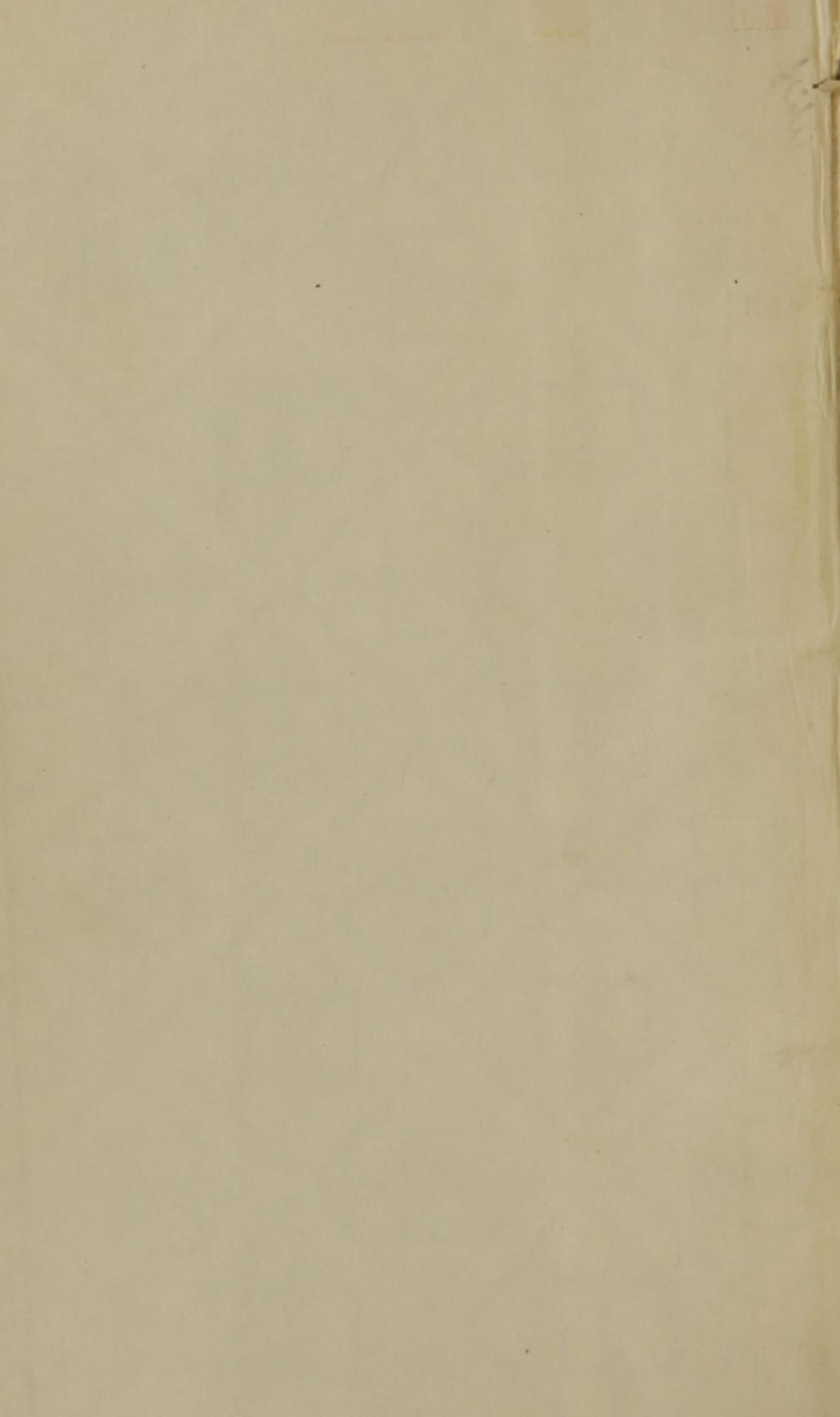


WJA
T769h
1853



Home-Treatment

FOR

247

SEXUAL ABUSES.

A Practical Treatise

OF THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF EXCESSIVE AND UNNATURAL SEXUAL INDUL-
GENCE, THE DISEASES AND INJURIES RESULTING THEREFROM, WITH THEIR
SYMPTOMS AND HYDROPATHIC MANAGEMENT.

BY R. T. TRALL, M.D.

Surgeon Genl's Office.
LIBRARY.
25450
Washington, D.C.

NEW YORK:

FOWLER AND WELLS, PUBLISHERS,

CLINTON HALL, 131 NASSAU STREET.

Boston, 142 Washington st.]

1853.

[London, No. 143 Strand.

ANNEX

WJA

T769h

1853

Reel: 76-5/1

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853, by

FOWLERS AND WELLS,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern
District of New York.

NEW YORK STEREOTYPE ASSOCIATION,
201 William Street.

Introduction.

NOTWITHSTANDING the causes and consequences of undue excitements or abuses of the sexual passion have been ably treated by several eminent physiological and medical writers, prominent among whom are Graham, Alcott, Ritter, Gregory, Deslandes, Lallemand, and others, there is still an increasing demand for information on the whole subject; and, especially, as regards the particular diseases and infirmities resulting from this source, and the means of recovery.

Since the true theory of organic transmission has become generally understood by

well-educated people, the abuses of the sexual function, and the diseases of the generative organs, have assumed their just importance in the estimation of physiologists and physicians. The reproductive function not only lies at the foundation of existence itself, but its integrity is essential to the proper development of the individual, as well as to the propagation of healthy and vigorous offspring. Nor can the individual in any way more rapidly waste his or her vital energies, nor more surely induce nameless diseases and anomalous infirmities, nor more certainly hasten on the period of decrepitude and decline, than by excesses or irregularities in the indulgence of the sexual appetite.

The reason is obvious: probably to the reflecting mind self-evident. The very intensity of the sexual orgasm, when legitimately exercised, is sufficiently evincive that it is not to be promiscuously nor too frequently excited with impunity, while the important purpose

it is ordained to accomplish in the economy of creation, is conclusive of the necessity of restraining its exercise within certain limitations.

Few persons are aware of the extent to which masturbation or self-pollution is practiced by the young of both sexes in civilized society; and none but those whose peculiar position or professional confidence brings them into advisory and intimate relations with the victims of unnatural indulgences or venereal excesses, can have an adequate conception of the evils thence resulting. None but the experienced medical man can trace the deplorable consequences to feeble, malformed, puny, and imperfectly-organized offspring; and no one but the profound physiologist can clearly see all the external marks of exhausted vitality and premature decay, stamped indelibly on thousands of our young men and maidens, otherwise in the bloom of youth, health, and beauty.

Says a writer on this subject: "The hollow, sunken eye, the blanched cheek, the withered hands, and emaciated frame, and the listless life, have other sources than the ordinary illnesses of all large communities."

Lallemand observes: "When a child, after having given proofs of memory and intelligence, experiences daily more and more difficulty in retaining and understanding what is taught him, we may be sure that it is not only from unwillingness, from idleness, as is commonly supposed. Besides the slow and progressive derangement of his or her health, the diminished energy of application, the languid movement, the stooping gait, the desertion of social games, the solitary walk, late rising, livid and sunken eye, and many other symptoms, will fix the attention of every intelligent and competent guardian of youth."

Nor are many persons sufficiently aware of the ruinous extent to which the amative propensity is indulged by married persons. The

matrimonial ceremony does, indeed, sanctify the act of sexual intercourse, but it can by no means atone for nor obviate the consequences of its abuse. Excessive indulgence in the married relation is, perhaps, as much owing to the force of habit, as to the force of the sexual appetite. I have had patients who, in their ignorance be it said, had provoked the sexual crises almost every night, after the consummation of the marriage contract, for periods of ten, fifteen, and twenty years. The result was, of course, in general terms, premature old age. They were as dull, languid, stiff-jointed, weak, and infirm, at forty and fifty years of age, as they should have been at seventy and eighty. I have often seen the head "silvered o'er" not with age, but with white hairs, at forty-five and fifty, and the whole expression of face and features wearing the impress of more than "threescore and ten." But whenever I have had opportunity to examine the historical data, I have inva-

riably found that the suicidal indulgence which so fearfully anticipated the natural period of the "sere and yellow leaf," was not so much attributable to the violence of the passion itself; it was, to a great extent, a mere habit, and the pleasure derived was rather negative than positive—the allaying of a kind of feverish or inflammatory uneasiness, rather than the exquisite pleasure and satisfying enjoyment which always rewards its legitimate exercise. If these same persons had commenced the journey of matrimonial life with but a monthly or semi-monthly indulgence, a habit far more in accordance with the rules of temperance, chastity, and reason, would have become established; the amatory propensity would have been as well and even better satisfied, and far more pleasurably gratified, while the present health and future vigor of both parties to the connubial contract, and also the well-being of the offspring, would have been duly regarded.

More lamentable still is the effect of inordinate sexual excitement on the young and unmarried. It is not very uncommon to find a confirmed onanist, or, rather, masturbator, who has not yet arrived at the period of puberty. Several cases have come under my observation, and many such cases are related in the books, in which young boys and girls, from eight to ten years of age, were taught the method of self-pollution by their older playmates, and had made serious encroachments on the fund of constitutional vitality, even before any considerable degree of sexual appetite was developed. Here, again, the fault was not in the power of passion, but in the force of habit. Parents and guardians of youth can not be too mindful of the character and habits of those with whom they allow young persons and children under their charge to associate intimately, and especially careful should they be with whom they allow them to sleep.

It is very true, however, that the sexual propensity is often prematurely and preternaturally developed. Perhaps a majority of the children of civilized society are not exempt from some degree of a forced, unnatural, hot-house cultivation of sexuality, both bodily and mentally, to the great disadvantage of both body and mind; a misfortune at least as prevalent in the "higher circles" of luxury and refinement, as among the "lower orders" of poverty and external degradation.

It may, peradventure, surprise and startle some of those fathers and mothers, who, in their fond and partial confidence, do not dream it possible that *their* sons and daughters can be in danger of injury or contamination from this cause, when I assure them that there is hardly a day in the year in which I am not consulted, personally or by letter, by one or more "debilitated young persons," whose debility commenced and increased with the practice of self-abuse. And when it is con-

sidered that there are many other physicians, "regular, irregular, and defective," who practice extensively in this class of diseases, besides several advertising quacks and medicine-selling charlatans in all our large cities, who drive a profitable trade in peddling out "restorative" nostrums to these deluded victims, some idea may be formed of the prevalence of the secret vice among us; and, as just intimated, the refined, the educated, and the accomplished, are as frequently the ruined subjects and wretched slaves of the abominable habit, as are the low, the vulgar, and the illiterate.

It is customary to designate self-pollution as among the "vices." I think *misfortune* is the more appropriate term. It is true that, in the physiological sense, it is one of the very worst "transgressions of the law." But in the moral sense it is generally the sin of ignorance in the commencement, and in the end the passive submission to a morbid and almost

resistless impulse. An intimate acquaintance with the history of many cases has satisfied my mind, that the practice usually commences without the remotest idea of criminality, either moral or physiological; but, as with every other unnatural or inordinate habit or propensity, when it *does* become a habit, it is exceedingly apt to triumph and tyrannize over reason, judgment, and conscience.

The time has come when the rising generation must be thoroughly instructed in this matter. That quack specific "ignorance," has been experimented with quite too long already. The true method of insuring all persons, young or old, against the *abuse* of any part, organ, function, or faculty of the wondrous machinery of life, is to teach them its use. "Train a child in the way it *should* go," or be sure it will, amid the ten thousand surrounding temptations, find out a way in which it should *not* go. Keeping a child in ignorant innocence is, I aver, no part of the "training"

which has been taught by a wiser than Solomon. Boys and girls do know, will know, and must know, that between them are important anatomical differences and interesting physiological relations. Teach them, I repeat, their use, or expect their abuse. Hardly a young person in the world would ever become addicted to habitual self-pollution if he or she understood clearly the consequences; if he or she knew at the outset that the practice was directly destroying the bodily stamina, vitiating the moral tone, and enfeebling the intellect. No one would pursue the disgusting habit if he or she was fully aware that it was blasting all prospects of health and happiness in the approaching period of manhood and womanhood.

Certain well-meaning but most unphilosophical "moral reform" writers, have very absurdly advocated the plan of keeping the youth of both sexes as much as possible out of each others' society, and cultivating a spirit,

not of inquiry, but of *stupidity*, as the great panacea for repressing libidinous thoughts, and restraining precocious licentiousness. "Girls and boys should never be allowed *to think* that there is a difference in the sexes," says one of this class, who advocates the *know-nothing* remedy, and who seems "to think" that virtue and chastity are purely negative qualities.

Superlatively nonsensical as are all such and similar ideas of improving the rising generation, they have been, until recently, the rule of action with the great majority of teachers. There is no prevention of the evils we are considering, short of correct physiological education. There is no cure for their numberless ill consequences, save in strict conformity to organic laws; and all who have been so unfortunate as to have become disabled, diseased, or infirm, by any misuse of the genital organs, must exercise great patience and determined perseverance in living in all

respects in conformity with the laws of life and health, or they will assuredly fail of a perfect restoration. Happy indeed should all such persons be, if but a few years of correct habits and rigid self-discipline are required to recover the vital powers from the shock of early dissoluteness.

There are no specifics in nature which work in opposition to the laws of nature. There are no drug-shop preparations which can reverse her laws. Nor are there any magic drops, nor enchanted powders, nor nervous antidotes, nor invigorating cordials, etc., etc., which can dissever the effect of any act or habit from its cause. Every pretender, therefore, who advertises his specific for "debilitated or impotent young persons" is a cheat, and his only desire is to defraud the unfortunate and often weak-minded victim out of his money. He is wisest who has least to do with the nostrum-venders.

I must repeat, that, in my judgment, few,

very few young persons would ever defile themselves by self-pollution, were they aware of the consequences; or, were they rightly instructed in relation to the reproductive function, notwithstanding all the exciting causes—and their name is legion—in operation. They would resist the allurements and the impulses almost unto death, rather than so debauch and disorganize themselves, if they understood the subject in its true light. “Who then,” says Graham in his Lectures to Young Men, “would yield to sensuality, and forego the higher dignity of his nature, and be contented to spend his life and all his energies in the low satisfactions of a brute! when earth and heaven are full of motives for noble and exciting enterprise; and when time and eternity are the fields which lie before him, for his achievements of virtue, and happiness, and immortality, and imperishable glory?”

“It is by abusing his organs and depraving his instinctive appetites, through the devices

of his natural powers, that the body of man becomes a living volcano of unclean propensities and passions.”

I will conclude these somewhat desultory introductory remarks, with a couple of extracts from the numerous communications received on this subject. The first is taken from a letter of recent date, written by an intelligent school-teacher in a Western state, and is a fair sample of hundreds I have perused. The other is a part of a communication addressed to the late Sylvester Graham, by a distinguished teacher and philanthropist, of Manchester, England. Both are full of instructive admonition.

“I was poisoned with drugs in my cradle, and contaminated with swine-flesh in childhood. In my very first lessons on the subject of eating and drinking, I was taught that pork, ham, sausages, lard, in fact all parts of the filthy hog, were the best possible aliment. I learned to regard coffee, cider, and even

whisky as necessary beverages; and the benefit or propriety of using water, either internally or externally, was left wholly to the decision of perverted instinct, until, by chance, I got hold of a stray number of the *Water-Cure Journal*. Had I been blessed with a perusal of such a glorious messenger of truth, and purity, and health, ten years sooner, I should now have been true to my nature, pure and healthy, instead of the victim of a loathsome habit, which had sadly wasted my fund of life, and caused me to look on the past with unutterable disgust; while I can hardly refrain from bitterly reproaching those who, instead of 'training me in the way I should go,' allowed me, yes, absolutely forced me, to travel down the broad road of physiological transgression to the very brink of perdition."

"I need not tell *you* how much such a work is needed (on advice to young persons). I can, however, fully assure you, from my own

experience, having been a tutor in our public schools and colleges for a long period, that the practice of self-pollution is as prevalent in our land as you have stated it to be in America. My experience has been principally with *boys*, and it is its awful prevalence among them that concerns me most. Not one in one hundred ever *think* that it is morally wrong or physiologically dangerous, until the habit has become too strong to be overcome.

“If we would arrest this evil, we must begin with boys. With many young men it is already too late. For some long time past I have spoken to nearly every boy I have had any intimate acquaintance with, and am struck with the universality of (or at least a knowledge of) the practice, their utter ignorance of its nature, the gratitude with which they listen, and the often tearful earnestness with which they regret not having been warned before. Often is the question asked by them, ‘Why did not my parents tell me this?’

“I am convinced that if the parent or teacher would just take the lad aside at a very early age, *previous* to contamination, and affectionately and simply explain to him its results, not one in one thousand would ever form the habit. Youth and young men would not then, could not, give up with passions morbidly excited and almost irresistible, and thus prostitution would receive a death-blow.”

Contents.

Introduction.

Evils Resulting from Sexual Abuse—Physiological Marks—Pathological Indications—Suspicious Symptoms—Sexual Abuse in the Married Relation, Attributable to mere Habit—Premature Decay—Important Advice—Prevalence of Masturbation—Children Addicted to the Secret Vice—Premature Development of Sexuality—Its Effect on Body and Mind—Impositions of Quacks—Self-pollution, a Misfortune rather than Vice—The Rising Generation must be Instructed—The True Method of Removing the Evil—Instructive Communications. . . iii

Chapter One.

EXCESSIVE SEXUAL EXCITEMENT.

General Causes—Improper Nursing—Dosing—Drugging—Their Effects in Infancy Illustrated—Animal Food specially conducive to Morbid Amativeness—Flesh—Fish—Fowl—Mixed Dishes—Alimentary Abominations—Mothers at Fault—Medical Men in Error—Salted Meats especially Obnoxious—Ruinous Advice of Physicians—Concentrated Food—Error in regard to Fish as compared with Butcher's Meat—Salt Injurious—Erroneous Opinions of the Nutritive Value of Flesh—Constipation—Hardened Fæces—Piles—Hemorrhoidal Tumors—Affects Girls more than Boys—Improper Drinks—Obstructed Skin—Improper Clothing—Sedentary Habits—Mental Culture, how Abused—Self-abuse in Schools—Testimony of S. Graham—of E. M. P. Wells—Obscene Books—Lewd Conversation—Gross Eating and Vulgar Thinking Naturally Associated—Testimony of Dr. Paley. 28

Chapter Two.

GENERAL CONSEQUENCES.

Pathological Phenomena—Vital Exhaustion, usually mistaken for Specific Diseases—Symptoms as described by Graham—Symptoms mentioned by Dr. Hill—External Indications described by O. S. Fowler—Signs of Self-abuse by the same Author—Signs of Excessive Indulgence in Married Life—Cases Illustrative—Symptoms of Masturbation described by Deslandes—Ordinary Course of Symptoms. 49

Chapter Three.

SEMINAL EMISSIONS.

Spermatorrhœa—Source of Constitutional Injury—Effects of Loss of Semen.—Secretion of Seminal Fluid—Remarks of Christian Ritter, M.D.—Prevalent Errors—Frequency of Involuntary Emissions—Morbid Sexuality transmissible.... 71

Chapter Four.

GENERAL TREATMENT.

Moral and Mental Management—Bodily Exercises—A Desideratum—Diet—Drink—Sleep—Bathing—Wet-Sheet Packing—Half-Pack—Half-Bath—Hip, or Sitz-Bath—Foot-Bath—Rubbing Wet-Sheet—Pail-Douche—Stream-Douche—Towel or Sponge-Bath—The Wet-Girdle—The Chest-Wrapper—The Sweating-Pack—The Plunge-Bath—The Shower-Bath—Fomentations—Injections—General Bathing Rules—Mechanical Means..... 81

Chapter Five.

PARTICULAR CONSEQUENCES.

General Debility—Weakness of the Joints—Neuralgia—Spinal Irritation—Early Distortions or Curvatures—Paralysis of the Lower Extremities—Hypochondria, or Mental Despondency—Fickleness of Temper—Irresolution, etc.—Insanity—Early Superannuation—Epilepsy—Apoplexy—Tetanus and Locked-Jaw—Chorea, or St. Vitus's Dance—Hysteria—Spitting of Blood—Disordered Vision—Impaired Hearing—Sleeplessness—Pimples of the Face—Inflammation of the Eyes—Chronic Diarrhea—Colorless Stools—Priapism—Satyriasis and Nymphomania—Loss of Sexual Appetite—Impotence—Permanent Morbid Sensibility—Shriveling or Diminution of the Genitals—Barrenness—Abortion—Leucorrhœa—Menorrhagia—Prolapsus Uteri—Gleet—Eruptions about the Genitals—Prolapse of the Testicles—Swelling of the Testicle—Enlargement of the Spermatic Cord—Irritation of the Urethra—Scalding Urination—Cancer of the Uterus—Tabes Dorsalis..... 101

Home-Treatment

FOR

SEXUAL ABUSES.

Chapter One.

EXCESSIVE SEXUAL EXCITEMENT.

GENERAL CAUSES.—It were easy to say, in general terms, that wrong educational habits—bad “bringing up”—is the common cause of the early prurien-
cy of the genital function so prevalent in the world; but the mere announcement of the fact would serve no useful purpose. People are not all agreed, and medical men differ widely, as to what are good and what are bad educational habits. Hence the necessity for dealing in reasons and specifications.

It may be asserted, in general terms again, that all methods of bodily or mental culture which give

an early preponderance to the lower range of the animal propensities, conduce directly to the premature development, and hence liability to abuse, of the sexual passion. And on this principle we are obliged to arraign no inconsiderable part of the ordinary system in which children and youth are doctored, fed, clothed, exercised, and schooled, as physiologically wrong. And if we trace the series of errors back to their starting-point, we shall not stop in many, nor in a majority of cases, until we reach the infant in its cradle.

IMPROPER NURSING.—Let us try to understand how the slopping and drugging, by the nurse and the doctor, even in the first days of infancy, may rank among the prominent causes of sexual depravity in after-life. The bowels and kidneys are excretory organs, designed to expel from the body waste and effete solid matters, and saline and earthy particles held in solution. The presence of these excrementitious matters excites, in the natural and proper manner, the expulsive action of the bowels and bladder. But doctors generally, and nurses frequently, making Dame Nature every thing in

theory, but nothing in practice, act as though these functions were forever in need of their meddlesome assistance; so that hardly an infant, save those few so fortunate as to be born under hydropathic auspices, escapes dosing with herb teas, hot slops, warm infusions, sweetened liquors, and drugging with still more injurious agents, in the shape of opiate cordials, castor-oil mixtures, antimonial syrups, calomel powders, pink and senna decoctions, etc.

Now all this may seem like a small matter to the attending physician or presiding nurse, but none of these things are trifles in the mind of the intelligent physiologist. He can perceive, even here, the germs of disease and disorganization, and he can trace their effects onward to really disastrous consequences in the future.

The bowels and kidneys, whose natural irritability when normally excited is sufficient for all healthful purposes, are by these extraneous drug-slops preternaturally irritated and debilitated, and hence overacted, weakened, and exhausted. Frequent repetitions of the same or similar causes of irritation create a *habit* of preternatural irritability, and a condition of debility and correspondingly increased

susceptibility to impressions of all kinds. The nervous energies of the whole system are thus disproportionately directed to the point of irritation, and are there wasted to a greater or less extent, in a warfare against the causes of irritation, which are there expending their force. Of course, the other excretory organs, the skin in particular, can not have their due supply of nervous energy, and their functional power collapses, becomes torpid, so that the weakened bowels and kidneys, while disabled from well performing their own proper functions, are urged to do vicarious duty for the skin and other organs.

The genital apparatus being in immediate proximity to this unnatural excitement, must partake of the general irritation, and hence a morbid susceptibility becomes eventually established in them; and when such an excitable or preternaturally susceptible condition of the parts becomes a habit, who can say that it will not continue, unless overcome by counteracting physiological discipline, a leading habit of the organism, until the superadded excitement incidental to the period of puberty causes it to break out in violent and destructive self-abuse?

The principle I am aiming to develop is completely illustrated in a very familiar but very significant fact. Boy-babies, in their cradles, after having taken cathartic medicine, and after having drank freely of warm sweetened water, or of medicated slop of any kind, if careful attention is not paid to causing them to urinate frequently, are often affected with *priapism*, or erection of the penis, a condition indicative of extreme irritation. With girl-babies the effect of these things is evidently equally injurious, though not in the same way apparent. It requires but a moderate degree of intelligence to understand that the frequent repetition of the same or similar irritants will ultimately induce a permanent morbid sensibility of the organs thus affected.

ANIMAL FOOD.—But the young child is destined, under the ordinary circumstances of birth or early education, to experience still worse influences, as it emerges from the cradle, and begins to run about. It is the unanimous opinion of all writers on this subject, that the early employment of animal food—flesh, fish, and fowl—is not only highly pernicious

to the moral and intellectual development of the child, but peculiarly injurious in giving undue ascendancy to the lowest propensities; yet we find the great mass of civilized society, led on, too, by their medical advisers, stuffing and gorging their little ones on the foulest kinds of animal matter, which, in an alimentary sense, deserve no other name than *carrion*. Even before taken from the breast they are not unfrequently forced to swallow, against the instinctive loathings of their yet but partially depraved appetences, meat, broths, fish, soups, pork-gravies, shell-fish stews, and taught to suck fat bacon rinds, salted fish-skins, boiled tripe, and other alimentary abominations. Calculating from such a beginning it need not be surprising that a year or two later should find these dietetically-abused children perfect epicures in the choice of strong meat dishes, oyster-stews, clam-fritters, mince pies, fried sausages, and a variety of other edibles in which the strong, rank odor of the animal prevails.

Many children, under such mismanagement, become so fond of animal food, that, when left to their own depraved appetites, they will make almost the

entire meal of flesh-meat; and all persons who observe closely the "manners and morals" of such children, will find them, generally, gloomy, morose, peevish, irritable, or pugnacious, just after eating, except when they gormandize to the extent of producing blank stupidity. This really abnormal condition will usually manifest itself in the mental and moral department, as well as in the disturbance of the bodily functions, during a considerable and often the whole time in which the digestive organs are laboring to relieve themselves of their oppressive and unnatural burden.

The mothers are grievously at fault; or, rather, *their education* is greatly to blame. Being profoundly ignorant of the physiological properties of food, and its relations to the human body, and in most particulars misled by the fashions of society, and mistaught by the medical profession, they are continually depraving the appetites of their infants and young children, and tempting and stuffing them with various animal dishes, until they are absolutely forced to love and desire that which they by nature instinctively loathe and abhor.

Medical men differ very much as to the period

of life at which children should be allowed the free use of flesh. I think it is not difficult to indicate an infallible rule—*the later the better*. But those parents who do not or can not understand this subject, and who will commence feeding their infants on animal food, and who will also persist in its employment during childhood and adolescence, should know that, in choosing the *kinds* of animal food, there is a wide field for discrimination—a great choice of evils. Some kinds are much worse than others, and all of the worst or most injurious kinds are bad in exact inverse ratio to the age of the child. Here, again, we can readily lay down the invariable rule of health. The plainest, least fatty, and freshest pieces of flesh-meat, are always comparatively the best; and the best qualities of animal food are evidently those derived directly from the herbivorous animals—deteriorating in almost the exact degree that the animal's dietetic habits depart from this standard.

SALTED MEATS.—A very great error pervades the public mind with regard to the use of *salted meats*—*beef, pork, ham, codfish, mackerel, herring*, etc.—and

this delusion, like most other delusions affecting the subject of eating and drinking, and the health of the community, seems to possess as completely the minds of medical men as of non-professional persons. Salted meats are usually regarded as peculiarly healthful, as compared with fresh meats, whereas, in truth, they are peculiarly pernicious; and their deteriorating influence on young, rapidly-developing children, can be regarded no better than absolutely poisonous. And the rule just mentioned as applicable to the use of all flesh-food by young children, is emphatically applicable in relation to salted flesh. It is injurious precisely in proportion to the infancy of the child.

It is another common mistake, in which medical men are as deeply involved as non-medical, that salted meat is merely the animal nutriment preserved in salt; that is to say, flesh with the addition of salt. It is something very different. It is, in reality, a third substance—a chemical compound, possessing properties quite unlike salt *and* flesh—either or both. This fact is evinced by all of its effects on the vital tissues. Let a person eat five ounces of salted beef or salted codfish, in which

there is just half an ounce of salt, and he will experience five times the amount of the "fever of digestion," and feel many times the degree of thirst that would result from eating an equal quantity of fresh beef or codfish, to which half an ounce of salt had been added in the process of cooking.

All salted or pickled "fish, flesh, or fowl," or shell-fish, is intensely irritating to the animal membranes, highly inflaming to the whole mass of blood, and extremely putrescent to all the secretions. Why it is so is easily explainable on both chemical and physiological principles, as I have more fully shown in another work (*Hydropathic Encyclopedia*).

During the past summer bowel complaints, the dysentery in particular, have prevailed extensively and fatally in many towns in New England, where all the means and materials of health exist in abundance. As usual, too, the Allopathic medical journals, in allusion to the prevalence of these diseases, have teemed with wondrously wise sayings on the subject, and, as is their custom, have recommended almost every thing in the world, except the things which would be useful. One of the latest of their

writers of the school recommends, or re-recommends—for a hundred others have done the same before—as a preventive of dysentery and kindred ailments, “a moderate use of salted meats, or salted fish”—the very articles which are peculiarly liable to produce the diseases. This unfortunate and ruinous error not only runs through nearly all the “old school” medical writings of the day, but pervades their standard books, and influences the public mind to a great and greatly destructive extent.

But, as if to add “insult to injury,” in the physiological sense, salted meats are almost always used in connection with superfine flour. Some strange perversity of both instinct and reason seems to have rendered coarse flour, or wheat-meal, as generally disliked as though its branny portion was a rank poison; and hence we find, especially in the summer season, that salted codfish and fine biscuits are the leading articles of diet throughout a large portion of our country—a combination which makes one of the most putrescent, irritating, and inflaming aliments known.

Many persons, too, feast themselves and feed their children freely on fish-flesh, when they will

not themselves eat, nor give their children butcher's meat. I know not from what source the hallucination which influences such a choice is derived, but such persons ought to examine a matter of so much importance to themselves and to the rising generation, with a strict regard to scientific facts, physiological principles, and human experience. Should they do so, they will find that fish diet, instead of being, like the old woman's clam, "an excellent vegetable," is still further removed, in the alimentary sense, from a vegetable nature, than is the flesh of herbivorous or graminivorous animals.

The fact that salt, in contact with animal membrane, abstracts from it a portion of its water of combination, leaving its structure so far dry, rigid, and inelastic, and, in fact, to some extent disorganized, is proof positive of its incompatibility.

There is yet another common error in relation to salted meats, which is, that they are highly nutritious. Quite the contrary is the fact. Those persons who use salted flesh-meats so freely, would be almost as well sustained, so far as the mere *amount* of nutriment is concerned, if they would eat the

same quantity and variety of farinacea, fruits and vegetables, without the flesh.

The particular manner in which salted flesh-meat conduces to premature, perverted, or preternatural sexuality, is by irritating the digestive viscera and whole alimentary canal primarily, and through them sympathetically exciting the genital organs; and by loading the circulating fluids with a greater amount of saline and effete matters to be excreted by the urinary passages. So far, also, as it tends to induce constipation, it adds directly to the general total of causes which inordinately irritate and inflame the sexual apparatus.

CONSTIPATION.—There is another very common and very general source of precocious sexual development and inordinate excitement, as well as a common cause of disease in the sexual organs, and premature decline in their functional powers; and I dwell on it more particularly, for the reason that it is scarcely hinted at in any medical work with which I am acquainted. I mean fine or concentrated food, and, indeed, all kinds of food which tend in the least to produce constipation of the

bowels. Costiveness may be said to be the general condition of the people, old and young, in civilized society; those who are blessed with a free and healthful action being the exceptions to the rule. Hardened fœces in the rectum or bowel, and piles or hemorrhoidal tumors, which are the common consequences of constipation, by the incessant irritation and perpetual inflammatory excitement which they occasion in the immediate vicinity of the sexual organs, are powerfully provocative of a feverish yet exhausting activity. The very act of dejecting the feculent matter, when hard, dry, scybalous, and only to be expelled by dint of painful effort and severe straining, produces great congestion in all the blood-vessels of the genital parts. They become turgid, over-distended, highly susceptible, and in a physiological condition, very nearly resembling that preceding the sexual crisis when legitimately provoked.

Very little reflection is necessary to convince any one how readily this condition, when excited daily for months and years, may prematurely develop the sexual appetite, and aggravate, to a degree well-nigh resistless, the impulse to unlawful indulgence,

or self-abuse. I have had occasion to advise professionally, many otherwise promising young lads, whose masturbating practice was traceable to the habit of straining at stool, more than to all other causes combined; and in some cases, as far as I could ascertain, it was the only *exciting* cause—constipation and its attendant circumstances constituting the predisposition.

This evil—constipation—it should be noticed, affects girls generally much more than boys, for the reason that the habits of the former are more in-door and sedentary; hence it is not surprising that the way of self-abuse is sometimes learned by them, with the aid of no other teacher than the inordinate solicitation of their own morbid sensations; and the temporary relief experienced, or pleasure enjoyed, causes a repetition of the act, until a habit is formed which rapidly lowers the whole moral tone of the mind, deranges the intellect, and wears away the vitality of the whole organic constitution.

IMPROPER DRINKS.—All forms of hot, relaxing, or stimulating drinks, especially all kinds of “spirituous or malt liquors, wine, or cider,” and all other

sorts of alcoholic beverages, "whether enumerated or not," by weakening the abdominal organs, and irritating the kidneys, tend to induce a permanent debility, and keep up perpetually a degree of preternatural susceptibility in the genital organs. Coffee, though less irritating and inflaming to the general nervous system than alcoholic drinks, seems to be even more exciting and debilitating to the sexual apparatus; while tea is very far from being innocuous.

OBSTRUCTED SKIN.—There is yet another very great error in the ordinary management of young persons, which is, inattention to bathing. A foul, obstructed skin, whose seven millions of pores are choked up continually with effete, perspirable matter, adds to the causes of irritation which are perpetually expending their force upon the urinary and genital organs, by throwing the putrescent matters of the body disproportionately upon the kidneys. In an artificial state of society, and with the numerous enervating circumstances which abound in civilized life, nothing less than a daily cool or cold bathing or washing of the entire sur-

face can keep it in a vigorous and healthy condition, and enable it to completely perform its own appropriate part of the work of eliminating all gross and waste particles from the body.

IMPROPER CLOTHING.—A few words under this head may not be amiss. All tight, burdensome, and over-heating clothing is exceedingly objectionable. The under-garments of girls, and the pantaloons of boys are frequently so thick, coarse, and heavy in material, and so bungling and irritating in fit, or rather misfit, as to prove sources of no inconsiderable degree of weakness and relaxation of the abdominal and pelvic viscera, a condition which contributes to render the genital organs preternaturally sensitive or morbidly prurient.

SEDEBTARY HABITS.—Among the more wealthy classes, and occasionally among the poorer, we find sedentary habits a frequent source of sexual pruriency. Idleness is as incompatible with bodily as with mental or moral health. If the constantly accumulating energy of the nervous and muscular systems is not expended in regular and appropriate

exercise or labor, it will seek an outlet in some less natural way, and very frequently in fitful and violent commotions of the sensitive and excitable sexual organs. A precocious development of brain is extremely liable, in sedentary persons, at or near the period of puberty, to produce, as it were, by a kind of metastasis, or revulsion, intense and dangerous excitement; for, as the time approaches for the full development of the reproductive function, a very little inordinate irritation, superadded to its naturally susceptible condition, may lead to disastrous results. And all plans, indeed, which force the mind to educational exercises, while the body is left inactive, and comparatively torpid, have the same tendency.

MENTAL CULTURE.—It is most true—and a most important practical point it is, too, in the physiological training of young persons—that proper mental culture—a correct course of study—and even active and persevering application of the mental powers to the acquisition of *useful* knowledge, is among the best and most efficient means for repressing the force of all causes of undue sexual excite-

ment, and of enabling the individual to restrain either its natural or morbid importunity within due bounds; yet, as already intimated, a method of education which merely stimulates the mind to exertion, without regulating the *direction* of its efforts, nor regarding the physiological necessities of the bodily constitution, often reacts with terrible and fatal force on the morbid irritability of the sexual organs.

SELF-ABUSE IN SCHOOLS.—It would astonish and appal the fathers and mothers of many beloved and promising sons and daughters, who are pursuing the usual routine of an educational course at our colleges, academies, and boarding-schools, to be made fully acquainted with the awful ravages made by “the secret vice” there—in the very places usually regarded as peculiarly exempt from profligacy or sensuous excesses of all kinds.

In relation to the cause of the debasing habit of self-pollution, Sylvester Graham has written—I fear with no more force than truth:

“But the most fruitful sources of instruction in this vice, are our public schools—and especially

boarding-schools and colleges. The extent to which this evil prevails, and of the mischief resulting from it, in most of these institutions, is beyond credibility; and none but those who have thoroughly investigated this subject can have any just apprehensions of the difficulties in preventing it. The utmost care, and vigilance, and precautionary measures, have sometimes failed to keep it out of public institutions for the instruction of youth.

“It is enough to make a parent’s heart recoil with horror, when he contemplates the danger to which his child is exposed, on becoming a member of a public school! And they are greatly deceived who suppose that a majority of the boys who enter these institutions escape the contamination! Nay, indeed, the parent who will suffer his son, under any circumstances of life, to pass his twelfth year, without keeping a most vigilant eye upon him, with regard to this pernicious vice, and seizing the first indications of this depravity to give him proper instructions concerning it, is very guilty of a dangerous neglect of parental duty.

“The common notion that boys are generally ignorant in relation to this matter, and that we ought

not to remove that ignorance, is wholly incorrect. I am confident that I speak within bounds, when I say that seven out of every ten boys in our country, at the age of twelve, have at least heard of this pernicious practice; and I say, again, the extent to which it prevails in our public schools and colleges is shocking beyond measure! I have known boys to leave some of these institutions at the age of twelve and thirteen, almost entirely ruined in health and constitution by it, and they have assured me that, to their certain knowledge, almost every boy in the school practiced the filthy vice; and many of them went to the still more loathsome and criminal extent of an unnatural commerce with each other!"

In corroboration of the above testimony, Rev. E. M. P. Wells, a very celebrated and successful teacher of Boston, wrote, in 1837:

"From an intimate acquaintance with about seven hundred boys for the past nine years; from the recollections of a pretty extensive acquaintance in boyhood; and from information derived from gentlemen of the highest distinction and most eminent success in the great subject—not of *learning*

only, but of *education*—in my own country, and from several nations of Europe, I am fully convinced that the practice of the self-gratification of the sexual desires is more common than any other indulgence which we consider at all wrong. There are fewer exceptions to the universality of the practice than there are to most general rules. I think, also, the practice is full as common, more excessive, and more injurious, in those who do not labor, and who live easily and luxuriantly, than in those of opposite habits of life. This, I suppose, is caused by their food being too stimulating for their exercise. Besides, the hardy mode of living and labor of the opposite classes of society keeps their desires in a more natural and healthful condition. Thus the easy and luxuriant are excited to an excess to which their less hardy constitutions makes them the more easy prey. Many of our delicate constitutions, consumptions, and our low and melancholy spirits, are to be attributed to this excess. The laborious and the poor have less of the desire, and are better able to bear the effects of its gratification.”

OBSCENE BOOKS AND CONVERSATION.—There remains to be mentioned two other prominent sources of youthful depravity and contamination—lewd conversation and lascivious books. Obscene novels and fictitious writings, specially addressed to the amative propensity, full of lewd images, impure conceptions, and lust-engendering narratives, and only interesting or amusing on such accounts, are abundant in our literary markets. And, I am pained to be obliged to add, some of our most “respectable” and wealthy publishing houses do their full share in scattering broadcast over the land vile and corrupting “light literature,” in the shape of trashy romances, exciting seduction stories, narratives of dissolute characters, and fictitious histories of imaginary debauchees, whose deeds of sensuality and depravity are detailed with all the minuteness and circumstantiality that can arrest the attention and inflame the passion of the youthful and susceptible mind. And this kind of mental food, like improper aliment for the stomach, is pernicious in proportion to the youthfulness of the person who partakes of and appropriates it.

Young persons ought especially to be confined

to books whose subjects are the practical arts and sciences, histories of nations, biographies of good and virtuous persons, etc., and such fictions only as are directed to the intellect and higher sentiments; leaving the details of heroes and heroines, whose greatest achievements were in the line of gluttony, and revelry, and profligacy, and debauchery, to the period of life when the judgment is mature, and when imagination and passion have come under the dominion of intellect, if, indeed, such works must be read at all.

Still worse in its depraving influences on the youthful mind, because more prevalent, is the general habit of low, vulgar, loose, and meretricious conversation. It is hardly possible for children, now-a-days, to associate freely with their seniors in age, without having their plastic minds filled with wanton and libidinous ideas and images. Much of the common talk with which thoughtless people of nearly all ages and callings amuse themselves and each other, and make pastime for their idle hours, is based on perverted ideas and depraved images relating to the sexual organs, and to sexual commerce. With the gross and vulgar-minded this

is the ever-present theme of the joke, and repartee, and anecdote, and song, and often, also, of fiction and falsehood. And too frequently do men, in the middle period of life, married men, and men who are fathers of sons and daughters, indulge, in the field, in the workshop, behind the counter, and even around the family hearth, in a style of lascivious hints, inuendoes, etc., relating to the sexual distinctions, in the presence of young, but not listless nor unobserving children; little dreaming, and perhaps little thinking, or little caring, that every profane expression, and each vulgar allusion, is exciting a prurient curiosity which may ere long become the initiative step toward the final fall of some one or more of the youthful hearers.

I believe it to be a general and an almost universal rule in society, that its individuals are more vulgar and lecherous in their conversation, as they are more gross and gluttonous in their personal habits; and the critical observer of men need not err greatly in choosing associates or instructors for his children, very much in reference to their voluntary, especially their eating and drinking habits. While for the pure all things are pure, to the im-

pure-minded all things are filthy. These will apply or misapply any ambiguous expression or obscure remark to the degrading theme which is so generally uppermost in their own minds.

Dr. Paley has well remarked that "habits of libertinism incapacitate and indispose the mind for all intellectual, moral, and religious pleasures." Some great libertines do, however, manifest a respectable degree of intellectual capacity, but are peculiarly and strikingly deficient in their perceptions of the *moral* bearing of any question; while they become so thoroughly selfish as to seem incapable of acting upon or even entertaining any problem of social weal or general philanthropy. No human beings are more besotted and miserly, sordid and mercenary, in all the relations of life, than the slaves of lascivious thoughts and practices, and most of their ways, manners, habits, pursuits, and resolves, are remarkably wayward, erratic, fickle, and fantastic.

Chapter Two.

GENERAL CONSEQUENCES.

PATHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA.—The effects of either self-pollution or excessive sexual indulgence, appear in as many forms and phases as there are individual subjects; nevertheless, there are, in the great majority of cases, symptoms enough in common to constitute a general family resemblance in morbid manifestations. *All evince clear and unmistakable evidences of nervous or vital exhaustion.* And if this condition is aggravated to a fatal result, the victim of self-murder is commonly supposed to die of dyspepsia, consumption, debility, decline, spinal disease, etc., etc., because, as the vital powers decay, and death approaches, the leading phenomena simulate, more or less closely, the symptoms of some of the maladies usually designated as above.

The various pathological results of this waste of

vitality have been noticed more or less by physicians, physiologists, and philosophers, in all ages of the world, since medicine became a profession. And within the last quarter of a century they have been described and explained by many eminent educational and reformatory writers, with remarkable exactness and accuracy.

“It would seem,” says Graham, in his Lectures to Young Men, “as if God had written an instinctive law of remonstrance, in the innate moral sense, against this filthy vice; for however ignorant the boy may be of the moral character of the act, or of the physical and mental evils which result from it, though he may never have been told that it is wrong, yet every one who is guilty of it feels an instinctive shame, and deep self-loathing, even in his secret solitude, after the unclean deed is done! And that youth has made no small progress in the depravity of his moral feelings, who has so silenced the dictates of natural modesty, that he can, without the blush of shame, pollute himself in the presence of another, even his most intimate companion. Hence all who give themselves up to the excesses of this debasing indulgence, carry about with them,

continually, a consciousness of their defilement, and cherish a secret suspicion that others look upon them as debased beings. They can not meet the look of others, and especially of the female sex, with the modest boldness of conscious innocence and purity; but their eyes fall, suddenly abashed, and the glow of mingled shame and confusion comes upon their cheeks, when they meet the glance of those with whom they are conversing, or in whose company they are. They feel none of that manly confidence and gallant spirit, and chaste delight, in the presence of virtuous females, which stimulate young men to pursue the course of ennobling refinement, and mature them for the social relations and enjoyments of life; and hence, they are often inclined either to shun the society of females entirely, or to seek such as is by no means calculated to elevate their views, nor improve their taste nor morals; and if, by the kind offices of friends, they are put forward into good society, they are continually oppressed with a shrinking embarrassment, which makes them feel as if they were out of their own element, and look forward to the time of retirement as the time of their release from an unpleas-

ant situation. A want of self-respect disqualifies them for the easy and elegant courtesies which render young men interesting to the other sex; and often prevents their forming those honorable relations in life so desirable to every virtuous heart, and frequently dooms them either to a gloomy celibacy, or an early grave.

“This shamefacedness, or unhappy quailing of the countenance, on meeting the look of others, often follows them through life, in some instances, even after they have entirely abandoned the habit, and become married men, and respectable members of society.”

Dr. Hill, in his *Eclectic Surgery*, has well described the symptoms of excessive masturbation as they are presented in a great majority of cases.

“In some cases, the only complaint the patient will make, on consulting you, is, that he is suffering under a kind of *continued fever*. He will probably present a hot, dry skin, with something of a hectic appearance. Though all the ordinary means of arresting such symptoms have been tried, he is none the better.

“Your patient will present *no* evidence of *organic*

disease. His lungs are sound, and his liver appears to perform its office tolerably well. On strict inquiry, however, you will find that he is generally inclined to be *costive*, and has probably been in the habit of taking some kinds of aperient pills. *Dyspeptic* symptoms, also, are not uncommon, in connection with excessive *languor* and *debility*. The languid or tired feeling is especially manifest, with trembling in the limbs perhaps, on first rising from the bed in the morning.

“The *sleep* seems to be irregular and unrefreshing—restlessness during the early part of the night, and in the advanced stages of the disease, profuse sweats before morning. There is also frequent starting in the sleep,* from disturbing dreams. The characteristic feature is, that your patient almost always *dreams* of sexual intercourse. This is one of the earliest, as well as most constant symptoms. When it occurs most frequently, it is apt to be accompanied with painful priapism. A *gleety discharge* from the urethra may also be frequently discovered, especially if the patient examine when at

* This starting in sleep, I think, is peculiar to those affected with costiveness, whether they have seminal emissions or not.

stool, or after urinating. This may be more frequent with those who have had gonorrhœa, but it is *by no means* confined to such.

“Your patient may confess to being a very nervous subject. He has not only frequent attacks of nervous *headache*, but occasional sensations of giddiness, or *vertigo*,* ringing in the ears, etc., with perhaps a fixed, dull pain in the *back* of the head, where a preternatural heat may almost always be discovered. Connected with this will be a stiffness in the muscles of the *neck*, and darting pains through the forehead. Extensive spinal irritation is a frequent accompaniment. Some patients will speak of a peculiar aura, like water running over the body, or a sensation resembling the crawling of insects under the skin, especially down the outside of the thighs. *Weak eyes* (as well as weak back) are among the common symptoms. But, as might be expected from the direct implication of the nervous system, the *moral* and *mental* symptoms are perhaps more to be relied on than any very obvious bodily peculiarities. The disease is well

* Giddiness, vertigo, and headache, are common effects of co-stiveness, however this may be induced.

known to be one of the most frequent causes of insanity, and one of its earliest symptoms is incapacity for concentrated attention. If the sufferer attempts to pursue any mathematical study, he will fail. He manifests, moreover, an excessive *want of confidence* in his own abilities, even where they do not seem to fail him. He has very often 'no mind of his own.' He is much afflicted with awful *forebodings*, though he can not tell of what. Some indescribable evil is always about to befall him. In this and several other particulars, the disease very closely resembles *delirium tremens*. It may be confounded with *hypochondria*.

"One very frequent, and perhaps early symptom (especially in *young females*) is *solitariness*—a disposition to seclude themselves from society. Although they may be tolerably cheerful when in company, they choose rather to be alone.

"The countenance has often a gloomy and worn-down expression. The patient's friends frequently notice a great change. Large livid spots under the eyes is a common feature. Sudden flashes of heat may be noticed passing over the patient's face. He is liable also to palpitations. The pulse is very va-

riable, generally too slow. Extreme *emaciation*, without any other assignable cause for it, may be set down as another very common symptom. If the evil has gone on for several years, there will be a *general* unhealthy appearance, of a character so marked, as to enable an experienced observer at once to detect the cause. In fact, I recognize such a case at the first glance, as readily as a banker does a counterfeit bill. In the case of onanists, especially, there is a peculiar *rank odor* emitted from the body, by which they may be readily distinguished. One striking peculiarity of all these patients is, that they can not look a man in the face! Cowardice is constitutional with them."

O. S. Fowler, the phrenologist, observes:

"Now, by a law of things, whatever impairs the physical sexuality, thereby impairs the *mental* sexuality; and as over-indulgence does this, therefore, whoever gives way to this passion proportionally *impairs his manhood*, or else effaces the charms of the feminine. The man lays down his nobleness, dignity, honor, and manhood, and is no longer bold, resolute, determined, aspiring, dignified, but becomes depreciated, irresolute, undetermined,

tamed, and conscious of his degradation. No longer comprehensive in planning, efficient in executing, correct in judgment, full of thought, strong in intellect, courteous in manner, noble in mien, and gallant to woman; but he becomes disheartened, uncertain in his plans, and inefficient in their execution, and a drone to himself and society. So, too, the female, diseased here, loses proportionably the amiableness and gracefulness of her sex, her sweetness of voice, disposition, and manner, her native enthusiasm, her beauty of face and form, her gracefulness and elegance of carriage, her looks of love and interest in man, and to him, and becomes merged into a mongrel, neither male nor female, but marred by the defects of both, without possessing the virtues of either. No more the woman till her female *organs* are restored, and her accompanying *mental* sexuality thereby re-established."

SIGNS OF SELF-ABUSE.—In relation to the "signs which come to the surface" of the self-fornicator, the author above quoted remarks: "The private sensualist may be further known by his pallid, blood-

less countenance, and hollow, sunken, and half-ghastly eyes, the lids of which will frequently be tinged with red; while, if his indulgence has been carried very far, he will have black and blue semi-circles under his eyes, and also look as if worn out, almost dead for want of sleep, yet unable to get it, etc. He will also have a half wild, half vacant stare, or half lascivious, half foolish smile, especially when he sees a female. He will also have a certain quickness yet indecision of manner; will begin to do this thing, then stop and essay to do that, and then do what he first intended; and in such utterly insignificant matters as putting his hat here or there, etc. The same incoherence will characterize his expressions, and the same want of promptness mark all he does. Little things will agitate and fluster him, nor will he be prompt, or resolute, or bold, or forcible; but timid, afraid of his own shadow, uncertain, waiting to see what is best, and always in a hurry, yet hardly knows what he is doing, or wants to do. Nor will he walk erect, or dignified, as if conscious of his manhood, and lofty in his aspirations, but will walk and move with a diminutive, cringing, sycophantic, inferior, mean,

self-debased manner, as if depreciated and degraded in his own eyes; thus telling you perpetually by his shamed looks and sheepish manner that he has been doing something low, mean, contemptible, and vulgar. This secret practice has impaired both his physical and mental manhood, and thereby effaced the nobleness and efficiency of the masculine, and deteriorated his *soul*, besides having ruined his body.

“He will, moreover, be dull of comprehension, incorrect, forgetful, heedless, full of blunders of all sorts, crude and inappropriate in his jokes, slow to take the hint, listless, inattentive, absent-minded, sad, melancholy, easily frightened, easily discouraged, wanting in clearness and point of idea, less bright than formerly, and altogether depreciated in looks and talents compared with what he would have been, if he had never contracted this soul and body ruining practice.”

Excessive sexual indulgence in the marriage bed not only destroys the health, temper, and disposition of the wife, rendering her gloomy, peevish, hysterical, and querulous, but often destroys the happiness of the family circle entirely. The following anec-

dote, with many similar ones related by Rosch, is in point: "In traveling I accidentally made the acquaintance of a merchant, whose humor and intelligence soon made him a most agreeable companion. In our conversation we casually turned upon women, and I noticed immediately that his vivacity had vanished, and a dark cloud was spreading itself over his mind. 'Yes, woman,' he exclaimed, after a long pause, 'who can fathom the mysteries of her nature?' He was silent again, and his face expressed the working of his heart. I interrupted his meditation by asking, 'Do you really find woman so mysterious?' This brought our conversation fully upon the subject, and I learned, in the course of it, that for six years he had been acquainted with the daughter of a merchant, and that a union could not be effected between them, the parents of the lady being opposed to it. She pledged him her fidelity to remain single until all obstacles were removed, affirming that she would marry none but him; and, finally, their mutual fidelity triumphed over every difficulty, and they were married. Shortly after their marriage the lady's disposition changed entirely, and he soon became convinced

that her former kindness was but assumed in order to deceive him. The scenes which daily occurred deeply affected him, and she robbed him of all domestic comfort, by a perverseness which, according to his ideas, was totally inconsistent with female character.

“She presented him with a fine boy, and only for about two months, during and after his birth, did he enjoy a cessation from confusion; and then the turmoil was resumed, and continued throughout one year and a half of unhappy married life, when he separated himself from her.

“After this she resided in a small town, at about fifty miles distance from him. His relatives reproached him bitterly for having taken such a step, assuring him that she was respected by every one. He insisted that he had not acted without deep reflection—that he had anticipated nothing but ruin in this hell of matrimonial life. ‘Is it not an unfathomable mystery?’ he exclaimed, after having finished his story; ‘how do you explain these things?’ I then gave him a key by which he might solve the difficulty, and spoke upon the subject, and illustrated clearly to his mind how his own lively

temperament, and the passion with which he desired to possess her, had produced the very evils of which he complained. He manifested a deep interest in my exposition of his case, and became convinced, that not his wife, but himself, had occasioned the domestic misery he had suffered.

“ ‘Great God!’ he exclaimed, ‘and these things not a part of man’s early education! kept ignorant of a subject on which his happiness so intimately depends, while the law commands an abuse which destroys families, and makes the best miserable! It is horrible!’

“ We separated, and after a year I received a letter from quite a different part of the country. The honest man had made good his former errors by repairing early to his wife’s residence, and communicating to her the new light he had obtained, and asking her forgiveness.

“ She entertained no ill-feeling toward him, having previously ceased to reproach him, and now could not comprehend what foul demon had interposed between them and interrupted their happiness; and when he requested her to return to him, her only objection was to join him in the place of

their former abode, fearing the reproaches of their former acquaintances. He assented to relinquish his business, and together they removed to a distant part of the country, to make for themselves a paradise which till now they had not enjoyed. Since then, knowing the path of duty, they walk in it and are happy.”

Many women, on being sent away from their husbands, rapidly recover health; and lose it again as rapidly on returning to them, as the following case, quoted from the last mentioned author, instructively illustrates: “A friend of mine married a healthy young lady of gentle and truly woman-like deportment. Soon after their marriage she became sick, and from the commencement of her pregnancy had a great deal to suffer. I recollect she was very much afflicted with vomiting, spasms, and a chronic headache. I was at that time a student of medicine, and had too little insight into such things to be at all surprised. The physician who was consulted decided it to be a natural consequence of her delicate situation—a condition to which her system was unaccustomed, and for which nature was preparing her with an extraordinary struggle. This

explanation was received, and the poor woman was punctual in swallowing the prescriptions, but without the desired effect; at last, with great effort, she gave birth to a boy. My own pursuits led me away from that place. My friend, whose business required him frequently to travel for six months at a time, always called upon me whenever he came to the place of my residence—sometimes coming from home, sometimes returning. I naturally inquired after the state of his health and that of his wife, and invariably learned that when he came from home she was sickly, but, on his way returning, he always assured me of having received intelligence that she was well. He finally died; and when, a few years afterward, I saw her as a widow, she enjoyed perfect health.”

Deslandes, in relation to the external signs of excessive masturbation, remarks: “The countenance, instead of the vermilion glow of health, is pale and without freshness, or of a yellowish, earthy, leaden, and livid tint; the lips lose their color; a bluish circle surrounds the eyes; the eyelids are puffed out with œdema; the flesh is soft and flaccid; the pulse is small and feeble; upon the slightest

motion, or during sleep, the forehead, chest, and palms of the hands are bathed with profuse perspiration; in some patients the hands and feet are œdematous; in short, the symptoms are those of general atony, which is attended with a slow, hectic fever, denoting that the economy does not yield without reaction to the destructive vice."

The dyspeptic symptoms usually noticed in persons addicted to the secret vice, are thus described by the above author, who, after remarking that the appetite is often temporarily increased at first, continues: "But such a state of things can not long continue; numerous signs soon show that excesses in venery may act on the digestive tube in another manner than by rendering the appetite more keen and the digestion more easy. In fact, the appetite does not long resist excesses in onanism; it first diminishes, then disappears, and is often replaced by a decided disgust for every kind of food; in some patients it becomes irregular, capricious; in others it remains. The latter have most cause of complaint, for it continues longer than digestion is performed. 'My appetite remains,' writes an onanist to Lissot, 'but it is a misfortune, as eating is

followed by pain in the stomach, and my food is rejected.' Many onanists feel pain of a similar character after eating. In others there is a sense of oppression, or fullness, in the epigastric region. In some there is a gnawing feeling resembling that produced by a want of food; this symptom is very common in girls, who, in consequence of secret practices, have become affected with leucorrhœa. In some the face and cheeks present a redness which contrasts remarkably with their habitual paleness. Onanists are frequently affected with headache, vertigo, flushed face, etc. In some the slowness of the digestion is indicated by eructations, which occur long after taking food; or the belly is tense and filled with wind. Food, which formerly digested with ease, is now oppressive; and the list of articles of diet is shortened every day. Some onanists have been known in these cases to indulge in ardent spirits, with the vain hope of exciting their appetite, and regaining their strength. Repeated vomitings, constant pain in the belly, and a slow fever, are also frequent symptoms of the deep-seated affections of the digestive organs. In many patients the intestinal canal is more liable to be affected by

venereal excesses than the stomach. Obstinate constipation in some, diarrhea and borborygmi in others, are the usual signs of the affection of this canal.

“Many authors have repeated after the statements of Hippocrates, that individuals affected with consumption arising from venereal excesses, have no fever. This is an error; they die, as we have already stated, with true hectic fever, which is caused by the state of the different organs, and particularly by that of the genital system. Of this, numerous instances might be cited. The following is related by Dr. Federigo, the Italian translator of Portal’s work on consumption: ‘I knew,’ says he, ‘a female who was affected for many years with extreme debility and entire loss of appetite; a slow fever every evening had rendered her extremely thin; her eyes were pale and sunken; her skin was very hot; and it was highly painful for her to stand erect; a profuse discharge weakened her still more; and she was in an advanced state of marasmus. All the active remedies, as preparations of iron, decoctions of cinchona, and mineral waters, were tried without success. She died in a most deplora-

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

ORDINARY COURSE OF SYMPTOMS.—One of the most constant symptoms is the tendency to emaciation. The loss of flesh is often imputed to rapid growth, over-work, or other causes, when it is owing wholly to masturbation ; and when the bodily bulk can be readily regained on abandoning the habit. This wasting of the body is usually attended with a craving, and often quite voracious appetite ; in some cases the craving is insatiable, and the patient wants to eat constantly. The leanness of the body is particularly noticeable about the hips and lower part of the abdomen. The thighs fall away, as it were, and the abdomen is drawn in toward the back, appearing quite concave externally, instead of convex, as in the normal state ; some persons become reduced to a mere skeleton, and then the morbid craving

abates, to be followed by little or no appetite for food, and not unfrequently a total disgust for aliment of all kinds. In many cases the loins, hips, thighs, and lower extremities exhibit a remarkable degree of emaciation, even before the constitution is really broken down; in these cases the usual flesh and strength are soon acquired after adopting a correct hygienic regimen. Often the head is bent forward and the trunk of the body curved as in old age. The patient feels indolent and stupid; his heart beats violently on slight exertion; and he is easily put out of breath. At first the countenance is preternaturally flushed, but soon becomes pale, dull, leaden, or livid, loses its freshness, and the expression is without sprightliness; the lips at length lose their natural color, a bluish semicircle surrounds the eyes; the eyelids are often puffy or œdematous, the pulse is small and feeble, and usually frequent at first, though as the habit continues it becomes slow and languid. The flesh is soft and flabby. As the debility increases, the hands and feet become puffy, and the forehead, chest, and palms of the hands, sweat profusely on slight exertion.

The bluish circle around the eyes, though common

to masturbators, may be produced by other causes; hence all persons manifesting this symptom should not be charged with this vice unless other corroborating circumstances are present.

The rank odor which often exhales from the bodies of masturbators, is peculiar, and exceedingly disagreeable. When once distinctly recognized by the sense of smell it can not easily be forgotten.

The fetid breath, too, with which many of them are affected, is unlike an offensive breath from almost any other cause. With some persons, especially those who have been uncleanly in other respects, or whose dietetic habits have been gross, every expiration of air from the lungs is horribly disgusting, rendering it a most undesirable and sickening task to converse with them.

Chapter Three.

SEMINAL EMISSIONS.

SPERMATORRHŒA.—In males the common and most prominent result of excessive sexual excitement, or of irregular indulgences is, *involuntary emissions*, technically called *spermorrhæa*, or more properly, *spermatorrhæa*. In the early stages, when the constitutional tone is not very greatly impaired, they are usually attended with lascivious dreaming, and generally a degree of pleasurable orgasm, which awakens the patient from sleep. But as the debility progresses the discharge takes place with little or no sleep-disturbance. In the early stages of the complaint, erection of the penis, partial or complete, precedes the emission; but when severe inroads have been made upon the organic vitality, it frequently occurs almost unconsciously.

Some masturbators, especially those subject to habitual costiveness, experience a constant irritation of the sexual parts, and pollute themselves upon the least exciting cause; while others so wear out the susceptibility of the organs, that an emission is impossible without great effort; but with either class of persons the habit of self-pollution is equally the ruling passion.

Female masturbators evince something like a corresponding derangement in the menstrual function. It is often premature in appearance, excessive in quantity, too frequent in its periodical recurrence, and alternated with leucorrhœa, and generally attended with occasional bloatings of the abdomen, violent palpitation, or fluttering of the heart, great weakness in the back, and not unfrequently severe prolapsus, or falling of the womb.

SOURCE OF CONSTITUTIONAL INJURY.—The injury resulting to the constitution is not so much from the mere loss of semen, or other fluid, as from the absolute waste of vital power through the inordinate nervous excitement. Unquestionably the loss of the seminal fluid is in itself a source of considerable

vital exhaustion; for all experience shows that its presence in the organism is essential to full and perfect development and vigor; yet the preternatural excitation of the nervous centers is the direct cause of a still greater waste of the fund of life. The excitement of venereal indulgence is more universal and more intense than that of any other propensity, and attended, consequently, with greater commotion and disturbance of all the functions of the animal economy. Indeed, the end contemplated in the institution of the sexual passion, requires for its proper fulfillment, that all the operations of the organic machinery, animal, vital, and mental, be for a brief period, as it were, concentrated in the reproductive function. Hence the waste of vitality, when the sexual crisis is frequently provoked, without the circumstances which render its exercise natural and legitimate, is immense and incalculable.

SECRETION OF SEMINAL FLUID.—A general error has prevailed among young persons, that the seminal fluid, after the full development of the sexual apparatus, is constantly accumulating, and that, unless it is occasionally or periodically discharged,

its superabundance will produce injury. The fact is, the semen, in its perfect state, is never secreted, except during the period of sexual excitement. Its elements may pervade the whole circulating system, be diffused throughout the entire organism, and any detrimental excess may be deterged through the various excretory functions; but it is only during venereal excitement that they are secreted by the proper organs in the form of semen.

Says a German writer—Christian Ritter, M.D.: “We sometimes meet, in common life, with stories of the terrible evils which have befallen young persons on account of their excessive chastity; nay, we have been told that the seminal fluid has even occasionally entered the brain of one or another of these unfortunate beings, and rendered him insane, with many other things equally silly and equally untrue. Chastity can never be excessive. It is always advantageous; it always promotes health and happiness; it never will nor can become the cause of injury or disease. Yet there are to be found impudent wretches who invent and propagate these and similar falsehoods, in order to seduce the pure and blooming youth into the path of vice. I

can, however, assure my readers that if there were even a single possibility of disease from total abstinence, it could only befall those individuals who overload their system with nutritious food or heating drinks, or who indulge in excess of sleep, in idleness, etc.”

PREVALENT ERRORS.—Dr. Alcott remarks, in an editorial note to the above paragraph of Dr. Ritter: “The author says, in a caption to the present chapter, which is so long that I have chosen to omit it, that the notion which he has been there so successfully combating, viz., that the retention of the seminal fluid sometimes induces disease, has been encouraged even by physicians! A most undoubted fact; for what monstrous error in habit or practice is there which some weak-minded physician may not have connived at, or even encouraged!”

Dr. Graham argues that the great debility resulting from venereal excitement or self-abuse, is not so much to be attributed to the mere loss of semen as to *the peculiar excitement* of the nervous system. He observes: “Hence, therefore, sexual desire,

cherished by the mind and dwelt on by the imagination, not only increases the excitability and peculiar sensibility of the genital organs themselves, but always throws an influence, equal to the intensity of the affection, over the whole nervous domain, disturbing all the functions depending on the nerves for vital energy—which is thereby increased upon or distracted from them—and if this excitement is frequently repeated, or long continued, it inevitably induces an increased degree of irritability, and debility, and relaxation generally throughout the nervous and muscular tissues, and especially the nerves of organic life. And hence those lascivious day-dreams and amorous reveries in which young people too generally—and especially the idle and the voluptuous, and the sedentary and the nervous—are exceedingly apt to indulge, are often the sources of general debility, effeminacy, disordered functions, and permanent disease, and even premature death, without the actual exercise of the genital organs! Indeed, this unchastity of thought, this *adultery of the mind*, is the beginning of immeasurable evil to the human family; and while children are regularly though unintentionally trained

to it by all the mistaken fondness of parents, and all the circumstances of civic life, it is but mockery in the ear of Heaven to deprecate the evil consequences, and folly little short of fatuity to attempt to arrest the current of crime that flows from it."

Concerning the supposed necessity for seminal emissions, the same author says: "Health does not absolutely require that there should ever be an emission of semen from puberty to death, though the individual live a hundred years, and the frequency of involuntary nocturnal emissions is an indubitable proof, that the parts, at least, are suffering under a debility and morbid irritability, utterly incompatible with the general welfare of the system; and the mental faculties are always debilitated and impaired by such indulgences.

The frequency of involuntary emissions, when resulting from this debilitating practice, varies greatly with different individuals. In some they occur once or twice a week; in others but once in two or three weeks. As a general rule, the more frequently they occur the greater is the degree of debility and exhaustion experienced by the patient on

the following day. With those who are extremely debilitated, the irritated sexual organs sympathize with every disturbance of the stomach or brain, and every casual excitement induces an involuntary emission of a crude and watery, or muco-seminal fluid, not unfrequently discolored and bloody; and sometimes there is a continued dribbling of a mucopurulent or gonorrhœal matter. Many husbands and fathers have become so irritable in the genital organs, in consequence of self-pollution in early life, that the least approach to familiarity or caressing with their companions, has induced an emission, in some cases rendering them utterly impotent.

MORBID SEXUALITY TRANSMISSIBLE.—There can be no manner of doubt that a debilitated and irritable condition of the sexual apparatus may, like all other morbid conditions of the parents, be transmitted from father or mother, or both, to the offspring. I have had patients who have been subject to emissions on the most trivial occasions of excitement, from the period of puberty, and even before; and this without having been addicted to masturba-

tion at all; and a young man was under my treatment two years ago, who assured me that he had been afflicted with involuntary emissions from a child.

This organic inheritance explains, in part, the very great difference we observe in the effect which seminal emissions, or the causes of them—self-pollution or venereal excesses—have in different persons. Some are worn out and crippled in a few months, while others maintain, apparently, a good degree of constitutional vigor for years, under the same kind and degree of self-abuse.

Those who were born with a good constitution, and have been addicted to masturbation from the period of puberty, or even before, have been known to hold out after the vital powers were so prostrated that the miserable sufferers were confined to their beds for years; and I have known many cases in which the drain of vitality was so great, from an almost constant seminal, or rather muco-seminal dribbling, that the patients were unable to sit up; and in several instances the patients lingered in this condition for a number of years after the power of speech was lost, unable to turn over in bed without

assistance, and only able to communicate by the language of signs. In most of these cases, too, neither parents, friends, nurses, nor physicians, suspect the real nature of the debility until it has progressed beyond all power of medication.

Of some hundreds of young persons whom I have advised professionally, not half a dozen ever received the first syllable of instruction, in relation to this habit, from the various physicians to whom they had previously applied; nor did those physicians seem to have the least idea of the nature of the malady for which they were prescribing blue pills, preparations of iron, tonic bitters, etc. Yet so prominently did the indications of self-abuse appear, that I could readily detect the fact in almost every case, at the first glance at the patient.

Chapter Four.

GENERAL TREATMENT.

As the sufferers from inordinate sexual excitement present all possible degrees of local debility and constitutional injury, so will the degrees of health they are capable of regaining be correspondingly various. But there is one pre-requisite in all cases. The first condition of recovery is a prompt and permanent abandonment of the ruinous habit. Without a faithful adherence to this prohibitory law on the part of the patient, all medication on the part of the physician will assuredly fail. The patient must plainly understand that future prospects, character, health, and life itself, depend on an unflinching resistance to the morbid solicitation; with the assurance, however, that a due perseverance will eventually render, what now seems like a resistless and overwhelming propensity, not only

controllable but perfectly loathsome and undesirable.

In treating of the causes of morbid sexual excitement I have already intimated the negative management—the things to avoid. In the present chapter, therefore, I need only treat specifically of the positive medication—the things to attend to.

MORAL AND MENTAL MANAGEMENT.—It is essential that the mind have occupation; something to dwell upon besides the adulterous images which are ever crowding themselves into the thoughts. Yet it must not be severely studious nor fatiguing. The patient should seek to throw the current of his cogitations as far from himself and as much on other subjects as possible. Let him endeavor to look far onward into the future, and overlook all he can of the past and present. He may find consolation and encouragement in the reflection, that a few years devoted to physiological regeneration, may add twice or thrice that number to a later, and better, and happier period of existence.

Nothing serves so well to strengthen and sustain the young person who has resolved to attempt self-

reformation, as a lively interest in the various reforms of the day; and in becoming a laborer in the cause of temperance reform, health reform, moral reform, etc., he finds himself surrounded by an influence which seems to buoy him up, and give him energy and fortitude to accomplish his own particular and personal renovation of habits. His reading, and studies, and reflections, should be carefully directed to practical and not to speculative subjects. I do not mean that he should become a leader among men in any sense, nor go forward as a champion in any cause; this requires all the vigor of body and energy of mind that we find in those who have never wasted any portion of their vitality; but that he seek such persons as associates, and try to identify himself with and interest his feelings in the principles which they advocate.

BODILY EXERCISES.—But mental occupation should never be considered as in any sense a substitute for bodily exercises. The vital energies which have acquired a habit of wasting themselves through the sexual apparatus, must be made to expend their force on the muscular system. The morbid irrita-

tion must be diffused, as it were, over the whole body. Hence all the exercise the patient is able to bear, short of absolute fatigue, is useful.

There is, however, a great choice in the kinds of exercise adapted to individual cases. As far as possible, they should seek such as will harmonize with the mental exercises, and serve in some way to interest and amuse. In cities, a moderate course of gymnastic exercises is advantageous, especially to those who are studious or sedentary in their accustomed avocations. Walking is, in the great majority of cases, the very best general exercise for those who do not labor. It is not very material whether the exercise be of the *work* or of the *play* kind, provided it is appropriate in degree, and taken moderately yet frequently. But some light business occupation is usually the best, for the reason that the mind recognizes some immediate object, some profitable return, independent of the capital to be acquired in health, over which some degree of doubt and uncertainty will always hang. It is in human nature, in both its healthy and its morbid aspects, to labor with more zest, cheerfulness, and satisfaction, for "small profits and quick returns,"

than for larger profits with a more distant realization. And this principle should be kept in view in the management of the cases under consideration.

There ought to be, connected with some of our hydropathic establishments, a farm, vegetable garden, and workshop, where invalids of this class and of other classes, may work their way, or a part of it; that is, where they can do some kind of mechanical, or out-door labor, and have *pay* for all they do. This plan would give the patient a double advantage; for in taking the exercise necessary to his recovery, he would have a sure reward as he goes along, and a prospect of an accumulating good in the future.

For those who are not greatly reduced in strength, moderate and steady labor on a farm, or in a mechanic's shop, is not objectionable; in fact, it is often the very best kind of employment. Young men whose home-attachments are not strong, and who are of a roaming disposition, often do well as traveling agents for good books and periodicals. In this way the mind can be sustained on a three-fold object—the recovery of health, a moderate

compensation for the time spent, and a better knowledge of the world.

DIET.—This can hardly be too plain and simple. It must be strictly vegetable, as well as abstemious. Every kind of animal food must be prohibited, and even milk can seldom be used without injury—never at the evening meal. Good brown bread, wheat-meal, water biscuits, Graham crackers, wheaten grits, or boiled wheat, and hominy, are the best articles of the farinaceous kind. It is especially important that a good proportion of the food be solid, so as to secure slow and perfect mastication. A majority of patients are troubled with a morbid craving, and feel an inclination to eat altogether too frequently, and some are never satisfied with all they can swallow. Dry solid food tends to correct this morbid appetite, and also guard against the tendency to overload the stomach. The evening meal should be very light, and taken entirely without drink. A hard cracker, or a crust of bread, is amply sufficient; and unless the dinner is moderate, no supper should be eaten at all.

The morbid appetite, or continual craving for

food, will never subside so long as the stomach is habitually gorged with all the food it can swallow; but may be surely overcome by a persevering adherence to the dietetic plan here recommended.

A moderate proportion of the best fruits and vegetables may be taken to advantage, but many kinds should never be taken at the same meal, nor in the same day. As perfect a dietetic course as can be laid down is, perhaps, the following: *Morning meal*—Dry toasted bread, baked apples. *Dinner*—Wheat-meal water cakes, one boiled potato, one raw apple. *Supper*—One small hard cracker.

The particular articles can be varied without affecting materially the simplicity or healthfulness of the whole. For examples: *Breakfast*—Cracked wheat mush, eaten with a very little syrup or sugar, a crust of bread. *Dinner*—Baked potatoes and bread, with plain rice pudding. *Supper*—A dry crust of bread. *Breakfast*—Hominy and hard crackers, with stewed fruit. *Dinner*—Graham bread, boiled cabbage, squash, peas, beans, or parsnips, and a boiled apple for dessert. *Supper*—A wheat-meal biscuit.

The patient should ever bear in mind that the

principal danger in variety is from the excess of quantity, while there is no danger of simplifying too much.*

Many invalids will no doubt fear starvation on the "meager diet" above indicated, and their apprehension will be aggravated by the feelings of depression which they will more or less experience for a time, on abandoning a stimulating diet. But I can confidently assure them that *that* is the least of all the dangers to be apprehended. I have known quite a number of young men, and several young ladies, adopt a dietary even more strict, and persevere in it, despite the advice of doctors, the remonstrances of parents and relatives, and the entreaties of friends and neighbors, for several months, and in several instances for two and three years, and in every case recover comparatively a good degree of health. In bad cases this rigid course of diet is indispensable to a cure.

* Those who desire a full exposition of the chemical and physiological properties of all forms of alimentary substances, I must refer to the Hydropathic Encyclopedia. I have also in hand a Hydropathic Cook Book, containing recipes for preparing food on physiological principles, which will soon be issued from the press of the same publishers, Messrs. Fowlers and Wells.

DRINK.—I do not, as a general rule, approve of very free water-drinking in these cases. A tumbler or so just before the morning walk, one or two tumblers about the middle of the forenoon, and at all other times precisely what the thirst calls for, and no more, is the best general direction I can give. Probably a still more accurate rule of practice is, for the patient to take as much water, at the times above mentioned, as will sit well and pleasantly on the stomach, avoiding all very disagreeable chilliness or painful sense of distention.

SLEEP.—“Early to bed and early to rise” must be an invariable habitude. Those who are very dreamy and restless in the forepart of the night must be extremely careful of the evening meal. Such persons may do well to take only two meals a day—at 8 A.M. and 3 P.M. The bed must be as hard as the patient can endure without discomfort, and the bedding as light as possible without his suffering from actual cold. The bodily position during sleep is of some importance. The patient must avoid, if possible, going to sleep on the back. On first retiring he may assume this position, being careful,

however, as sleepiness comes on, to recline to one side. When fully awake in the morning, he must rise instanter, and proceed to bathing, exercising, etc., being careful to give the system a half an hour or so of rest before eating.

BATHING.—The bathing part of the treatment is exceedingly apt to be overdone. Many patients, who have been for years wasting their vitality at a rapid rate, find their way to a Water-Cure, and expect the presiding doctor, by some wonderful exhibition of skill, or some marvelous property of “cold water,” is going to replenish the enfeebled organism, and make them over and as good as new, with a few packings, and plunges, and douches, etc. This is a great mistake. Such patients are always deplorably impatient. They are willing to do any thing or suffer any thing, provided the cure will come speedily. But their impatience sometimes defeats the very object in view—restoration. If the physician is candid and intelligent he will inform them that the process of reparation is slow; that it will require weeks, probably months, and possibly years. Some of these impatient patients,

who have already spent several years in quack-doctoring themselves, growing worse all the while, will, on being told that the road to health is a long one, return to their nostrum-seeking experiments again, and devote a year or two more in vain attempts to find a specific which has no existence.

The great majority of patients require, so far as the bathing processes are concerned, very mild treatment. The nervous system should never be subjected to much of a shock, nor the body greatly chilled with cold. All baths should have reference to maintaining a comfortable balance of the circulation, and securing an agreeable reaction, and the familiar saying, "We had better do too little than too much," is peculiarly applicable here.

So great is the diversity of circumstances in which we find this class of patients, and so various their degrees of debility and susceptibility, that we can give no very precise directions as to the time and temperature of the baths; but we can give rules which all may apply with sufficient discrimination. To avoid frequent repetitions, the following bathing processes, which are applicable to home-treatment, are described connectedly in this place:

1. *Wet-Sheet Packing*.—On a bed or mattress two or three comfortables or bedquilts are spread; over them a pair of flannel blankets; and lastly, a wet sheet (rather coarse linen is best), wrung out lightly. The patient, undressed, lies down flat on the back, and is quickly enveloped in the sheet, blanket, and other bedding. The head must be well raised with pillows, and care must be taken to have the feet well wrapped. If the feet do not warm with the rest of the body, a jug of hot water should be applied; and if there is tendency to headache, several folds of a cold wet cloth should be laid over the forehead. The usual time for remaining in the pack is from forty to sixty minutes. It may be followed by the plunge, half-bath, rubbing, wet-sheet, or towel-wash, according to circumstances.

2. *Half-Pack*.—This is the same as the preceding, with the exception that the neck and extremities are not covered by the wet sheet, which is applied merely to the trunk of the body, from the armpits to the hips.

3. *Half-Bath*.—An oval or oblong tub is most convenient, though any vessel allowing the patient to sit down with the legs extended will answer.

The water should cover the lower extremities and about half of the abdomen. While in the bath the patient, if able, should rub the lower extremities while the attendant rubs the chest, back, and abdomen.

4. *Hip or Sitz-Bath*.—Any small-sized wash-tub will do for this; although tubs constructed with a straight back, and raised four or five inches from the floor, are much the most agreeable. The water should just cover the hips and lower part of the abdomen. A blanket should be thrown around the patient, who will find it also useful to rub or knead the abdomen with the hand or fingers during the bath.

5. *Foot-Bath*.—Any small vessel, as a pail, will answer. Usually the water should be about ankle deep; but very delicate invalids, or extremely susceptible persons, should not have the water more than half an inch to one inch in depth. During the bath the feet should be kept in gentle motion. Walking foot-baths are excellent in warm weather where a cool stream can be found.

6. *Rubbing Wet-Sheet*.—If the sheet is used *drip-pingly* wet the patient stands in a tub; if wrung so

as not to drip, it may be used on a carpet or in any place. The sheet is thrown around the body, which it completely envelops below the neck; the attendant rubs the body over the sheet (not with it), the patient exercising himself at the same time by rubbing in front.

7. *Pail-Douche*.—This means simply pouring water over the chest and shoulders from a pail.

8. *Stream-Douche*.—A stream of water may be applied to the part or parts affected by pouring from a pitcher or other convenient vessel, held as high as possible; or a barrel or keg may be elevated for the purpose, having a tube of any desired size. The power will be proportioned to the amount of water in the reservoir.

9. *Towel or Sponge-Bath*.—Rubbing the whole surface with a coarse wet towel or sponge, followed by a dry sheet or towel, constitutes this process.

10. *The Wet-Girdle*.—Three or four yards of crash toweling make a good one. One half of it is wet and applied around the abdomen, followed by the dry half to cover it. It should be wetted as often as it becomes dry.

11. *The Chest-Wrapper*.—This is made of crash,

to fit the trunk like an under-shirt, from the neck to the lower ribs; it is applied as wet as possible without dripping, and covered by a similar dry wrapper made of canton or light woolen flannel. It requires renewing two or three times a day.

12. *The Sweating-Pack.*—To produce perspiration, the patient is packed in the flannel blanket and other bedding, as mentioned in No. 1, omitting the wet sheet. Some persons will perspire in less than an hour; others require several hours. This is the severest of the water-cure processes, and, in fact, very seldom called for.

13. *The Plunge-Bath.*—This is employed but little, except at the establishments. Those who have conveniences will often find it one of the best processes. Any tub or box holding water enough to allow the whole body to be immersed, with the limbs extended, answers the purpose. A very good plunge can be made of a large cask cut in two near the middle. It is a useful precaution to wet the head before taking this bath.

14. *The Shower-Bath.*—This needs no description. It is not frequently used in water-cure, but is often very convenient. Those liable to a “rush

of blood to the head," should not allow much of the shock of the stream upon the head. Feeble persons should never use this bath until prepared by other treatment.

15. *Fomentations*.—These are employed for relaxing muscles, relieving spasms, griping, nervous headache, etc. Any cloths wet in hot water and applied as warm as can be borne, generally answer the purpose; but flannel cloths dipped in hot water and wrung nearly dry in another cloth or handkerchief, so as to steam the part moderately, are the most efficient sedatives.

16. *Injections*.—These are warm or tepid, cool or cold. The former are used to quiet pain and produce free discharges; the latter to check excessive evacuations and strengthen the bowels. For the former purpose a large quantity should be used; and for the latter purpose only a small quantity.

General Bathing Rules.—Never bathe soon after eating. The most powerful baths should be taken when the stomach is most empty. No full bath should be taken less than three hours after a full meal. Great heat or profuse perspiration is no objection to going into cold water, provided the

respiration is not disturbed, and the patient is not greatly fatigued or exhausted. The body should always be comfortably warm at the time of taking any cold bath. Exercise, friction, dry-wrapping, or fire may be resorted to, according to circumstances. Very feeble persons should commence treatment with warm or tepid water, gradually lowering the temperature.

The baths which are most generally indicated in the cases under consideration are, the *rubbing wet-sheet*, *half-bath*, *hip-bath*, *foot-bath*, and the *wet-girdle*. The towel wash is a good substitute for the rubbing wet-sheet, and in very feeble persons it is preferable, as it occasions less shock. As a general prescription (to be modified to suit particular cases), I would suggest the following :

Rubbing wet-sheet or sponge-bath on rising in the morning, followed by the dry rubbing-sheet if the patient has an assistant, and by rubbing with dry towels if he has not. The time may vary according to the temperature of the body, and the state of the weather—from three to ten minutes.

Half-bath at 75° , about 10 A.M., from two to ten minutes, followed as above. If this bath is im-

practicable, the hip-bath, as below, may be substituted.

Hip-bath at 70°, about 4 P.M., ten to fifteen minutes.

Foot-bath at 8 P.M. If the patient is subject to cold feet, put them in warm water—about 100°—five minutes, then dip them in cold water for half a minute, afterward rubbing dry with towels. Hand-rubbing is advisable after this bath, and also after the rubbing wet-sheet, provided the patient has an assistant.

The above arrangement presumes the patient to take three meals a day. If he takes but two, the 10 o'clock bath may be taken at 11, and the 4 o'clock bath at 6.

Neither the half-bath nor hip-bath should be taken so cold as to leave the muscles of the loins and lower extremities stiff and chilly for more than a few minutes. If these symptoms do not pass off after moderate exercise, the temperature must be raised a little or the time shortened. The former is generally preferable.

Many patients will be too feeble and cold to bear as many baths as are given above. But in all cases

the patient's temperature and circulation are to guide him. Take as many of them, in the order mentioned, as can be borne without permanent discomfort.

The *wet-sheet packing* is advantageous in cases where the skin is clogged up with bilious accumulations, and the superficial temperature not too low. It may be repeated daily, or semi-weekly, according to the effect, until the skin is thoroughly cleansed, which usually takes a month or two. Those who have been greatly reduced by seminal emissions, do not bear the pack well while the emissions continue.

Other applications of water will be directed in the succeeding chapter.

MECHANICAL MEANS.—Various mechanical contrivances have been invented and experimented with to prevent seminal emissions. But they are all only applicable to the incipient stages of the difficulty, and then merely to such cases as are preceded by an erection of the penis. In these cases they do frequently prevent the erection, and consequently the emission, yet they do nothing toward

removing the cause. This must be accomplished by the adoption of the whole regimenal course I have laid down. In some cases the emission has been prevented by a ligature, or cord, tied loosely around the foreskin, which is drawn over the glans; if any abnormal irritation excites the erectile action, the string compresses the part so painfully as to arrest its progress and awaken the patient. Another contrivance is a tin, or glass, or other kind of tube, inclosing the part; on the inner surface, or near the external end, pins or sharp points of some kind are fitted, which, as soon as erection commences, check it by pressing against the projecting organ.

Chapter Five.

PARTICULAR CONSEQUENCES.

THE effects of sexual excesses are often manifested by such an assemblage of symptoms as are known to nosologists as specific maladies, many of which have also other causes. They present themselves in a thousand forms and phases, from the slightest bodily disorder and mental hallucination, to the most complete and fatal prostration of all the powers of body and mind. The most frequent and prominent will be considered in the present chapter.

General Debility, often taking the name of *dyspepsia*, frequently treated by physicians as *liver complaint*, and not unfrequently terminating in *consumption*, is the most common result of inordinate or excessive sexual indulgence. *Marasmus* is but another name for the same general condition, and

merely indicates extreme emaciation. The plan of treatment has already been detailed. Those, however, who are reduced below the point of taking bodily exercise, must trust to one or two tepid spongings daily, and the dietary given in the preceding chapter.

Weakness of the Joints, especially in the knees, is occasionally manifested in a remarkable degree by masturbators. They walk with a swinging, dragging motion of the lower extremities, instead of a firm step, and on attempting to run are very apt to strike one knee behind the other and tumble down. In almost all large cities persons are occasionally seen tottering along the sidewalk, whose trembling, half-palsied limbs are unable to sustain the weight of the body, and whose knee-joints are bent almost to a right angle, in consequence of this habit in early life. These extreme cases are usually incurable. Those who are still able to walk several miles actively, may derive additional advantage from an occasional wet-sheet pack for an hour, followed by a half-bath at 70° two minutes, or a dripping sheet three to five minutes.

Neuralgia is among the frequent consequences

of all forms of sexual excesses. It may affect almost any part of the system. It is often experienced in the muscles of the neck, and about the loins. Usually persons affected with neuralgic pains are extremely sensitive to wet weather, easterly winds, and sudden alternations of temperature. They require a very cautious and discriminating management. They should be out-door as much as possible in fine weather, but avoid all great exposures. The baths should be very mild in temperature, and followed by considerable rubbing with the dry sheet or hand-friction. Some patients of this class acquire such an extreme degree of morbid susceptibility, that almost any bath temporarily aggravates the pain, and the mere touch of a cold damp cloth is sometimes agonizing. In such cases dry-rubbing, to get up a glow on the surface, should precede the bath, and the patient must depend mainly on a strict diet and suitable exercise for his recovery.

Spinal Irritation is a still more common result. In females it is usually connected with some form of mis-menstruation; in males, with debility or great irritability of the urinary organs; and in both,

with weakness in the muscles of the back and loins, so that the patients, instead of sitting erect, are inclined to lean forward. The lower part of the spinal column is generally the seat of the tenderness on pressure, but sometimes the upper portion, near the base of the brain, is affected. Physicians are very apt to scarify, pustulate, or apply leeches or caustics to the back in these cases, supposing the cause of the spinal irritation to lie in the spinal marrow. Such medication invariably does injury. Cold wet cloths may be applied to the spinal column once a day and worn till they become dry, then removed until the next day. Prolonged but not very cold hip-baths twice a day, are also the leading measures of the bathing part of the treatment; temperature 75° to 80° ; time, fifteen to thirty minutes.

Distortions or Curvatures of the spine sometimes result from the relaxed and debilitated state of the muscles, which are thus rendered incapable of sustaining the spinal column erect. The special treatment recommended in the case of spinal irritation is also useful here; but the water should be gradually reduced to as low a temperature as the patient

can comfortably bear, with the view of inducing muscular contraction. Every pains should also be taken to invigorate the muscles of the back, loins, and abdomen, by rubbing, thumping, kneading, etc.

Paralysis of the Lower Extremities is one of the occasional consequences, of which I have seen several cases. In some there was also, as an accompaniment, and probably an immediate cause, an evident softening of some portion of the brain or spinal marrow. All such cases are necessarily fatal. In others the paralytic condition was the direct result of the waste of vital energy; and all who have, to my knowledge, adopted the general plan of bathing and regimen recommended in this work, have recovered.

Hypochondria, or Mental Despondency, is one of the most common sequelæ of inordinate sexual excitement. Almost all of these patients have their minds and thoughts intently fixed on some special reason for despairing—some particular state, condition, pain, or sensation, which is in their imagination irremediable; and from this dilemma it is sometimes very difficult to extricate them. In the treatment of these patients the moral and mental

management must be mainly depended on, combined with as much steady and regular bodily exercise as they can well bear. In a word, occupation of both mind and body is the main thing needful. As these cases are generally attended with torpid skin and constipated bowels, the cold or warm pack, according to the temperature, and the coarsest food, are among the principal auxiliaries.

Fickleness of Temper, Irresolution, etc., though common to the victims of self-pollution, can hardly be regarded as specific maladies. They are to be managed according to the general principles herein indicated.

Insanity and *Idiotcy* are among the extreme and irretrievable consequences of sexual excesses. Dr. Benedict, in the Eighth Annual Report of the State Lunatic Asylum of the State of New York, remarks: "Masturbation, as a fruitful cause of insanity, deserves especial attention. Fifty cases, admitted during the past year, we attribute to this cause, *and we believe this to be less than the actual number.* Many of these cases had been addicted to this horrid vice from their youth, and even childhood, by which their mental and physical strength

was insidiously debilitated, and insanity slowly induced.

“In addition to those fifty-five whose insanity is attributed to this cause, five others were admitted during the year, insane from other causes, and forty-seven of those remaining in the institution at the close of last year, were addicted to this vice, making one hundred and seven masturbators out of eight hundred and sixteen cases!”

In a late report of the Massachusetts State Lunatic Asylum, it was stated that thirty-two insane persons, whose insanity was produced by self-abuse, had been received during a single year.

Early Superannuation—premature old age—is the penalty which all must indiscriminately pay to the violated laws of their organizations. I have already alluded to this subject sufficiently. The only practical remark pertinent here is this. All who have unfortunately been prodigal of the fund of life heretofore, must hereafter be proportionately economical if they would prolong existence to “threescore and ten,” or any near approximation to that “allotted period.”

Epilepsy.—More than one half of the cases of

epileptic fits which have come under my observation during the last six years, I have been able to trace unmistakably to self-abuse. How great the proportion is in the practice of other physicians I am unable to say, for medical books furnish us no statistics on this subject. I have known several cases in which children commenced the habit at the ages of seven, eight, and nine years, and became epileptic two or three years afterward. A majority of such cases are hopeless, for the reason that they are seldom taken hold of in season.

Apoplexy is noticed by several authors as the superinduced affection. During the paroxysm hot bottles should be applied to the feet, and cold wet cloths, or the pouring-bath, to the head. Tepid injections are also indicated.

Tetanus and Locked-Jaw are rare yet possible consequences. The full warm, or even hot bath, is indicated, to relax the spasmodic action of the muscles; afterward the case should be treated as one of "general debility."

Chorea, or St. Vitus's Dance, is among those deplorable results of which almost every city and large village exhibits some sad examples. It is curable

only on its first appearance, and requires the strictest regimen.

Hysteria is apt to occur in young females who have become constitutionally debilitated from this cause. It requires no attention, save the general treatment.

Spitting of Blood is always a serious complication. The patient must abstain from all violent exertion, eat as little food as will keep off absolute starvation, take frequent but very small draughts of cold water, and wear the chest-wrapper whenever it can be borne without chilliness.

Disordered Vision is more frequently noticed than any other derangement of the external senses; yet all of them are liable to be affected. Walking foot-baths, and cool, but not very cold, eye-baths—holding the eyes open in water of about 70° five minutes once or twice a day—are the best special appliances.

Impaired Hearing is, next to disordered vision, the most frequent of the abnormal manifestations in the functions of relation. It is to be mitigated in the same way as advised for the preceding ailment.

Sleeplessness is very often complained of. The patient retires feeling dull and drowsy, but the longer he remains in bed the more wakeful he becomes. Toward morning he falls into a disquiet slumber, from which he is soon aroused, feeling completely exhausted for want of rest. A gentle sponge-bath, or rubbing the surface with a wet towel, and a hot-and-cold foot-bath, just before going to bed, are the best means of soothing the brain and nervous system.

Pimples of the Face, of a deep-red, dark, livid, or purple hue, sometimes giving the face or forehead a very rough, uneven appearance, are not uncommon. They will generally disappear gradually as the general health improves, but usually leave some traces of their existence for years, sometimes during life. Cosmetics are sometimes resorted to, but always aggravate the difficulty. Persons troubled with these pimples should be careful and not sit with the face near a hot fire, nor in any way overheat the head.

Inflammation of the Eyes are also common. Sometimes the eyelids are weak, red, and watery, and sometimes the conjunctiva, or white part of

the eye, is tinged with a dark-pink stain. At the same time the visual organ appears languid, dull, glassy, and vacant in expression. The special management is the same as for disordered vision. If, however, there is preternatural heat about the eyes, they may be bathed for a minute or two in cold water—about 60°—several times a day.

Chronic Diarrhea is mentioned by several writers on this subject. It is attended with little pain, but is usually increased by the most trifling deviations from the accustomed diet. It requires a very dry, mostly farinaceous diet, and the employment of the wet-girdle a part of the time. It may be applied around the whole body, or only on the front half, according to the patient's ability to bear it without chilliness. An injection of about a gill of cool or cold water, at bedtime, to be retained, if possible, during the night, is advisable.

Colorless Stools, denoting extreme deficiency in the secretion of the digestive juices—saliva, gastric, and pancreatic—are often observed. The liver is also torpid in these cases, and its functional duty thrown upon the skin and kidneys. It is to be treated on the same plan as chronic diarrhea.

Priapism, or painful erection, is often very obstinate and troublesome. It may occur whenever the patient is warm in bed; but is usually worse in the morning. Sometimes it annoys the patient either day or night, whenever the least mental or bodily excitement is applied. A warm hip-bath for twenty minutes at bedtime, as little bedding as the patient can possibly be comfortable under, the application of a cold wet compress whenever the part becomes irritable, the careful avoidance of salt, alkalies, spices, etc., in the food, a very abstemious and dry diet, with no drink in the evening, constitute the special remedial means. It is also specially important to obviate the least tendency to costive bowels.

Satyriasis and *Nymphomania*, an inordinate and almost maddening irritation of the genital organs, inducing a constant and almost resistless propensity for sexual commerce, is liable to affect the male or female masturbator. The dripping wet sheet, and tepid or warm hip-baths—75° to 85°—should be employed frequently, until the inflammatory passion abates.

Loss of Sexual Appetite is the opposite extreme

of sensibility, and often results from the same general cause. There is nothing special in the requisite treatment. A few years of rest, and a life in conformity with the laws of life, may re-develop the natural sensibility.

Impotence itself is an occasional result, and when complete is, perhaps, less to be lamented than when the ability to beget none but malformed offspring remains. It may be attended with that degree of local debility which renders sexual commerce impossible, or a preternatural sensibility which provokes a seminal emission before the act of copulation is consummated.

Permanent Morbid Sensibility of the genital organs is often complained of. They are tender to the touch, and are frequently troubled with aching sensations and neuralgic pains, yet without external heat, redness, or swelling. The hip-bath at 80° ten minutes, then reduced to 70° five minutes, generally relieves this symptom. It may be repeated daily as long as necessary.

Shriveling or *Diminution* of the genitals is mentioned by nearly all writers on these diseases. In these cases no special local treatment is called for

until the constitutional health is re-established. Then frequent cold sitz-baths are useful—three or four times a day, for five minutes, temperature about 50°.

Barrenness is a frequent consequence of sexual excesses of all kinds. The constitutional treatment is all that need be attended to.

Abortion is very frequently occasioned by excessive indulgence in married life; and some females acquire a predisposition to it, by self-abuse in girlhood. There is no safety for such persons unless they refrain wholly from sexual indulgence during pregnancy.

Leucorrhœa, in unmarried females is more frequently the result of masturbation than is generally supposed. It is true that many other causes produce it, and that constipation of the bowels alone often induces it. But when this last mentioned cause is combined with self-abuse, the leucorrhœa is always severe, and frequently followed by prolapsus of the uterus, or bowels, or both. When these patients are much reduced, pale, cold, and emaciated, the dry-pack, followed by the tepid sponge-bath, and one or two daily hip-baths at

70°, are the chief measures of special medication. Otherwise the general treatment is sufficient.

Menorrhagia, or excessive menstruation, is frequently the manner in which the local debility is manifested. Usually the monthly periods are not only excessive in quantity, but also too frequent in recurrence, and are attended with irregular swellings or bloatings of the abdomen. During the menstrual period the patient should, if able to sit up, take two or three hip-baths daily, at 60 to 70°, five to ten minutes; if not, cold wet cloths should be applied to the abdomen and frequently changed.

Prolapsus Uteri, or falling of the womb, is an immediate consequence of the relaxed state of the vagina, and this condition may readily be produced by self-abuse. Like leucorrhœa, prolapsus may result from many other causes; indeed, from any cause which debilitates the muscular system very much; and prominent among these causes are constipation and the purgatives which are taken to remove it. Hence, in judging how far any displacement is attributable to vicious habits, we must take into account all the other evidences of the case. These cases require an extremely simple and

abstemious diet, vaginal injections of cool water, and in bad cases, mechanical treatment, that is to say, a replacement of the organ by mechanical means.

Gleet, in males, is occasionally met with. The dribbling discharge is not a proper seminal fluid, but a morbid secretion, similar to that of chronic catarrh. It requires nothing different from the general plan of treatment.

Eruptions about the genitals sometimes occur, and in rare cases extend over a considerable portion of the body, but require no peculiar treatment. If itching or smarting attends them, warm bathing should be employed sufficient to relieve the uneasy sensations.

Prolapse of the Testicles is among the most frequent local deformities. It commonly affects only one, but sometimes both. It is owing to an extreme relaxation of the scrotum, which allows one or both to descend one, two, or three inches. After the general health is measurably renovated, this relaxation may be in a considerable degree overcome and the parts restored by short, frequent, cold hip-baths, or what is still more efficient, the ascending douche or ascending shower.

Swelling of the Testicle, which is not uncommon, usually disappears on the recovery of constitutional vigor, without local treatment. Whenever the swelling is so great as to occasion a painful sense of weight, a suspensory bandage should be worn.

Enlargement of the Spermatic Cord is quite as frequently attributable to this as to any other cause. Neuralgic pain, or morbid tenderness of the affected part, more or less troubles the patient. I am not aware of any local measures that are advantageous.

Irritation of the Urethra is mentioned by authors. This may result from numerous causes, yet a tender, itching, or painful sensation along its course, especially on urinating, is sometimes clearly traceable to the secret vice. Warm water is here again specially indicated.

Scalding Urination—a sense of heat during the passage of the urine—is still more common. Warm hip-baths will generally remove it.

Cancer of the Uterus is mentioned by several authors as having been produced by self-abuse, and by excessive sexual commerce. It can only be treated by the competent surgeon.

Tabes Dorsalis was the term applied as long ago as the days of Hippocrates, to a condition of the system resulting from inordinate sexual excitement, characterized by the symptoms of a general decline, and a sensation on the part of the patient as though ants were crawling along or falling down the course of the spinal marrow. Practically we need only regard it as "general debility."

THE END.

Longuet

£





