as we have before hinted) the student in medicine will receive but little help from those professional tutors, whose pride and apathy prevent them from exploring this almost untrodden field. His researches, like ours, will derive

no light from the reflecting lustre of the talents which surround him; his path lies in darkness and difficulty.

In confirmation of our position, even Professor Gregory, in his observations on the duties and offices of a physician, pp. 16, 17, observes, "It unfortunately happens, that the only judges of his merit are those who have an *interest in concealing or depreciating it.*" And the well-known remark of another celebrated ancient author still applies in the present day, that "a physician, in a great city, seems to be a mere play-thing of fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the most part, totally casual; they that employ him know not his excellence—they that reject him know not his deficiency."^{*} In cases of this description, the cure must always be attempted with a reference to the cause of the disorder; not that the symptoms and effects may essentially differ, but that relief may be greatly facilitated, by operating on the mind may be made the chief agent in the expulsion of the corporeal disease altogether, and in the complete resuscitation of the virile faculty.

In a former part of the work we took occasion to express our hostility to the system of *stimuli*. Violent impulses for the moment, produce violent effects; they coerce nature beyond the limit of her legitimate nobility, and the inevitable consequence of this unaccustomed impetuosity is a subsequent depression in the exact rate of the elevation which preceded it; it is in fact, to use a commercial figure, an anticipation of the resources of the system to meet an immediate exigency, leaving a perpetual deficiency in those means which nature had provided for the future support of the animal economy. This mode of treatment is very properly reprobated by all men of talent and respectability, although it may be the subterfuge of quackery and empiricism. There are, however, situations where it is necessary to adopt the judicious and careful use of stimulants; but a very little experience in medicine will qualify an individual to discriminate; in fine, as a system, the application of *stimuli* is to be deprecated, but as an occasional resource, where gentle impulses alone can force their natural functions in their legitimate courses, it is frequently advisable, and indeed indispensable.

The preceding pages of this work are generally devoted to the *description* of the various diseases which originate in the imprudence of youth; without entering into minute details of the various modes of relief, we have abstained from the recommendation of remedies, because we consider medicine in the hands of the timid, the irresolute, or the ignorant, as more likely to produce evil than advantage. The salutary properties of medicine are only elicited by the most judicious proportions, and skilful preparation. Medical men are sceptical in regard to the efficacy of remedies, in the correction of morbid affections, for they are often disappointed, and their prognostics are foiled by

* It is lamentable to see the extent to which imposition is carried on in this city, and how much public credulity facilitates, nay, encourages such glaring and barefaced proceedings.

It is enough, it would seem, for the Mock Doctor to pass a long eulogy on himself in the public prints, and to offer to the unfortunate hopes of a speedy cure, whereas in nineteen cases out of twenty those wretches yelected Drs. par excellence, have been brought up to mechanical pursuits, but from a want of innate honour which would induce them to continue at an honest calling, together with a loafing, lazy disposition—they play on the weak side of human nature and commit their daily homicides without reserve. We propose to give a full detail of all the quacks in this city in an appendix to our treatise on Venereal, just now going to press; we shall point out their previous occupations, whether mechanical or loafing, each under its distinct head.

so many opposing circumstances, that some even consider a salutary change more as a fortunate accident, than as a result of the substances employed; yet surely such result need no more be doubted, as an *expected* favourable event, than the proof of a chemical *test* shall be questioned in producing any particular combination. By adopting our treatment to each series of disease, the science of medicine may be effectually rescued from the degrading reproach of *vulgar, uneducated, quackery* or the equally dangerous and unfeeling sophistry of regular empiricism.*

We wish to point out, that independent of the arrangements we have made for the convenience of personal consultations, our peculiar attention to these diseases will allow us to cure patients at a distance from the city, on a proper explanation of their symptoms; and this is a highly important feature in our arrangements, for when it is considered that the multifarious engagements of a country practitioner naturally preclude that minute attention to so important a subject, which can alone secure to the patient a certainty of health, it is of double utility by the secrecy which it offers and the relief it ensures. Our modes of treatment are by no means speculative, but grounded on a professional education, a close attention to experiment, an elaborate study of the theory of the human constitution, and to crown all, by an extensive and successful practice. We have no pretensions but such as are borne out by extensive testimonies, and we have no testimonies which we desire to withhold, or into the authenticity of which inquiry will be shunned; but we have verified in our experience the sincere pleasure which results to the philanthropic practitioner, from the conscious feeling that disease has been removed, the pangs of the suffering relieved, and the withering child of affliction snatched from the bed of torment and decay, to be restored to health, to comfort, and to society.

* The too frequent occurrence of mistakes similar to the following, is one great cause of our preferring to supply our patients with medicine, instead of prescribing for them.

The late Dr. Good, in his history of Medicine, published in the year 1795, relates the following story.

A physician prescribed for the son of a poor woman, labouring under a dyspnoea, the following draught to be taken at bed-time—R. Syr. Papav. Alb. drachmam, Tr. Opii. C. drachmas duas Aq. distillat drachmas quinque M. Unfortunately the person to whom the prescription was brought, not being acquainted with the new name for the paregoric elixir, and not attending to the C., (for camphorat,) made it with drachmas duas Tincturæ. Opii; and, though he advised the woman to give the patient only half the draught, it proved sufficiently strong to deprive him of life before the evening of the following day.

The same author relates a story of a prescription being sent to a drug-store to be made up, wherein the ignorance of the compounder was the occasion of some trouble, but not such fatal consequences as in the former instance. A gentleman of Worcester, who does not practice pharmacy, prescribed for his patient as follows: R. Decoct. Cascariillæ uncias sex, Tincturæ ejusdem unciam Misce. The shopman who had the principal care of the business, having sought for a bottle labelled Tinctura ejusdem (Tincture of the same,) in vain, not being able to consult his employer, who was gone to attend a labour some miles off, he sent to some neighbouring shops to inquire for it, and not succeeding, he at last took the prescription to the gentleman who had written it, to know what he should substitute in its stead, as he could not procure any Tincture of Ejusdem in any of the shops in the whole city.—[*Good's History of Medicine, Appendix, page 14.*]

Consider for a moment the feelings of a patient (for whom a prescription may be written,) labouring under a most delicate, though severe indisposition, how must his feelings be by this unwarrantable exposure of the nature of his complaint.—[*Chamberlaine's Tyrocinium Medicum.*]

The undue loss of seminal secretion in a natural way, that is, from too frequent intercourse with the other sex, is productive of dire evils, but where resulting from self-pollution, no language can describe the nature of those sufferings which violated nature is compelled to endure. All the intellectual faculties are weakened. The man becomes a coward; sighs and weeps like a hysterical woman. He loses all decision and dignity of character; is unfitted for any mental or bodily occupation; and becomes a disgusting burthen to himself and others. An incessant irksome uneasiness, continual anguish, or alternating with fits of unreasonable and childish merriment, depressed or excited without adequate cause,—these form some of the consequences resulting from the pernicious practice.

Loss of sleep, or inability to repose calmly until fairly wearied out, midnight watchfulness, and dull sluggish unrest upon waking, with troubled, frightful, or lascivious dreams; such is the history of the hours of darkness. Mid-day passes gloomily away; the lazy victim of solitary vice requires much sleep, in some measure to atone for the loss of power and to recruit exhausted sensorial energy. Left to himself, he is often found at this hour still breathing the impure, stifling atmosphere of his own chamber, on that bed from which he feels no cheerful alacrity to rise. An indefinable muddily dizzy oppression of the brain haunts his waking hours, his brow is often contracted, and his look betrays either the vacancy of his soul, or that his polluted mind is wandering after some indulgence that imagination has conjured up to his disordered fancy. He eats with avidity, sometimes ravenously, for in this way only can the enormous drain upon the seminal fluid be partially supplied; at length the nervous power essential to the digestive process begins to fail; then SLOW FEVER rapidly emaciates his wasting frame. Previously, even, to this, we may note that the skin assumes that pale or violet hue, easily cognizable by the practiced observer, especially around the eyes; pimples appear on the face, of course defying for their removal the ordinary remedies; the powers of the body decay; the shortest effort at a sudden race, which once formed the exulting display of youthful agility, is now followed by breathlessness and fainting, the muscular system becoming strangely enfeebled and wasting away.

All his fire and spirit are deadened by this detestable vice; he is like a faded rose, a tree blasted in its bloom, a wandering skeleton; nothing remains but debility, languor, livid paleness, a withered body and a degraded soul. A youth endowed by nature with talent and genius, becomes dull or totally stupid; the mind loses all relish for virtuous or exalted ideas; the consciousness of the purity and essential holiness of the Creator, operates as a bar against any approach to Him, or the appropriation of any of those consolations under suffering, which Religion is destined to afford.

The whole life of such a man is a continued succession of secret reproach, painful sensations arising from the consciousness of having been the fabricator of his own distress, irresolution, disgust of life, and not unfrequently self-murder. Nay, what in effect is this but the consummation of slow self-destruction? Could we but lift the veil of the grave, how should we startle at the long train of the victims of Sensualism!

A gentleman of high connections, and apparently possessed of every requisite to make life happy, was found unexpectedly dead in his bed: a pistol, the instrument of his death, was clenched in his hand; none could account for the rash act; and doubtless, but for his own revelation, it would have passed away as unaccountable as the "*temporary insanity*" of the newspa-

pers. Upon a piece of paper, in his own handwriting, were discovered the words, "*I am impotent and unfit to live.*"

Scarcely a day passes that deaths by suicide are not recorded, where no cause is assigned for the deed, but which, from the result of experience, I am strongly inclined to believe, could we explore the secrets of the gloomy prison-house, would be easily explained by masturbation.

There is in this class of patients an exquisite sensitiveness to external impressions: the slightest change of weather affects the sensualist most severely; he cannot perceive the correctness of the remark that ours is a temperate climate, for with him the seasons are always in extremes; the summer scorches him into lassitude, or he becomes peevish at the continuance of the cold.

Such individuals are excessively prone to catarrhal affections, they take cold from trifling causes, their bodies becoming as keenly delicate to external and atmospheric agencies, as the most perfect barometer. We find, that in them, the lining mucous membrane of the nostrils and eyes is peculiarly irritable, fits of long continued sneezing annoy them on getting into a cold bed, or on the sudden approach of a strong light. The eyelids become strangely hot and irritable at night, the handkerchief is in frequent requisition, and a continual winking and pressure together of the lids is then observable. The most acute pains form another feature of the aggregate malady. These are sometimes referable to the head, or limbs, but more commonly to the stomach, forming the index to that form of Indigestion, resulting from the drain upon sensorial energy.

Many miscalled Rheumatic diseases are solely dependent upon this practice. The organs of generation participate also in the misery of local deprivation. *It is a singular fact, that the habit of self-pollution is connected with an inevitable diminution of the size of the penis.* The author has had frequent occasions to verify this statement. Of nocturnal emissions, seminal weakness, diseased testicle, and gleet, as the consequences of masturbation, I shall speak separately. *The diminution of the size of the penis, is one of the first and most obvious effects of this bad habit.* The virile organ becomes shrunk into less than half its former outline, and what is worse, the power of perfect erection is altogether destroyed. This is not wonderful, if we reflect upon the diversity of operation between the natural and sexual act and the vile friction of the masturbator. With him, even if the seminal vesicles be not sufficiently distended with that natural stimulus which provokes erection, he can produce by friction a higher degree of irritation than is natural, and he can command the sensation, when it would be impossible to maintain the requisite firmness of the organ for coition. Thus then a variety of evils are engendered. The testicles are called upon suddenly and violently to secrete, and the excretory canals to discharge, a thin, effete, unprolific semen, and the nerves of the penis are rendered susceptible of an agreeable titillation without the naturally inseparable adjunct—firm erection of that organ; hence when the masturbator tries to indulge in coition, he cannot assume the requisite solidity to effect penetration; or if he partially effect an entrance into the *vagina, it is followed by a premature emission.* The organs have been accustomed by a vicious perversion, to excrete without erection; or if the penis swell for a moment, the genitals of the female do not grasp the whole length of that organ *with the rude and forcible friction it has suffered from the human hand.*

I enter into these details for the purpose of proving, if indeed it were neces-

sary, that my statements of the consequences arising from self-pollution form no imaginary, or overcharged picture, and that these results are susceptible of rational explanation. The reason why masturbators are debilitated more than those who indulge in natural sexual intercourse, is, that independently of the emission of the seed, the frequency of the erection (though imperfect) with which they are afflicted, greatly weakens them. Every part that is in a state of tension exhausts the power, and they have none to lose; the spirits are conveyed thither in greater quantities; they are dissipated, and this occasions weakness; they are wanting in the performance of other functions, which is thereby only imperfectly done. The concurrence of these two causes is attended by the most dangerous consequences.

Another reason why this habit is more certainly destructive, is the unrestricted and indiscriminate ruin it inflicts upon the whole moral and mental constitution of man. No sooner has this uncleanness got the ascendancy over our passions, but forthwith it pursues its slave every where, and retains possession of him at all times and places, and upon the most serious occasions; and in the very acts of outward devotion, he ever and anon finds himself transported with lustful conceptions and desires, which incessantly follow him and take up his thoughts.

I remember one, who confessed to me that he could not converse with a female for a few moments, without rushing to some place of secrecy, *and there giving way to his vile propensity*. His gratification arose from fancying that he was enjoying sexual intercourse with her. Can any state be more disgustingly degrading? The masturbator is subject to all those disorders *which arise from application of the mind to one single thought, upon which all its energies are concentrated*. In this way, though exhausted by perpetual excitement, such persons are liable to all the disorders incidental to primary affections of the brain, a state which places man beneath the brute creation.

Still another reason why masturbation is more pernicious than coition, arises from the state of mind during the two acts. The onanist, and here we allude only to those who have some ideas of sexual intercourse and love, having no material object which is the beginning and the end of his pleasures, the imagination must supply and invent it. This mental labor renders the sensations stronger and the body more disposed to feel them. Added to these, the onanist is desirous of prolonging his feeling, and having under his control certain circumstances which in sexual intercourse hasten the denouement, he retards it. Thus with fatal skill he gives to this destructive vice all the power it can possess, and experiences all the evil which this vice can cause.

Tissot, one of the most intelligent and scientific of the physicians of France, has arranged under six distinct heads, the evils which arise from self-pollution; and his description accords precisely with my experience, during a long practice. He observes,—

First—"All the intellectual faculties are weakened, loss of memory ensues, the ideas are clouded, the patients sometimes fall into a slight madness; they have an incessant irksome uneasiness, continual anguish, and so keen a remorse of conscience that they frequently shed tears. They are subject to vertigos; all their senses, but particularly their sight and hearing, are weakened; their sleep, if they can obtain any, is disturbed with frightful dreams."

Secondly—"The powers of their bodies decay; the growth of such as

abandon themselves to these abominable practices, before it is accomplished, is greatly prevented. Some cannot sleep at all, others are in a perpetual state of drowsiness. They are affected with hypochondriac, or hysterical complaints, and are overcome with the accidents that accompany those grievous disorders,—melancholy, sighing, tears palpitations, suffocations, and faintings. Some emit a calcareous saliva; coughs, slow fevers and consumptions, are chastisements which others meet with in their own crimes.”

Thirdly—“The most acute pains form another object of patients’ complaints; some are thus affected in their heads, others in their breasts, stomach, and intestines; others have external rheumatic pains; aching numbness in all parts of their body when they are slightly pressed.”

Fourthly—“Pimples do not only appear in the face, (this is one of the most common symptoms) but even suppurating blisters upon the nose, the breast, and the thighs; and painful itchings in the same parts. One patient complained even of fleshy excrescences upon his forehead.”

Fifthly—“The organs of generation also participate of that misery, whereof they are the primary causes. Many patients are incapable of erection; others discharge their seminal liquor upon the slightest titillation, and the most feeble erection, or the efforts they make when at stool. Many are affected with a constant gonorrhœa, which entirely destroys their powers, and the discharge resembles fœtid matter or mucus. Others are tormented with painful priapisms, dysuria, stranguaries, heat of the urine, and a difficulty in rendering it, which greatly torments many patients. Some have painful tumours upon their testicles, penis, bladder, and spermatic cord. In a word, either the impracticability of coition, or any deprivation of the genital liquor, renders every one imbecile, who has for any length of time given way to this crime.”

Sixthly—“The functions of the intestines are sometimes quite disordered; and some patients complain of stubborn constipations; others of hæmorrhoids, or piles, and of a running of fœtid matter from the fundament.”

Such are some of the sufferings closely connected with these libidinous excesses and perversions of nature.

This vice then of self-pollution, 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 man escapes with life, he is as it were loaded with a tribute of ills which he must pay before long, and perhaps always. Thus the indirect influence of onanism in producing human suffering is enormous. I consider it even as greater in proportion than that of the most immediate consequences of this fatal habit. This is confirmed not only by daily observation, but it cannot be otherwise. How much then do those deceive themselves, who seek for the diseases of masturbation without believing in their existence, and who continue to indulge because they do not see its abuses!

If premature indulgence causes so much injury, it should be one of the most interesting duties of humanity to prevent children and young persons from abusing themselves.

The age at which the venerl power enters into full action, and when its natural exercise is attended with the least detriment, has been generally determined on two distinct grounds. second, the general state of the organization. The marriageable age has been fixed at an earlier period, according as legislators have assumed one or the other of these bases. The first served as foundations for the matrimonial laws of the Romans: and probably the

second served as a guide to Lycurgus, who prohibited men from marrying before the age of thirty-seven, and to Plato, who recommended that every child born of a female younger than twenty years old, or begotten by a man less than thirty years, should be branded with infamy. J. J. Rousseau, too, reasons in the same manner: "until the age of twenty," he says, "the body grows and has need of all its substance; continence is natural, and if not observed it is at the expense of the constitution."

It may be deemed an exaggeration, when it is stated that full *three-fourths* of the insane owe their malady to the effects of masturbation: but the assertion is corroborated by one of the first writers on medical jurisprudence, and is fully borne out by the daily experience of proprietors of lunatic asylums. The practice of self-abuse usually has its origin in boarding schools, and other places where young people congregate in numbers; and there are few persons who may have observed the vice practised, (although it may be unpleasant to avow as much,) that could resist the contamination.

"One sickly sheep infects the flock,
And poisons all the rest."

It is not only in private schools that this sin rages: our public seminaries and colleges are not exempt from it. The heads of our universities are particularly scrupulous in driving from their neighborhood the frail fair, lest they should contaminate the votaries of learning: whilst a vice far more degrading in its practice, and infinitely more baneful in its effects, rages within the very sanctuaries of classic lore. Many a brilliant genius has sunk into fatuity beneath its degrading influence. Loss of memory, idiocy, blindness, total impotence, nervous debility, paralysis, strangury, &c. are among the unerring consequences of an indulgence in this criminal passion.

An American writer says: Called at one of the New-England Insane Hospitals, and by the kindness of the gentlemanly superintendent, I was taken over the establishment and shown some of its wretched inmates.—Among those were pointed out a number who had been brought there by the effects of Masturbation, of whom the Superintendent informed me, there were twenty or twenty-five in the institution at the time. He remarked also, that persons of all professions and classes of society were among the victims of this habit. Connected with the Hospital there is a spacious green enclosed by a high fence, where the insane are permitted to take exercise and the fresh air in pleasant weather. In this yard were ten or fifteen persons, most of whom had become insane by this indulgence. One of these, a man of bloodless countenance and vacant gaze, was promenading back and forth as fast as his feeble limbs could bear him. This man was educated at one of our first literary institutions, and was a member of the learned professions. Oh! how fallen from the talented and accomplished young man he once was! Another degraded and ghostly looking object had also been an active and intelligent professional gentleman. Others there were, companions in degradation—once promising young men, now like the unreasoning brute, except in form alone. Instead of the speaking eye and intellectual countenance, their sombre brows, their haggard and wo-begone faces, cast around them a gloom that might also be felt. It rendered the place truly horrible, and reminded us that we were among the living dead. I will now draw the veil to disclose the revolting scenes presented by those who are wholly

abandoned to their vicious habit, and who have neither shame nor reason left to restrain their disgusting indulgence. Would that every lad and young man might take one view, such as may be seen in this and every other hospital. It must surely leave an impression never to be effaced. When tempted to this fatal vice, he would read in characters horrid as if traced by the skeleton finger of death—**Beware.**

Numerous instances are mentioned by medical writers, where this horrid habit of masturbation has been implanted in the young, when infants, by nurses and servants, who to still their cries, or prevent fretfulness, would titillate the genital parts. What a responsibility rests upon parents, to see that no such vile and destructive outrage is perpetrated upon their children!

"The indications," says Dr. Woodward, "by which parents and friends may be led to suspect this vice, are ill health, especially debility, paleness, with a down cast look and a disposition to retirement and seclusion—a jealousy and suspicion of those in whom they used to place confidence, and who were former associates and friends. The individual becomes feeble, is unable to labor with accustomed vigor, or to apply his mind to study; his step is tardy and weak, he is dull, irresolute, and fails in his sports with less energy than usual, and avoids social intercourse. I never see a pale, sickly lad, from 15 to 20, especially if he be shy, shame-faced and retiring, but what I suspect him of this vice: and among a hundred that I have questioned, I have rarely been mistaken."

How intensely important that parents and guardians should reflect upon the source whence the vilest habits may be introduced, with secret impunity, among their infant charge, of either sex! If they may be deceived in the choice of those to whom they entrust the important task of forming the minds and dispositions of their pupils, what is there not to fear from their proximity to domestics, who are examined chiefly for the display of their corporeal talents, and are frequently hired without its being known whether their morals are irreproachable, or their minds not grossly polluted and vicious? In the majority of these deplorable cases, a servant maid, gross, luxurious, and previously unaccustomed to abundance of good food, has been the guilty instigator of a propensity which, however her coarse organization might bear with impunity, has produced effects of the most deplorable character on the sensitive frame of a girl, whose habits mode of thought, feeling, and powers of fancy, render her the easy prey of a fascinating and overwhelming delusion.

Let the community be enlightened on this subject, and let the young know that if they indulge in this odious vice, the secret *will out*; and that not only their physicians, but their friends, will know the shameful cause of their disease, and it will operate as a powerful restraint. It should be remarked, however, that these indications are not always infallible, and we should not form a hasty judgment.

On the other hand, disease may be preying upon the brain and nervous system, while the flesh, the countenance, and the appetite indicate good health. In the latter stage of the habit, its ravages are marked by more frightful symptoms—such as are enumerated in some of the cases before presented.

Predisposing causes should be removed. Let the diet and regimen be such as to prevent premature development of the passions and all physical precocity. If children are brought up in an idle, effeminate, and luxurious manner, their persons are, like tinder, ignited by the first spark that falls up-

on them. If the laws of physiology were obeyed, and external excitements removed, the sexual appetite would sleep on, as nature designed, till the transition from boyhood to manhood, instead of being forced into action at from five to ten years of age, as we have seen.

Dr. Rush says the exciting causes of the diseased appetite are, excessive eating, more especially of high-seasoned animal food, intemperance in drinking, and idleness. Hence, to allay the passion, he prescribes a simple diet, abstinence from all strong drinks, constant employment in bodily labor or exercise, the cold bath, and close application of the mind to business or study.

Milton, after speaking of the pure, ethereal flame of love, says, "As for that other burning, which is but as it were the venom of a lusty and overabounding concoction, strict life and labor, with the abatement of a full diet, may keep that low and obedient enough."

The remedies, therefore, proper in these cases, may be enumerated as follows: *Total abstinence* from the voluntary practice is insisted on as indispensable, and in most cases it will effect a recovery without the aid of special means. But it often happens that the evil is continued in the form of involuntary emissions, in sleep. These are often dangerous and difficult to check; they arise from two causes—a polluted imagination, and a relaxed, debilitated, and irritable state of the body, especially the parts most abused. A Roman physician observes, "*If nocturnal emissions continue any time, the necessary consequences are consumption and death*—for the most balsamic part of the humor and animal spirits is dissipated; the whole body falls away, and particularly the back; the patients become feeble, dry, and pale; they languish in slow, melancholy agony."

The mind is probably the exciting cause. In unsound sleep, the thoughts busy themselves with the libidinous images of the waking hours. Hence, *the mind must be purified*; by watchfulness and perseverance, the thoughts may be restrained and turned from their wonted channel. To aid in this, check the first risings of impure ideas, and avoid everything that may excite them; closely apply the mind to business or study and useful reading; or engage in some absorbing subject, or enterprise, in which self will be forgotten. Shun solitude, seek the restraints of company; lust evaporates in the presence of chaste and virtuous society. Avoid idleness, especially all vacuity of mind—"The idle man's brain is the Devil's work-shop."

If other motives fail to cure the voluntary practice, consider the dreadful consequences of continuing in it.

Last, and most important, cultivate abiding religious impressions, and a sense of the presence of God, and consider his threatenings against all impurity.

To restore the health and vigor of the body, "the regimen," says Dr. Woodward, "must be strict, the diet should be simple and nutritious, and sufficient in quantity; it should be rather plain than light and abstemious; no stimulating condiments should be used, the suppers should be particularly light, and late suppers should be wholly avoided. All stimulating drinks even strong tea and coffee, should be discarded; cider and wine are very pernicious; tobacco, in all its forms, not less so."

Cold bathing is an important auxiliary—friction of the skin with a coarse towel or brush; labor or other exercise in the open air is absolutely necessary to increase the strength, and cause an equal circulation of blood; the amount must not be too great, but sufficient to produce such a degree of fa-

rigue as will favor quiet rest. Let the bed be hard—the covering not too warm. Avoid all mental and nervous excitement in the evening, and everything that might prevent undisturbed repose. Retire to rest, not till inclined to fall asleep, and arise as soon as awake.

This course must be persevered in, and health will gradually return. If the exigency of the case demands active medicines, they should be prescribed by an experienced physician; but these are to be considered only temporary auxiliaries. The only ground of hope is the strength of will and lingering power of goodness in the individual.

Mr. Combe, in his work on "The Constitution of man," remarks as follows: "The organ of Amativeness is the largest of the whole mental organs; and being endowed with natural activity, it fills the mind spontaneously with emotious and suggestions, the outward manifestations of which may be directed, controlled, and resisted, by intellect and moral sentiment, but which cannot be prevented from arising, or eradicated after they exist. The whole question, therefore, resolves itself into this, whether it is more beneficial to enlighten the understanding, so as to dispose and enable it to control and direct that feeling; or (under the influence of an error in philosophy, and false delicacy founded on it,) to permit it to riot in all the fierceness of a blind animal instinct, withdrawn from the eye of reason, but not thereby deprived of its vehemence and importunity; The former course appears to me to be the only one consistent with reason and morality; and I shall adopt it in reliance on the good sense of my readers, that they will at once discriminate between practical instruction concerning this feeling addressed to the intellect, and lascivious representations addressed to the propensity itself; with the latter of which the enemies of all improvement may attempt to confound my observations. Every function of the mind and body is instituted by the Creator; each has a legitimate sphere of activity; but all may be abused; and it is impossible regularly to avoid the abuse of them, except by being instructed in their nature, objects and relations. This instruction ought to be addressed exclusively to the intellect; and, when it is so, it is science of the most beneficial description."

These remarks abundantly explain the motives, which have led to the publication of the present work. Surely no rational person can read them, and doubt the importance of making these facts familiar to the young. We really believe there would not be half so much lewdness in the world, but for the attempt to throw a mystery over these subjects, purely physiological as they are, and vitally affecting the moral and physical welfare of man.

The secretory glands of the human body form an apparatus, the action of which is unvarying and constant. The liver is perpetually employed in the formation of bile, the kidneys in the separation of urine from the blood. In fact, all the secretions are derivable from that living and vitalising fluid.—The gall bladder is provided, as the temporary receptacle for the bilious soapy fluid secreted by the liver, and as the wants of the system require, it is poured into the first intestine to assist in the separation of the nutritive portion of the partially digested aliment.

Precisely analogous is the action of the testicles, pouring their appropriate secretion into the receptacles denominated the "*vesiculæ seminales*, or *seed bladders*," not to be absorbed again into the system, but rather to be excreted as indispensable to the reproductive act. Hence the *stimulus* arising from the *distention* of these vessels, become a pleasurable impulse to the necessary multiplication of the species, *as if sexual desire were susceptible of grati-*

fecation only as the result of instinct; if depraved man instead of lashing his genital organs to exertion by filthy conversation, lewd and impure imaginations, and the various causes which are entirely absent among the brute creation; if like them he were content to FOLLOW THE DICTATES OF HIS UNERRING ORGANIZATION, diseases arising from excess would be unknown, equally among us as with them; and their proverbial and almost certain fecundity be but the type of our own.

As the seminal vessels (like the gall bladder) will not allow of extraordinary distention, the *thinner* portions of the semen become *partially* absorbed, and though thereby the bulk of that secretion be lessened, yet the residuum becoming more acrid and stimulating, the impulse to excretion is thus rendered unconquerable; and so nature, (in the absence of the act to which the stimulating impulse tends) occasionally relieves herself of the superabundant secretion. Of this act men are mostly unconscious; if, however, it arrest attention, its *frequency* and its *consequences*, are the circumstances that rouse the proper and natural fears of the sufferer.

Nocturnal emissions occurring more frequently than at intervals of twenty-one days, are a decided proof of debility, and the certain harbingers of approaching impotence. In many instances the sleep is not broken, and it is comparatively difficult to ascertain how often the evacuation occurs; the consequences of the loss of the seminal fluid are, however, sufficiently evident. Occurring more frequently than can be fairly ascribable to the distention of *healthy* vessels, the most energetic measures are instantly requisite to avert the identical mischief, which would arise if the loss of the seminal secretion were solicited and voluntary.

A popular author on this subject observes,—“*The causes of these nightly or ‘wet dreams,’ as they are called, are numerous. In the first place, the testicles must have acquired, through the practice of Onanism, (for involuntary emissions rarely assume the formidable character here depicted, except induced by masturbation,) a morbid sensitiveness, that, on the slightest local or neighboring irritation, they put in action their secretive powers. In fact, the infirmity might not inaptly be termed a consumption of those glands.—Consequently, the causes may be at this period, piles or hæmorrhoids, constipation, indigestion, irritability of the bladder or kidneys, &c. &c.; for they all more or less, are present, and, perhaps, severally aggravated by stimuli of one kind or other, taken during day or previously to rest.*”

The semen of a person tormented with this infirmity, is thin, watery, sickly odored, and rarely prolific. Although I have already depicted the consequences of unnatural indulgences in the previous pages, the following passage, from a more able pen, exhibits so well the desolating effects alluded to, that it is too useful to my purpose to neglect:—“*The muscles of the youth become soft; he is idle; his body becomes bent; his gait is sluggish, and he is scarcely able to support himself. The digestion becomes enfeebled, the breath fetid; the intestines inactive; the excrements hardened in the rectum, and producing additional irritation of the seminal conduits in its vicinity. The circulation being no longer free, the youth sighs often; the complexion is livid, and the skin, on the forehead especially, is studded with pimples. The corners of the mouth are lengthened, the nose becomes sharp; the sunken eyes, deprived of brilliance, and enclosed in blue circles, are cast down; no look of gaiety remains—the very aspect is criminal. General sensibility becomes excessive, producing tears without a cause; perception is weakened, and memory almost destroyed. Distraction, or absence of mind,*

renders the judgment unfit for any operation. The imagination gives birth only to phantasies and fears without grounds; the slightest allusion to the dominating passion produces motion of the muscles of the face, the flush of shame, or a state of despair. The wretched being finishes, by shunning the face of men, and dreading the observation of women. His character is entirely corrupted, or his mind is totally stupified. Involuntary loss of the reproductive liquid takes place during the night, and also during the daily motions; and there ensues a total exhaustion, bringing on heaviness of the head, singing in the ears, and frequent faintings, together with pains, convulsive tremblings, and partial paralysis."

In reference to the physiology of the seminal receptacles, it is carefully to be borne in mind that the stimulus of the sexual orgasm is the only irritant which *naturally* they are destined to obey; hence, whatever foreign to this is sufficient to rouse the chain of action producing emission, must undoubtedly operate most detrimentally to the whole animal economy; in reference to the generative organs themselves, imposing upon them tendencies repugnant to their natural agency, which at no distant period inevitably and completely abolish their living power.

The reproductive power may not be entirely destroyed by that state of generative debility which is engendered by nocturnal emissions, and yet very painful consequences of another character may unquestionably arise. A healthy female may become pregnant from the feeble, yet exhausting effort, of a man whose constitutional power is seriously broken; yet it would be unfair, unphilosophical—unsupported by any analogy drawn from the history of the lower animals—to expect that this circumstance would not tell most powerfully and detrimentally upon the offspring. The opinions of the learned, in all ages, have not varied widely on this subject.

Sexual ability in man is a mysterious compound power, requiring a perfect association in the action of the secretory organ of the seminal secretion, and the instrument of its ejaculation and discharge. Any functional irregularity, or want of correspondency between the action of the testicles and penis, is therefore an unquestionable state of disease; for since both are so closely and intimately dependent on each other, the least want of exactness in their adaptation might be the cause of *impotence*.

Whatever be the mode in which this deviation from the healthy and natural action of the parts is first induced, it is not difficult to trace its inevitable effect in the production of *seminal debility*, and the ultimate destruction of sexual power. Irritation, however engendered, rapidly propagates itself along the urethra, and chronic inflammation of the prostatic and most sensitive portion of that canal is rapidly established, and the muscles surrounding the membranous division of the urinary passage are sympathetically affected with irregular spasm. The irritation extends itself by continuity of surface to the seminal vesicles, and even to the testicles, producing in the former unnatural evacuations, and in the latter an exaggerated thin secretion, too rapidly elaborated, and therefore, for all the purposes of generation, worthless.

Among individuals so affected, (on attempting intercourse with the sex,) *the emission is too quickly discharged*, nocturnal pollutions are frequent, (indeed these are often the immediate precursors of seminal weakness,) *or the semen is expelled during the evacuation of the bladder and bowels*. With some there is more or less complete extinction of venereal desire, the erections become few and feeble, incomplete, or absolutely impossible. The

seminal fluid may dribble away without pleasure, without erections, without the natural ejaculation, and its loss, when occurring in this manner, gives rise to the same or infinitely greater evils, than those which occur from mere sexual excess, or what is worse, from self pollution.

There have not been wanting some writers, who have contended that not the semen, but only the mucous of the canal or prostatic fluid, furnishes the discharge in these deplorable cases. But this is far from being a correct view of the pathology of the disease; mere chronic inflammation, arising from common causes, may be accompanied with simple mucal discharge; but seminal weakness is, in the majority of instances, the ultimate consequence of self-pollution, which, in the first instance, brings about that irritability which evinces itself in nocturnal discharges, and subsequently in complete debility of the whole generative system. The seminal fluid, such indeed as it is, weak, thin, effete, and devoid of all fructifying agency, is undoubtedly the fluid which the organs suffer to escape; and to prevent its further flow, as well as to give healthy tone to the secretory and retentive organs, ought to form our first care.

In the early stage of seminal weakness, different persons are variously affected: some are incapable of procuring a discharge of semen into the cavity of the female genitals in a natural way, though they may effect temporary erection, whilst others cannot perform the act of copulation, from emission taking place too quickly, and before the proper firmness of the male organ has enabled it to effect the requisite penetration.

In some instances the power of the male genitals is not altogether destroyed, nay, impregnation may occur, in a healthy female, from the laborious embraces of one whose constitutional vigor is almost entirely destroyed. But the offspring—can it be rationally expected that the child of such a father should be otherwise than puny, feeble, and predisposed to those diseases which, under the most favorable circumstances, destroy so large a proportion of children under five years of age? We know that there are diseases peculiar to childhood. The process of dentition is accompanied by much irritation, and sweeps annually its thousands into the grave. Measles, hooping-cough, and most especially inflammatory affections of the lungs and mucous membranes of the bronchial cavities, form the sad catalogue of evils through which, as through an armed troop, the poor little sufferers are doomed to run,—and only the minority pass the ordeal.

Is constitutional vigor of no importance, in enabling children to resist harmlessly the certain attacks of those diseases, to which they are undoubtedly obnoxious? The seminal secretion, which in a certain sense communicates life, or is at least the agent, without which the embryotic rudiments of a new being cannot assume active and progressive vitality, is itself alive; and if from excessive evacuation of this fluid, seminal weakness ensue, it is not unreasonable, but highly philosophical, to suppose that, in the event of procreation occurring from actual sexual congress, the offspring will bear enstamped upon it the physical characteristics derived from parental debility.

The term **IMPOTENCE** is applied as relative to that inability or incapacity to the performance of the sexual act, which may arise from a variety of causes, but from none so frequently as the excesses of sensualism, more especially the secret, vicious, and solitary indulgences of self-pollution. It is important in a practical point of view, that we do not confound this condition of the generative system with **STERILITY**, inasmuch as a male who is

sterile, or a barren female, may possess a perfect aptitude for coition, though for all the purposes of procreation absolutely incapable. In impotence, there is a temporary or permanent destruction of those powers which are absolutely essential for *generative* purposes. *Sterility* may, therefore, be defined as inability to propagate the species, though not to effect the sexual congress; while *impotency*, in either sex, whether natural or acquired, whether as the result of disease or malformation, entirely precludes its performance.

Some, from *constitutional frigidity*, are impotent; thus we read that Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, only admitted her husband's embraces once a month, and then solely in relation to posterity; it is doubted whether, under such circumstances, her sense of duty would atone for the absence of inclination. Excessive venery, and the profuse discharges of *fluor albus* or the whites, are susceptible of completely destroying all power of excitement in women; hence prostitutes, from over-stimulation of the generative organs, seldom conceive. Transient impotence is often the result of mere apprehension. Too eager desire, too ardent imagination, the ecstatic effect produced by the sight of a beloved object, extreme nervous susceptibility, are often sufficient to produce temporary impotence.

It is not unusual to meet with instances of married people becoming quite indifferent to each other's embraces: a patient of mine confessed to me his inability to complete the sexual act with his wife, unless by an effort of the fancy.

With regard to age, it has been seen that it is most natural to the young man to admire beauty of the locomotive system;—to the middle-aged man, to admire beauty of the vital system;—and to the older man, to admire beauty of the mental system; but that, as woman is more precocious than man, she becomes more advanced in reference to sex, than man at the same age; and consequently to be duly matched to her husband, the wife should be the younger.

As the average stature of woman is two or three inches less than that of man, and her whole figure is more slender, these proportions are naturally preferred. Women, indeed, who are too tall, are generally awkward; and a low stature is far less objectionable.

Man has the shoulders wider than those of woman; woman has the haunches more capacious than those of men. The upper part of the body also projects less anteriorly and the lower part projects more in woman than in man. The haunches of woman are more apart; and her thighs more voluminous.

And as, with these proportions and developments, all the functions most essentially feminine—impregnation, gestation, and parturition, are intimately connected, such proportions and developments are naturally preferred.

In woman, consequently, as an object of choice, the head, shoulders and chest, should be relatively small and compact; and the arms and limbs should be relatively short, and should taper as they recede from the trunk, while the hands and feet should be small. Thus her body should taper upwards, as her limbs taper downwards.

Owing, then, as we have seen, to smaller stature, and to greater size of the abdomen, the middle point of the figure, which is at the pubes in man, is higher in woman; and this also he prefers in her, as an object of choice;—as well as that her members be, as naturally they are, more rounded, less hard, her form less angular, and her traits finer.

Man naturally and necessarily seeks next, not for qualities which are his

own, but for those of which he is not in possession—something new, something capable of exciting him ; this conforms to the fundamental difference of the sexes ; and those marriages in which such qualities exist are always more prolific than others.

Mr. Knight says in corroboration of this, that the “most powerful human minds will be found in offspring of parents of different hereditary constitutions,” and that he has witnessed the bad effects of marriages between two individuals very similar to each other in character and color, and springing from ancestry of similar character.”

Amidst these differences, it is evident that we should profit by rendering them the means of correcting faulty organization, and of annulling in children the effects of hereditary predispositions.

Now, on this important point, the reader is aware that, according to the laws of resemblance, the qualities of the father and mother are communicated to their progeny, not in various and minute fractional parts, but in halves—in the anterior, or the posterior, series of organs, and in no other way ; that man, however, has to do only with the law of selection, because by its means he can achieve every influence upon progeny ; and that, by placing himself in suitable relation to an appropriate partner in intermarriage, man, unless all the most undisputed facts of breeding be false, has (precisely as the breeder has among the lower animals) the power to reproduce and to preserve either series of organs—the best, instead of the worst portion of his organization.

The reader will probably remember the observation of Dr. Pritchard, that “If the same constraint were exercised over men, which produces such remarkable effects among the brute kinds, there is no doubt that its influence would be as great ;” while he has seen the establishment of those natural laws of which neither such writers, as they themselves avow, nor the breeders of animals, had any conception.

In these general observations, it remains only to remind the reader, that the organization of the woman destined to reproduce, should be of the best kind ; and that maturity, exercise and perfection in every function, are equally essential ; for, as are these and their adaptation to the male, so will be the perfection of the progeny.

In society, however, we see persons not only regardless of imperfect organization and function, but of actual disease. Some, consequently, are childless ; whilst others become the parents of beings destined to a life of suffering.

Laws assuredly ought to prescribe proper means for insuring the natural conformation and health of both parties, and should forbid marriage before each had furnished a certificate vouching for these.

Monstrosities and diseases capable of being transmitted by generation, should also be regarded as so many physical causes of divorce. By this means, not only sterility and deformities, but degeneration of the species, would be avoided.

With regard to the age of woman in matrimony, if that labor of nature which is necessary for the completion of the organization be troubled by premature marriage, the woman remains always of small stature, weak and pale.

If pregnancy ensue, breeding will still more interfere with the development of her structure and strength ; she will be liable to abortions and fluxes ; and the pains of childbirth may destroy her.

If she becomes a mother, she cannot afford to her offspring a sufficiency of nutritious milk; her children will be weak and ailing; she must submit, in rearing them, to attentions and vigils exceeding her strength; and her youth will be passed in anxiety and grief, which inevitably bring on premature old age.

Moreover, to the due performance of the duties of the married state, the greater or less development of another order of faculties—those constituting mind—must be taken into consideration.

For all these reasons it is prudent to allow an interval of at least two years to take place between the appearance of the catamenia and marriage; for it is then, generally, that they have reached regularity—that woman reaches the period of her full growth—and that there is a surplus of vital power necessary for the reproduction of the species.

The age from twenty to twenty-five is the period at which women in England and the United States appear best adapted for becoming mothers.

It may here be observed, that when a man past sixty marries a young girl, as is sometimes the case, he often pursues only the shadow of a pleasure of which he can no longer seize the reality; and the misery entailed upon a young girl by marriage with an old man, should alone be a sufficient reason for legal opposition to such a union.

A well-organised woman, on the other hand, is not indifferent when the catamenia have ceased. This occurs only in countries where, as in France, the vital system is bad. But it may perhaps be doubted by some, whether the marriage of a female in whom the characteristic sign of fruitfulness has ceased, should be suffered by law, seeing it is injurious to the state to deprive it of that portion of the population that could have been furnished to it by the young husband whom she usually appropriates.

Dionysius, the Tyrant replied to his mother, who, at an advanced period of life, wished to marry a young man, "It is in my power to break the laws of Syracuse, but not those of nature." I believe that Dionysius was wrong: and that these women are essential to the economy of nature.

No circumstance, in choice, is more important than the form of the pelvis in woman; for upon this depends her own fate and that of her infant.

That several national varieties exist in the form of the pelvis, appears to have been first clearly shown by Dr. Vrolik of Amsterdam, whose observations have been reviewed by Professor Weber, of Bonn. In Weber's opinion, the most frequently occurring form of pelvis among Europeans is the oval; the most frequent in the American nations, the round; the square in people resembling the Mongolians; and the oblong in the races of Africa: and there is a correspondence between these diversities and the shape of other parts of the skeleton, and even of the skull.

In intermarriage, the size of the pelvis is of vast importance. It is evident that the head of the fœtus, which is generally five inches in diameter, cannot be expelled through the inferior aperture, if that is only about one half that diameter.

A woman thus formed, if unfortunately she become pregnant, will be under the necessity of undergoing the Cæsarian operation, or the section of the symphysis pubis, or of witnessing the sacrifice of her child by the accoucher.

These malformations can in general scarcely be known without an examination which is opposed by modesty; and their existence, consequently,

is most generally a secret till after the first accouchement.

We may, however, suspect malformation of the pelvis, says a recent writer, "when the hollow of the back is so great as to force the last lumbar vertebra into the upper part of the cavity of the pelvis; when the irregularities of the hip-bones elevate it too much on one side; when the thighs press too much against each other in walking; and whenever there remain any traces of rachitis, such as crookedness in the long bones, or any extraordinary development of their extremities.

It is observed nevertheless, that "there are some very deformed women in whom the pelvis possesses its natural proportions, so that they are delivered with ease; whilst there are many who, with the appearance of regular conformation, have some malformation that renders their first accouchement almost inevitably mortal.

"What space of pelvis," says Dr. Good, is absolutely necessary to enable a living child, at its full time, to pass through it, has not been very accurately settled by obstetric writers—some maintaining that this cannot take place where the conjugate diameter is less than two inches and a half, though it may till we reach this degree of narrowness; and others, that it cannot take effect under three inches. The difference in the size of the head in different children on their birth, and of the thickness of the soft parts within the pelvis in different women, may easily account for this variation in the rule laid down. It is clear, however, from the acknowledgment of both parties, that if the dimension of the pelvis be much under three inches, delivery cannot be accomplished without the loss of the child."

"It is the duty of medical attendants and relatives," says the writer before quoted, "to point out to a female whose pelvis is ill formed, that, in marrying, she exposes herself to suffering which may end in death."

It would, however, be well, if a law were in existence, that no girl should marry when any malformation, duly attested by medical men, renders delivery physically impossible without imminent danger to the mother, or to both. To allow marriage between a healthy and active person and an infirm or deformed being, is to attack the happiness and health of the former, or the life of the latter.

Into choice, the consideration of the signs of virtue next enter.

These are principally the presence of the hymen, and some appearance of the sanguineous fluid at the first union.

The hymen is a membrane of semilunar, or, occasionally, of semicircular form, which is stretched across the orifice of the vagina, leaving only an aperture sufficiently large to permit the catamenia to pass. It appears to be merely a duplicate of the membrane which lines the interior of that canal; and it diminishes in width until it is obliterated by exercise of the part.

The importance of this sign is not the same among all nations.

Amongst the greater part of the nations of Asia, and in some of those of Africa, and even among barbarous hordes in Europe, proofs of virginity are required on the marriage night. Among others, on the contrary, an opposite estimate is formed.

Conolly tells us, that among the Toorkmans, "for a man to marry a widow is a difficult matter; for, unlike the Arabs, who consider marriage with widows ill-omened, the Toorkmans prefer them on account of their superior knowledge of the mènage, they being of course better acquainted with household duties than unmarried girls.

In Arabia, only half price is given for a widow; but the Toorkman relicts

are generally at a considerable premium. It was related, as an instance of a man's great generosity, that he gave his daughter, a widow, to the brother of his deceased son-in-law, when he might have gotten to the value of — I am afraid to say how many tomanas for her.

The hymen exists in the fœtus, and in women in whom it has not been destroyed by circumstances connected or unconnected with defloration. It has not, however, been bestowed exclusively upon women, as Haller imagined, as a distinctive mark of virginity. All females of mammiferous animals, monkeys particularly, and even cetacea, exhibit the hymen more or less developed.

This duplication may be wanting from original malformation; the first catamenia, if the aperture be small—or an accident, as a fall—or disease, as an ulcer, may destroy it. Its loss, for the most part, is no proof of the absence of virginity.

On the other hand, the presence of this membrane cannot constitute a sign of virginity. Zacchias observes, that it is not ruptured when it is thick and hard, when there is a disproportion between the organs, or when the sexual union has taken place only at periods of great relaxation.

Cravard found it perfect in a female thirteen years of age, who was laboring under syphilis. Even conception has occurred, in some cases, without the destruction of this membrane.

Ruysch mentions an accouchement which could not be completed without dividing a double hymen, which had not interfered with impregnation, but which prevented the exit of the child. The female who was the subject of this case, had been long making useless efforts for her delivery, when Ruysch was called in. He perceived a first obstacle—a very thick and strong hymen: and he divided it. A second obstacle appeared in a second membrane; and a second incision was requisite. The delivery was then accomplished.

Baudelocque says, "It is well known that the hymen is not always torn in the first union; and that it has been found entire in some women at the time of labor, I can myself adduce two examples." The first was that of a young lady, who assured him that she had not allowed perfect access. In this case, the hyæna shut the vagina very closely, and left but a very small opening. She nevertheless became pregnant; and the parts were so found at labor. In the other, the membrane alone resisted, for half an hour, all the efforts of the last periods of delivery.

Dr. Blundell says "Four impregnations, in which the hymen remained unbroken, have fallen under my notice—the diameter of the vaginal orifice not exceeding that of the smaller finger; and this, too, though the male organ was of ordinary dimensions." And again, "I know of three cases in which the organ was not suffered to enter the vagina at all, and where, nevertheless—I suppose from the mere disposition of the reproductive liquid upon the vulva—impregnation took place."

An anthropological fact which sets this question completely at rest is this, which I have myself observed in the dissecting room, namely, that the hymen is re-formed in women who abstain from sexual indulgence. This was found to be the case in the body of an old woman who bore evident marks of having been the mother of children.

Marc, in the *Dictionnaire des Sciences Medicales*, says, "A young female, severely afflicted with syphilis, was brought to La Pitie. The hymen was altogether wanting, the vagina greatly dilated, and the external reproductive

parts diseased. She was cured; and, to the astonishment of the medical observers, a well-formed semilunar hymen was found."

Any flow of the sanguineous liquid is a sign equally uncertain.

"The bright red color of the nipples," says Beck, "the hardness of the mamæ, and the general appearance of the female, all deserve attention, but they they can seldom be of any practical utility in determining the point under examination."

As to the increased size of the neck, it is certain that indulgence may momentarily cause it. Hence the Romans were in the habit of measuring the thickness of the bride's neck with a thread, both on the morning of marriage and the following one, and of thence concluding concerning her change of condition. We may, however, reasonably doubt the infallibility of this sign, as circumstances unconnected with marriage produce the same phenomenon.

The lobe of the ear is asserted by some to be most frequently of a very bright and lively red.

Considering the whole of these signs, the faculty of medicine at Leipsic has declared that there does not exist any true and certain sign of virginity; and Morgagni is of a similar opinion.

If there be few or no signs of virginity, it is far otherwise with signs of the habit of child-bearing, which I have described in the work on Beauty.

The more minute indications of this kind are the streaks of fissures left on the abdomen and mamæ, owing to their previous distentions; and others which affect the reproductive organs, but which need not here be described.

The absolute causes of impotence in the male, or those for which there is no known relief, principally originate in some malformation or defect in the reproductive organs; and these may be either natural or artificial.

To this class may be referred an absolute want of the penis; the ureters terminating in the perinæum, or above the os pubis.

In some subjects has occurred an amputation of the virile organ.

There are many cases of the penis being impervious.

In an unnatural perforation of the penis, or in other words, the extremity of the canal of the urethra terminating at some other place than the natural one, the possibility of impregnation may depend on the distance to which the orifice is thrown back. A case is related by Mr. Hurd, in which the patient had been relieved by complete amputation; there was only a very small protrusion of the organ on pressure; yet he had, subsequent to this, two children.

The natural want of both testes, provided that ever occurs, or their artificial loss, must be a cause of impotence.

The loss of one of the testes, if this were compensated by a healthy condition of the other, would be no ground of dread. But if the remaining testis be small and extenuated, or have become scirrhus or scarcinomatous, or even if the epididymus be tumefied and hard, it gives reason to expect impotence.

In woman, there are various malformations that form obstacles to conception.

Cases of congenital deficiency of the vagina, though very rare have occurred.

An obliteration or thickening of the sexual organs, so as to prevent any access occurs.

Congenital brevity of the vagini would seem to be occasionally an incurable

ble cause, so far as relates to the pain caused by coition, although possibly it may not be accompanied with sterility.

Dr. Hunter, being consulted by a lady in a mask, thus circumstanced, told her that she was the most unfortunate partner a man could have, as there was no cure. Dr. Dewees appears to have met with two cases. In , the whole distance to which the finger could be passed, did not exceed one inch or an inch and a half: in the other, it was apparently connected with an absence of the uterus, as the vagina terminated in a cul de sac.

The absence of the matrix occurs. Columbus states that a female who suffered acute pains when she indulged in pleasures, exhibited, on a post mortem examination, only a slight swelling or pad at the extremity of the vagina.

The ovaries may be so feebly developed as not to be in a condition to receive the impression of the fertilizing liquid.

They have been sometimes found originally wanting. Morgagni mentions a girl who exhibited no vestige of them. Such, too, was the case mentioned in the Philosophical Transactions. The woman's stature was about four feet six inches, having ceased to grow at ten years of age, and she died at the age of twenty-nine. She never had any catamenia; her mammæ and nipples never enlarged more than in the male subject; there was no appearance of hair on the pubes; and she never showed any passion for the male sex.

Mr. Pott removed the ovaries in a case of sanguineal hernia, by a surgical operation. Before this period, the female (aged twenty-three) was stout, large-breasted, and had the catamenia regularly. Afterwards, although she enjoyed good health, she became thinner, her mammæ were gone and she never had the catamenia.

Such are the incurable cases. The curable are very different.

Elongation of the nymphæ and clitoris are both susceptible of cure, and do not present any obstacle to conception. Even with regard to these, however, it should be remembered that accidental monstrosities, malformations and changes produced by habit and education, either in forms or qualities, pass from the parents to their posterity.

Exterior imperforation may sometimes be remedied by the surgeon's skill.—Dupuytren in his Essay on the Laceration of the Perinæum during Labour, mentions two cases. He delivered a young woman secretly. The perinæum was ruptured, but by the use of the suture it again united. Several years afterwards, a man and woman visited him: the husband was unable to consummate his marriage. On examination, the aperture of the vagina was found very narrow, and a cicatrix was on the perinæum. It was his old patient. He advised patience; and in a short time, the female became pregnant, and was safely delivered. In a parallel case, the husband deemed it a most unequivocal proof of previous purity.

The contraction of the conduit itself may be enlarged by gradual dilations. Should pregnancy intervene, dilatation gradually takes place before the period of delivery; this occurs more readily in young females than in those of advanced years.

In a case reported by M. Villaume, the hymen was present, but there was merely a mass of cellular tissue in the place of the vagina; and by an operation, an opening was made to the matrix. Dr. Physic is also stated to have operated with success in a case where the vagina was entirely closed up to a considerable distance within the os externum.

The obloquy of the matrix merely requires some management in the act of re production.

In men, mutilations, or severe wounds of the reproductive organs, carcinoma of the testes or penis, and a schirrous or a paralytic state induced by injury to the nervous or muscles of the parts, are all likely to prevent cohabitation.

Owing to complete and constant abstinence from coition, the internal spermatic organs, as well as the penis, often shrink, and become ineit, constituting impotence. As an infant, says the canon law, is unfit for marriage because it is unable to perform its duties, in the same manner as men who are impotent, have no right to contract this obligation. It is moreover an act of deceit and felony. In this case, even a desire to live with a fair fame should induce the deceived wife to claim the dissolution of a contract entered into with imposture and fraud.

With regard to both sexes, everything that tends to diminish the energy of either, as debauchery, is at variance with reproduction.

Thus, in very voluptuous women, conception may sometimes have really taken place, and its product be, immediately after its arrival in the matrix, destroyed by sanguine and other exhalations produced by frequent and excessive indulgence.

Women who marry late in life conceive always less readily, and those who exercise the mental organs severely and continually are in most cases barren, while in others they become subject to serious accidents in pregnancy, because they carry all their powers toward the brain, and deprive the sexual organs of their natural energy.

There exist general diseases which are so injuriously influenced by marriage, that they constitute grounds of celibacy.

Pulmonary phthisis is one of those, of which pleasure, as a powerful stimulant of the circulatory system, must hasten the progress.

Among the curable causes of impotence in men may be enumerated the following:—retraction of the penis, originating from stone in the bladder, or some other urinary disease; obliteration of the canal of the urethra, from stricture or other causes; malformation as to the place of the urethra; a natural phymosis, confining the glans in such a manner as to prevent the emission of the reproductive fluid; atony of the parts arising sometimes from local disease or external injury, and others from masturbation; inability to propel the liquid out of its vessels—this is frequently an absolute cause, but more generally it is a curable one.

Among the diseases that are considered compatible with the act of reproduction, are asthma and the early stages of phthisis pulmonalis.

In many chlorotic girls, marriage would tend to develop the attributes of their sex; but, to marry a choleric girl of fifteen or sixteen, with a view to favor the development of puberty, and especially of the catamenia, is not only to subject her to dangerous risks, but to desire a wife and daughters with similar tendencies to disease.

A state of exhaustion of the uterine system produced by excessive excitement, and added to this the most perfect indifference, explain why courtesans rarely conceive.

In the female addicted to bad habits, the relaxation of the uterine organs, and its consequence, an inability to retain the reproductive liquid, render all who yield to these habits barren.

Long-continued hæmorrhage, recent prolapsus of the matrix or vagina, and even protracted fluor albus, are of course eminently unfavorable.

Narrowness of the vagina occasionally originates from accidental causes; and in these cases, dilatation may be made by surgical means.

There are many cases of constitutional sterility, which cannot be at present explained.

As the mare that has slinked her foal is always liable to that accident, so it is with women who have once miscarried.

The three following conditions, we are told, may induce us generally to expect aptitude for generation in a female: the growth of desire at the period of puberty, the eruption of the catamenia at the right time, and moderate enjoyment of matrimonial embraces.

But it is not less truly added, that we meet with females combining all these, who are nevertheless childless, though married many years to men of good constitutions who had previously given proofs of reproductive powers; and on the other hand, the absence of these three conditions is always a certain proof that a woman will not conceive, as some become pregnant without ever having had the catamenia.

It is a nearer approach to a certain view, to observe that "there are temperaments and constitutions more adapted for reproduction than others, in consequence of organic peculiarities and dispositions that it is not in the power of the anatomist to discover; women possessed of such a temperament conceiving generally with readiness."

I have thus as briefly as possible brought under the notice of the reader the *causes, varieties, symptoms*, and peculiarities of those disorders of the generative organs in both sexes, which either partially or totally obstruct them in the due discharge of the important functions which they are ordained to perform in the human economy, and on the proper discharge of which not only rests the happiness of individuals and families, but also the welfare of empires: for it is not to be disputed, that on the degree of vigor and healthy action of the generant organs in parents, depends in a great measure the health of their offspring: daily experience presents to our notice painful and not unfrequently loathsome evidence of this fact.

Hence it behoves all persons, before entering the marriage state, to enquire whether or not they are in such bodily health as may insure that their marriage bed shall not become a *hot bed of disease*, from whence nought but weak and puny offspring shall be produced—living evidences of their parents' follies and brutally selfish passions.

How degraded, and utterly lost to all the finer feelings which alone ennoble us, must that man be, who, knowing himself to be tainted by disease, or so debilitated by early and guilty excesses, that it is next to impossible that he should give life to any but tainted and doomed progeny—doomed in their mothers' womb!—dares to offer his polluted and shattered frame at the pure shrine of female love. O! shame, where is thy blush?

Further I would ask, if we saw a man wantonly exposing his child to the contagion of an infectious disease, or inoculating it with the virus of a syphilitic or any other malady, should we not denounce him as a monster unfit to live, or to be scouted from civil society? Most assuredly.

Why, then, should we tacitly permit, if not encourage, a crime no less heinous—its results being similar—as that of diseased individuals forming matrimonial engagements? It is astonishing, and indeed were it not fatally

placed beyond doubt, it would appear incredible, that these monstrous acts are of daily and hourly occurrence; encouraged but too often, by those whose duty it should be to prevent them.

Witness where parents, for the sake of worldly gain and honors, induce their children to form engagements totally opposed to nature's salutary laws; such, for instance, as the union of young females with hoary lasciviousness and broken rouès.

I am well assured, that were but half the attention paid to the procreation of the human race as that devoted to the breeding of animals, many of the diseases which now afflict us would soon be eradicated.

But unfortunately, marriages are too often formed in a totally different spirit to that upon which they were formerly founded, viz., for the procreation of a healthy progeny, and mutual support. They are now, but too often, especially in our large cities, mere bargains, or at the best, but the result of a transient passion for a pretty face or form, which is no sooner obtained than disregarded as valueless.

To these combined causes may be traced much of that domestic unhappiness we daily see, and many of the serious diseases under which we suffer from one generation to another; therefore reader if you will be still unmarried, let me beg of you well to ponder on these truths—truths, which if you neglect now, may at some future time painfully and vividly be recalled in your own families.



