

# W O M A N

AND HER

## SECRET PASSIONS.

CONTAINING AN EXACT DESCRIPTION OF

THE FEMALE ORGANS OF GENERATION;

THEIR

USES AND ABUSES.

Together with a detailed account of the

CAUSES AND THE CURE

OF

THE SOLITARY VICE.

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# W O M A N :

## AND HER SECRET PASSIONS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### WOMAN. HER PECULIAR WORTH.

THE charms, the loveliness of woman, and her capacity for giving pleasure to the opposite sex, as well as the enjoyment of rational happiness in herself, have been the theme of poets in all ages. When formed as nature intended her to be, and when following out in her life and habits, the dictates of nature, woman is like a poem in herself—a creature of music, and a luxuriant tree of fragrant blossoms. She has been compared to almost everything that is beautiful and delightful in nature. She was intended by the Creator to be loved; not only as the medium through which the earth is populated; but also as an object of regard on account of her graces, both physical and moral, independent of mere sensual gratification.

With the lower animals it is not so. We observe, in the females of the brute creation, nothing peculiarly attractive, except the mere generative power and adaptation to bearing the young of her species. The male seeks her for that object alone; and having gratified his carnal appetite, she ceases to be an object of desire, or of pleasure to him. What appears to us like a young and comely

female—in comparison with others of the species—evidently has no superior attractions for the male. He goes indiscriminately to the old and the young, to the plump and well kept animal, or the old and shaggy creature that has borne young for years. It has no choice—no taste, appreciation of beauty or of qualities.

Here, then, is a marked difference between our species and those of inferior beings. Woman is prized for her beauty of mind and person. The delicate skin, the soft and tender expression of the eyes, the ruby mouth, the pearly teeth, the well-turned neck, the swelling and plump bosom, the tapering waist, the rounded hips, the robust and symmetrical limbs, the neat ancles and arched foot, are objects that are eagerly sought by the eye of man, and richly prized when found. Added to beauty of feature and of form, are the graces of motion—the sprightly and springy step, the graceful bend of the body, delicacy of taste and manners, and all those nameless and bewitching graces of action that pertain to proper and well-kept womanhood, and add to our appreciation of Nature's last and most beautiful work.

If such be woman in a state of nature, it is deplorable to reflect that all of the fair sex are not thus blessed. Health is needful to the development of feminine beauty, whether of form or of motion. Yet how few of them seems to heed this fact!—how few even of those whom leisure and wealth afford the means of insuring and preserving a sound condition of body and mind, avail themselves of those means! If, instead of rising late and neglecting proper exercise, the wealthy young lady would spring from her bed at the first appearance of light, when the rosy dawn first looks in at her window, and after a wash in cold water, set out upon a ramble over the mead or through the woods, and walk from three to five miles before setting down to her breakfast, and after eating her morning meal, would try another walk or ride on horseback, a couple of hours, she would return home invigo-

rated, while the roses on her cheeks would vie with the damask flowers of the field.

Nor would it be alone in the bright eyes and the glowing cheeks that she would reap the reward of her early rising and exercise ; for her spirits would be as buoyant as those of the merry plow-boy, and her conversation and manners would charm all who came within the circle of her acquaintance. Then she might dispense with those artificial aids to beauty which now encumber the toilet of too many of our fair dames. She would say to cosmetics, 'your reign is over,' and to stuffing and cotton padding, 'your occupation is gone !' A fairy in the family circle, and a Cinderella in the ball-room, she would captivate all hearts ; while in her own wholesome bosom would well up a continual fountain of health and joy ! Should she persist in early rising and long rural walks in the morning, all nature would assume a new garb in her eyes ; the green grass would be like Paradise to her spirit, and the trees would break forth into singing. Let her try the experiment and she will discover that the one half has not been told her.

Lying late in the morning, and taking little exercise in the open air, is exceedingly prejudicial to young ladies ; not only on account of the unhealthiness of such idleness itself ; but because of the fatal habits to which it sometimes gives rise, and which it fosters to a most alarming degree.

Begin the habit early, then, and adhere to it rigidly. If you do not immediately experience a benefit from the course prescribed ; persevere nevertheless, and in a short time you will begin to realize the immense advantages resulting from it. Rise as early as possible in winter, and after a wash in cold water, take your regular walk. If the weather be inclement, you can guard against it by additional clothing ; but do not give up the practice on account of the cold. Be constant, be regular, and your reward will be incalculably great.

## CHAPTER II.

## SELF-POLLUTION. BOARDING SCHOOLS.

It now becomes my duty to speak plainly. He that would guard his fellow-creatures against evil, must set forth that evil in its true colors, or his labor may be in vain, and the evil continue to exist unimproved.

The luxurious habits of civilized life lead to many excesses. Those of gluttony and hard drinking have been sufficiently commented upon. Tracts and newspapers showing the fatal results of intoxication, surround us on all hands. But an evil more destructive than any of these has received, comparatively, but little attention. It is time that the warning was given, and that the trumpet was blown within the hearing of every young person. For want of knowledge on this subject, the fairest daughters of the land have gone down to a premature grave, or lingered out existence in wretchedness, without knowing the cause of their misery, or without ever knowing that there was such a thing as enjoyment, in living according to the dictates of nature and of virtue.

It is a fact generally conceded, that those young persons who fall a prey to secret vice, are the most promising, the most beautiful, and generally those who would have enjoyed the greatest amount of happiness, if they had escaped the temptations of *Onanism*, as it is termed. It has been, indeed, those girls who were, in earlier life, the pride of their families and of their friends, whose dispositions were the most affectionate and whose conversation was the most lively and captivating, who have become the victims of this most withering calamity. Its effects upon their constitutions, upon their temper, and their personal appearance, have been deplorable, even before they knew the cause of their distaste for life and its rational pleasures which they daily experienced.

As an example of the vast change for the worse that is made in the feelings of those young persons who become slaves to this revolting habit, I give the following letter from M. B., a young lady of fourteen years, who had been sent to a boarding school by her aunt with whom she had previously resided. The first was written on her arrival at the school, and read thus :

‘MY DEAR AUNT : The packet reached P—— on Tuesday afternoon. Oh ! what a delightful sail we had up the river ! I wished that you and dear cousin Mary had been on board, everything was so delightful and the Captain was so kind, and all the passengers were so pleasant. I think that sailing on the water is the most delightful thing in the world. We saw the green fields and the groves and woods all along the shore as we sailed, and people out in the meadows making hay in the bright sun, and some of the cottages were standing so near the water, that you could plainly hear the voices of little children, as they played before the doors, and ran about the gardens attached to them. I seemed to be in a perfect Paradise. We got to the school in the morning. Such delightful fields and flowers and trees I never saw, and the birds sing and the little fish leap up in the streams and ponds and glisten in the sun ! Oh ! my dear, dear aunt, how shall I thank you for sending me to so delightful a place ! But the school bell rings and I must hasten to conclude. I go to my delightful studies once more. So good bye till next week.

Your ever affectionate, M. B.’

Such was the first letter from this young and gay-hearted girl. Many of her succeeding ones were equally lively and pleasant. But, after a time, their tone was changed ; until at the end of some eleven months, the following was received from her :

‘MY DEAR AUNT : You write that you have been rather poorly. I am sorry to hear it : but I believe it is the common complaint about this time. A Mrs. W——

died in this village of cancer on the breast, last Saturday, and I attended her funeral. The sight of so many graves oppressed me with sadness, and I could not help shedding tears all that evening. I went to walk in the groves to see if it would not remove my melancholy: but it only made it worse. Indeed, I do not seem to be well. The sun hurts my eyes and makes my forehead ache, and when I walk far, I feel so languid and tired that I am glad to sit down, or retire to bed as early as possible. My studies also fatigue me, and have lost their relish. Indeed, aunt, I feel lonesome up here, and my friends among the girls appear tired of me too. My conversation seems to give them no pleasure as it did formerly, and I feel, all the time, as if something was going to happen of a distressing nature. I really want to leave the place and come home to your house once more, where I shall, at least, be sure of *one* friend.

Your affectionate niece, M. B.'

Her aunt was an intelligent woman, who had suffered from evil habits herself in early life: and she immediately suspected, on the receipt of this last letter, that all was not right. Her niece was an orphan girl who had been confided to her care by her dying parents, and she felt the liveliest interest in her welfare and future respectability. When, therefore, her suspicions were aroused, she lost no time in striking at the root of the supposed evil. She sent off a note to her family physician requesting his immediate attendance, and he returned to the house of Mrs. B., with the bearer of the note.

The lady imparted her suspicions to the medical gentleman. She even showed him the letter. He agreed with her in regard to the cause of her niece's melancholy, and recommended that she should be instantly sent for. The physician and Mrs. B. then agreed upon the course of conduct that should be pursued towards the young girl, the former being unknown in the matter in order to save the feelings of the unhappy victim of self-pollution.



## CHAPTER III.

## ATTEMPT AT A CURE.

THE young lady (M. B.) came home to the house of her aunt in the afternoon of a pleasant day, being now fifteen years of age.

Her aunt received her as cordially as usual, but could not avoid betraying, at the first moment, her surprise and grief at the alteration in the personal appearance of her niece.

This young girl had been gifted by nature with a handsome countenance and rather plump form. All this was rapidly changing. Her eyes were heavy and dimmed, and wandered in an unsettled manner around the room. There was a careworn expression in her face, and her voice was languid and weak.

After the first salutation was over, M. B. expressed a wish to retire and rest herself after the fatigue of her journey, and, indeed, she appeared to be half dead from weariness.

As soon as she was gone to her apartment, her aunt sat down, and covering her eyes with her hands, could not refrain from shedding tears. She thought of the blooming girl who had gone from her a year before, radiant with health and buoyant with cheerfulness, and asked herself could this be she? What a havoc a few months had made with youth and beauty! But she resolved that her cure should be forthwith attempted—that no means should be left untried to snatch the poor girl from destruction.

M. B. arose in time for supper. She ate heartily, and then her aunt proposed a ramble in the open air. The young girl languidly consented, though it was evident that she would rather have remained within doors. All exertion seemed to distress her. But the aunt took her out to walk; and as it was a fine moonlight evening, the pond, the grove, and the old gray rocks, presented unwonted

attractions. But the niece took no interest in any of these, as she had once done. She seemed to think only of getting back to the house and sitting down supinely in her corner.

When they were about retiring to bed, her aunt said to her,

‘Come, my dear, you had better sleep with me to-night.’

M. B. exhibited some surprise, and then her aunt said, ‘As you are so poorly, I ought to be with you so that if you should want anything in the night——’

‘Oh, no, aunt!’ interrupted the niece, with animation; ‘I am never ill in that manner, to need any assistance in the night. You need not take the least trouble on my account.’

‘But I insist that you sleep with me,’ returned the aunt, ‘for you don’t know so well as I do what is best in such cases.’

For a moment, the young girl looked at her aunt suspiciously, as if she had caught an idea that the true cause of her debility was suspected. But the aunt was on her guard, and acted in such a manner as to dispel the inquietude of the girl. The latter made no more objections, though it was plain that she would have preferred to retire to her own chamber and sleep alone.

They threw off their garments and went to bed. After a little desultory conversation, both of them sank into the arms of Morpheus.

Just before daylight, the aunt woke up, and perceived that M. B. was also awake. The former lay perfectly quiet, so that her niece was not aware of her being awake. In a few moments the aunt had indubitable certainty of the fatal habit which her niece had acquired, and which was so fastened upon her, that she could not even wait until she was alone, before she put in practice the means of procuring the customary pleasure.

Supposing her aunt to be sound asleep, the young girl commenced the act, though in a very cautious and guarded

manner. Then the aunt pretended to wake up, and flinging her arms about her, said—‘What—who—what is this?’ Then she immediately added—‘Oh, it is you, my dear. I am so much accustomed to sleep alone that I did not, at first, recollect that you were with me. How do you feel, this morning?’

M. B. replied in a voice that she tried to render cheerful, but it was evident that she was vexed at an interruption which prevented her from putting in practice her usual habit. The aunt was careful not to fall asleep again until it was time to rise.

M. B. did not attempt to leave her aunt, that morning, until after breakfast, when the young girl was suddenly missed.

A servant being questioned, said that she had seen Miss put on her bonnet and go towards the grove that stood on a piece of rising ground beyond the pond.

The aunt instantly threw on her shawl and hood and hastened to the grove. She wished to act with caution; she had no doubt that, having been disappointed in the commission of the act in bed that morning, the young girl had withdrawn herself to some secret place where she might indulge her destructive propensity without interruption. She wished, then, to prevent the girl from committing the act without betraying her knowledge of her weakness.

When, therefore, the aunt reached the grove, she sauntered carelessly on, in an indifferent manner, glancing about her on every side; but she could see nothing of M. B., though she searched the grove through and through.

Being convinced that her niece was not in the grove, the good woman retraced her steps towards the house. In passing the barn, she heard some one breathing within, and applying her eye to a knot-hole, she saw her niece reclining on the hay and in the very act of injuring herself. She ran around to the door of the barn and called M. B. in a hasty manner. The girl came to her immediately, but

with a face as red as scarlet, though, she had no reason to believe that any one had discovered her folly. The aunt did not, on this occasion, act with her usual prudence.

She looked sharply at the girl, until the latter trembled as if with apprehension that her secret was discovered.

‘Come,’ said the aunt in a tone harsher than usual, ‘what can you be doing in the barn among the cattle? I expect the doctor here, every moment, for we must find out how it is that a young girl of naturally good constitution and for whom everything wholesome is provided, should be sinking, day by day, under some mysterious distemper. We must be in the house when the physician arrives.’

M. B. now seemed really irritated, not only at the brusque manner of her aunt; but more than all, at having been interrupted in her second attempt at self-pollution.

‘Why, aunt,’ cried she, ‘can I not walk out a moment to enjoy the morning air: I’m sure I need it badly enough, and I’ve heard that, for consumptive persons, the atmosphere of a stable is a restorative—at least, so I have often heard.’

This attempt at evasion and falsehood struck the aunt so unpleasantly that she was thrown wholly off her guard, and replied hastily,

‘Yes, that is true in some cases;’ but it was too late to retreat. She had spoken, too, in a very pointed manner, and had looked at the young girl in such a way that the latter at once perceived that her aunt had seen the whole. For a moment the eyes of M. B. swam in her head; she turned deadly pale, and fell to the floor in a fainting fit.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CONFIDENCE AND AFFECTION.

WHEN the aunt saw her niece lying senseless before her, she was filled with the keenest regret. All her affection for the young girl instantly returned. She called for assistance, and fortunately the doctor arrived at that moment. He ordered that M. B. should be conveyed to her chamber, where she soon recovered and was left to repose.

The aunt then revealed to the physician all that had happened, and expressed her alarm for the consequence to her niece.

‘It is best as it is,’ returned the doctor. ‘It is better that you should be her confidant than myself; and now that the ice is fairly broken, you can converse freely with the young lady on the subject of her infirmity, and apply such remedies as I shall advise. I will leave the house, for the present, and you will be kind enough to keep a strict eye upon the patient till she is fairly recovered, and then you must come directly to the subject with her, and show her the ruinous consequences of the course which she is pursuing.’

The aunt felt that the advice was proper, yet she shuddered at the idea of undertaking so delicate a business.

She visited the chamber of her niece several times during the forenoon just to inquire how she felt. The replies were brief, while the young girl kept her face concealed with evident shame, now that she knew her conduct was known to her best friend.

In the afternoon, when dinner was placed on the table, the aunt sent up an invitation for M. B. to come down to try to eat something. The answer came back that M. B. was not well enough to eat any dinner.

It was not difficult to divine the cause of this reply, and

the unwillingness of the girl to appear in the presence of her aunt.

Arming herself with resolution, the good woman ascended at once to the chamber of her niece, and throwing her arms around her as she lay upon the bed, said—

‘Come, my dear, come down and eat your dinner, and believe me to be your friend, who desires your welfare above all things. We will talk of all this whenever you are disposed: but, for the present, come down and eat your regular meal.’

M. B. suffered herself to be persuaded, and was led down stairs by her aunt. She ate but little, however, and spoke less. She was suffered to retire to her chamber soon afterwards, where she remained until the next morning.

On the next day the aunt led the conversation to the subject that most interested her. At first, M. B. pretended not to know what she meant; but gradually she was prevailed on to speak freely, and then she made a full confession of her errors to her best friend.

It appeared that at the boarding school where M. B. was sent, there was a girl called Fanny, two years older than M. B. She was a very pretty girl and of lively manners and conversation. M. B. was interested in her, and when she proposed to be the bedfellow of the former, she willingly consented to the arrangement.

For the first few nights they lay awake conversing an hour or two before dropping to sleep. At length Fanny got into a habit of praising the young girl, and would pass her hand over her limbs and hips, and speak of her fine form. From that Fanny proceeded, in the course of a couple of weeks, to take still greater liberties and to invade those charms which should be sacred to the man of a woman’s choice.

These liberties alarmed M. B. at first, but when they were carried still farther, the young girl made discoveries to which she had previously been a stranger. Fanny grew so bold as to actually perform the act which produced

titillation, and this she did with a refined ingenuity which proved too clearly that she had become well acquainted with matters relating to sexual indulgence.

After the first performance of this act, M. B. yielded herself up wholly to the wiles of Fanny, who sometimes personated a husband, hugged, and kissed M. B. in the most ardent manner, and in other respects pretended to enact the part of one of the opposite sex.

In this way had M. B. been thoroughly inducted into the most pernicious of all habits, and when, at length, Fanny left the boarding school and went home to her mother at M——, the young girl had continued those practices alone, carrying them to an extravagant excess which she had never indulged in with the artful destroyer of her virtuous feelings.

All this and much more was revealed to the aunt by her niece, who, now that she had begun her confessions, revealed all that had occurred to her in this respect.

M. B. was much alarmed at hearing from her aunt the consequences of this vice. She had never once suspected the true cause of her debility, gloom, and lowness of spirits; and thus it is, that young people of both sexes go on for years in the practice of Onanism, feeling dispirited, languid, and restless, without ever once thinking of the true cause of their ill health and their misery.

It is, therefore, of the last importance, that all young persons suspected of this habit, or who exhibit the symptoms attendant upon it, should be warned of its horrible effects before the vice has become confirmed and they find it difficult or even impossible to break away from its seductive power.

The aunt of M. B. duly informed the doctor of the disclosures that had been made to her, and he gave such directions in respect to diet and regime as he thought the case required.

On her part, M. B. placed herself entirely in the hands of her aunt. She made her niece sleep with her every

night. In the morning she administered a cold bath and took her out on a walk of several miles before breakfast, while the food given to her was plain and nourishing, but free from all heating ingredients.

In two weeks M. B showed the result of this treatment very plainly. The color had returned to her cheeks, her spirits were restored, her eyes were brilliant and sparkling, and her flesh was sound and firm. She could not believe that she had ever been addicted to so degrading a habit, and wondered how she could have been led away and infatuated by its seductions; but chiefly she wondered that she had never before suspected the cause of her bad feelings; for now that she had relinquished the practice, she could very easily trace the evil in its effects.

In short, a perfect cure was effected. The young girl became once more the ornament of her aunt's abode; the favorite of the old and the gayest among the young.

Let it not be forgotten that these bright results were the consequence of confiding her story to one who knew how to apply the remedy. Secrecy is the great enemy of reform, and when once the truth becomes known, there is hope for the victim of this most diabolical vice.

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## CHAPTER V.

### VALUE OF CONTINENCE. A CAUTION TO THE MARRIED.

BEFORE we can estimate the horrors of self-pollution, we must know how to put a just value upon the seminal liquid. It is to this that we are indebted for our health, beauty, and the enjoyment of life. When this is wasted, decay of beauty follows; old age comes on prematurely, and a sense of continual suffering prompts to suicide. Affection, social feeling, friendship, all vanish. We become a prey to imaginary terrors. We are haunted by continual anxiety,



and are utterly unfit to live. We become irritable, selfish and complaining. Our society is shunned, and we are incapable of imparting pleasure to our friends, or of creating an interest in the other sex.

If this follows from the indulgence of excessive venery between two of opposite sexes, its effects are horrible when done alone, prompted by the mere force of the imagination. Put a bridle upon thy thoughts. A great English bard has said :

‘ Guard well thy thoughts ;  
Our thoughts are heard in heaven.’

They are heard on earth, too. They are traced in the wan cheek, the fœtid breath, the sunken and dimmed eyes, the querulous voice, and the early decay of womanhood. Avoid all temptations to solitary vice, and banish from the mind all libidinous pictures of the fancy, for they proceed from a diseased imagination—sad precursor to a diseased and useless body, and impaired and ruined intellect.

The following case will not be uninteresting : Bernard and Angelina were thrown together at an early age ; even in childhood they became mutually attached toward each other. Circumstances separated them for a long time : Bernard returned to the village with the down of manhood upon his cheek. He sought out Angelina. He found her gathering flowers upon the heath. She knew him at first sight, and with a cry of joy fell fainting into his arms. She was just seventeen, fresh and blooming as the rose. Her eyes were dark and lustrous, and her form was a perfect model of young womanhood.

Bernard was the perfection of manly grace ; virtuous and brave, he had never been addicted to immoral practices. His heart had been given to Angelina ; he sought no other fair. She reigned alone, mistress of his desires. They met, as I have related, and interchanged vows of eternal constancy—a constancy which would have subsisted without any vows at all. A short separation ensued,

during which several letters passed between the two lovers. One from Bernard read as follows :

‘My secret and blessed Dove :

Time that tore us asunder will soon unite us again. With my whole heart I love you ; and the mist rising from the sea, glorious with sunny hues, is less lovely in my sight ; like a spiritual essence divested of all earthly taint. The touch of thy fair hand sheds joys innumerable into my whole being, and the glance of thy eyes sheds light and life into my bounding heart. Peace to thy slumber—joy to thy waking, and lightning speed to the hours that divide us.

Thine,

BERNARD.’

The following is from Angelina to Bernard, written a few days before their marriage :

‘My blessed Heart,

I await thee, my sweet love, as the morning mist waits the sun, to be raised from earth to heaven ; for thou art my sun, and I have light and buoyancy only through thee. Where thou art not is darkness ; but thy presence is the light of my eyes, the joy of my soul. Thy love is the sweet balm of my spirit. Dear source of my joys, and theme of my thoughts, come quickly. I faint with excess of transport of meeting thee. Come, and let my soul expire in thy bliss at the sound of thy dear, blessed footsteps.

ANGELINA.’

Such was the love of Bernard and Angelina, sincerely expressed. Act and word in accordance, they exhibited a most happy pair as they stood at the altar. All the villagers prognosticated a most genial marriage. For some time this anticipation seemed to be realized. They were seen, hand in hand, wandering through the glades, or seated at eventide by the brook with eyes raised to the heavens as if in ecstatic enjoyment.

But let the reader peruse the two following letters, written about three months after their union, and compare them with the two letters which were written before :

‘DEAR WIFE :

Yours, of May 2d, was received. I was glad to hear from you, and yet why repine at my absence? You know that business requires a temporary separation, and it is your duty to be resigned to your lot. Otherwise you do not fulfil the vows pronounced at the altar, and your letters will prove rather an annoyance than a comfort to your absent husband. I beg that you will attend faithfully to my interests in my absence, which you can hardly do if you spend your time in repining at unavoidable fate. The weather is horrible, and my affairs here are perplexing in the extreme.

Yours,

BERNARD.’

Here is Angelina’s reply :

‘DEAR BERNARD :

Your very *polite*, *gallant*, and *encouraging* epistle was received last night. I beg you will not be uneasy about my “*attention to your affairs*,” which seems to engross your whole thoughts at present,—though *once* it was not so. On your generosity I have thrown myself in binding my fate to yours for life; though I need not say that I had a happy home before you took me as *an appendage to your estate*. But this is ill-natured. No doubt that you have been vexed by the cares of business and the ‘horrible weather,’ and I ought to overlook what has given me unhappiness, lest, indeed, my letters should be what you fear, ‘rather an annoyance than a comfort to you.’ Hoping for better times,

Your

ANGELINA.’

Does it not seem almost incredible that three short months should have made so great a change in the feelings of two rational beings towards each other? Yet for all this, there was a cause both palpable and natural.

They came together in marriage, like too many others, under an apprehension that they had nothing to do but to plunge into a jar of sweets, and overwhelm themselves in the continual delights of sexual enjoyment. For a few days they enjoyed great pleasure, but as they continued this course week after week, they exhausted the fountain of pleasure. To speak plain English, they wasted their seminal fluid too lavishly—they drained their bodies of that precious liquid, which is the cause of beauty, youth and love. Their spirits sank in consequence of this criminal waste: their health was impaired: the heart and lungs were robbed of a great portion of their vitality: the freshness of youth became wilted: their nerves were easily irritated: nature herself became disrobed of her attractions: a disinclination to all exertion, and a distaste for everything which had previously given them pleasure, followed, and it is not strange that the glowing love which they had cherished for each other became dimmed, and was followed by mutual reproaches and reeriminations.

This mighty change in their feelings is, therefore, attributable to a very natural cause. Had Bernard and Angelina been satisfied, on their marriage, with one week's indulgence in sexual gratification; and had they then checked themselves and resolutely abstained for one month, from actual coition, and subsequently indulged in the sexual act some two or three times a month, or even less than that, they would have preserved their first feelings fresh and lively, and would have continued to love each other during their whole lives. But they did not this. They continued for more than a year to indulge in extreme gratification, and at the end of that time, Angelina sued for a separate maintenance.

If these causes result from too free an indulgence of sexual pleasure in the natural way, what can we hope for those unhappy youths and maidens who despoil themselves of the very spirit of life and love by solitary gratification? In view of the deplorable results of this habit to so many

thousands of the fair sex, we might almost imagine that the prophet of Israel had a direct reference to this subject, when he exclaimed, ' Oh! that mine eyes were water, and my pillow a flood of tears, that I might weep for the slain of my people.'

Consumption, which is so fatal to the American fair, may be, in a good degree, attributable to the fatal vice of masturbation. Want of out door exercise, and sedentary habits predispose to this practice, and how many have gone down to an early grave for want of obeying the dictates of nature and listening to the repeated warnings of the most able physicians!

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## CHAPTER VI.

### ON THE CHOICE OF A HUSBAND.

It is too much the case with young girls, that they look upon marriage as the sovereign remedy for all unhappiness—the great aim and object of their existence. Hence follow so many rash and unhappy unions.

As no young lady can enter the marriage state, without expecting to yield to the embraces of her husband, she should not be in haste to become united for life to one of the opposite sex. She should discourage immediately all attentions from the man whom she does not fancy, or who is unsuitable for her. Infidelity in men is very common, because their wives prove unsatisfactory. A man of strong amorous feelings pays his court to a woman of a cold temperament. In her eagerness to marry, she encourages his visits and leads him to suppose that she is sincerely attached to him. Yet his ardent manner finds little response in her bosom. Still she has her own reasons for wishing to marry; and thinks it most prudent not to reject an offer, especially as her lover is able to

provide her with a good home. She is, therefore, laying the foundation of her own wretchedness, and leading her admirer into a snare. She affects to be pleased with his conversation and his manners, while there is much in both that is not congenial with her own feelings.

At length the wedding day arrives. They are married. For a few days the bride enjoys the attentions of her husband, and then her natural coldness begins to exhibit itself. She can not endure his embraces, and she is even repelled by his ardor. The husband is then dissatisfied, and soon finds in the arms of more amorous women, consolation for the indifference of his wife. She discovers his unfaithfulness, and a divorce follows. The wife, not in the least daunted by her first unsuccessful essay, seeks another husband; gains him, and he in turn becomes dissatisfied with so ungenial a companion. Everybody sympathizes with the poor woman, and thinks her deeply injured; but she is her own enemy, and should have married a man, if she married at all, whose temperament was as cold as her own.

Many a woman has taken to herself great credit for chastity, who is indebted only to her coldness of temperament for the preservation of her virtue.

While living in the country I became acquainted with a Mr. P.—, a young man of large expectations, and a great admirer of the fair sex. He formed an acquaintance with a young lady—the daughter of a clergyman—in a neighboring village. He believed that she was strongly attached to him. I had often seen them in company together, and knew by the lymphatic temperament of the lady that she was ill-adapted to become the wife of P—. I could also perceive that his lively conversation afforded her no peculiar pleasure, though she was careful not to exhibit her distaste to him. While he was conversing with her, her eyes often wandered off towards men who were far more congenial to her taste than her lover. I once took the liberty of a friend to suggest something of

the kind to P——. His reply was what might have been expected from one of his hot and hasty temperament, and our intimacy was broken off for several months. They had been married some two or three months, when I perceived a disposition on the part of P—— to renew our acquaintance and place it on its former footing. I had my suspicions with regard to the cause, and gave him every opportunity to further his object. Accordingly, we were very soon as familiar as ever.

‘Do you remember,’ said he to me one evening, ‘that you hinted at Caroline’s coldness and want of love for me, a few weeks previous to our marriage.’

‘Not precisely that,’ said I, ‘but I thought you were ill-matched, and that both of you would find it out when too late.’

After a pause of some minutes, P—— replied: ‘You were right. Everybody praises my wife—everybody says that I have made a good match, and that it is my own fault if I am not happy; but there are secrets which they do not know. I have found no sympathy anywhere. You only appear to have understood the true state of the case. My wife appears to have entertained no correct idea of the purposes of marriage. She thinks it a great hardship to receive my caresses, and takes no pleasure in them.’

I could propose nothing for the relief of my friend. His case admitted of no remedy. In about a year after this conversation, it was reported that P—— kept a mistress. This got to the ears of his wife. She was exceedingly offended, even while her coldness prevented him from deriving any pleasure in her society. As there was no direct proof of her husband’s delinquency, she could not proceed against him. Yet she was firmly persuaded of his infidelity. She determined to revenge upon P. by obtaining a lover. That was not difficult, as there were several men who admired the appearance of Mrs. P., and were accustomed to speak in her praise. To one of these she gave so much encouragement that he proposed an

elopement. After some hesitation, the unfortunate lady consented to it. But her absence from the village had scarcely been observed before she returned to her father's house broken-hearted. The man for whom she had lost her reputation, was a person of amorous temperament who, judging from Caroline's form and general bearing, imagined her to be suitable to his wishes. But no sooner had he taken her under his charge, than he found, that she expected to be entertained with expensive jaunts to Europe and the various places of public resort; while on her part, she could yield no pleasure to the man whose pockets she wished to drain. He soon grew tired of paying so dearly for what yielded him no return, and deserted her in one of the Southern States, leaving her a sum of money barely sufficient to pay her expenses home. She was now fully convinced of her deficiencies. When her husband had complained of her coldness, she had assured him that any other man would be glad to win her regard. But her new lover had opened her eyes; and she felt that her husband had formed a just estimate of her qualities as a wife. A divorce soon followed, and P. subsequently married a lively young brunette, whose attractions and blandishments fully satisfied his expectations.

A woman must not expect everything from her husband. She must not suppose that he can devote all his time and attention to her, and that she can live wholly upon his smiles and compliments. She must engage in some kind of employment—something calculated to alleviate the ennui of his absence. I speak of women who really love, not of those who are glad to get their husbands out of the way that they may enjoy themselves with their female friends and neighbors. Sleeping in the same bed, or even in the same apartment, with their husbands, night after night, is productive of much evil, as they appear to each other under circumstances unfavorable to the continuance of that mutual admiration which first brought them together. A lady should not see her



husband in the morning until she has made her toilet. But a man must not expect to find all his resources of enjoyment in his wife; especially if he discovers, that on some points there is a want of congeniality in taste. Some active business engaging his attention during the day, he will return to the fireside in the evening prepared to make the most of a tidy and comfortable home.

The following case which came under my observation, is different from the others which I have related. A fine-looking young man of high respectability was united in marriage to a young lady who possessed beauty, accomplishments and health. She was the pride of her father's family, and being the youngest and only one at home, had been much noticed and sought after. On their marriage, congratulations poured in from every quarter. It was a love match—a prudent match, and one which cemented the friendship and union of two of the best families in the town of Providence. The bride and bridegroom, after the nuptial ceremony, went off some fifty miles to some solitary, unfrequented, romantic road-side inn to commence the honeymoon.

With earnest zeal the lovers try  
The human race to multiply.

Time passes on, and the scene opens with a pleasant cottage residence, jasmine and honeysuckle overshadowing the porch—the apparent abode of domestic contentment. This was about the time of the Dorr excitement in Rhode Island; but the sound of war came not near their peaceful and beautiful abode. They heard the report of the belligerent preparations made by the 'high-contenting parties,' but were not actors in any of the scenes, nor even spectators of any of the operations.

Our hero and heroine may be recognised, although no longer billing and cooing, no longer linked arm in arm, or hand in hand, although stripped of their wedding plumage, still they may be seen as man and wife, fulfilling their

several duties, and performing all those courtesies that fill up each day of the week.

They sent each other kisses from their fingers' tips :  
The time was when they kissed each other's lips.

In truth, the picture represents modern respectable, and, as the world goes, contented domestic life. There are, however, no little olive branches running about the floor, and the vine has, as yet, borne no fruit.

If the real condition of the parties could be known—if it were permitted to let fall the curtain so that the actors could throw off the restraint which the fact of the eyes of the world being upon them imposes, how different might be the exhibition. The truth is, the marriage had not been consummated.

Owing to an infirmity on the part of the husband, the wedding-night was passed over with less of those attentions towards the expectant bride, than were wont to be bestowed twenty-four hours before, when modesty, womanly chasteness, and manly propriety, protected the lady from what the customs of society disallows, but which marriage strips in an instant. Sleep closed the eyes of a disappointed pair. The first month passed much in the same manner as did the first night. Sundry excuses were made which were affectionately received. That which one party felt to be a misfortune, the other might have regarded as a wrong ; but woman's nature is generous. She wondered and waited, and hoped for better times. Personal discomfitures was supported by anticipations, and marital coldness was construed into pardonable timidity. The wife, less frigid, sought by womanly endearments, to win her retreating husband to her purpose, but in vain, and she desisted. He interpreted her unobtrusive dissatisfaction into contentment, and became reconciled—not without an occasional shudder of self-humiliation at the part he was playing. Still time wore on. A year passed over. Sisters whispered, and

brothers-in-law smiled, while mothers and aunts wondered aloud that no heir to the estate had appeared, or seemed likely to arise.

Our maiden wife still preserved her maiden feelings. She was wise enough to know that a lesson due to a young wife from her husband, had not been imparted to her ; but she was generous enough to withhold, nay, defy a complaint that might tell to her partner's prejudice. She took even the family wonderment as offensive, and wished they would mind their own business. She still hoped ; it had led her through a second and a third summer, but there was still no better prospect.

Then the husband began to abate in those little attentions termed courtesies. If he had been home later than usual, no apology, as had been the custom heretofore, was offered. If he dined out, it was a matter of no consequence ; it being quite immaterial whether he kept his Chloe waiting or signified his intention before leaving.

In fact, it was evident that his affections were on the wane at home ; or, as a jealous one might imagine, were elsewhere bestowed. The lady's feelings subsided into a settled sorrow. Now and then, a pang of discontent would thrill through her veins, and then all was quiet again. Hers was a grief that she could not divulge, and she bit her lips in silence. It happened, at length, that the husband was one fine morning shouldering his knapsack for a pedestrian jaunt with some friends, that news arrived of the birth of a nephew. The lady then ventured to say, ' Happy sister ! I fear that we shall never return the compliment ! '

The insinuation was quite unintentional, but it went home. For a moment the husband seemed paralyzed, and then an angry word came to his relief. He said, ' if we have none, it is probable that, sooner or later, we shall have to keep those of others ; besides, you appear too solicitous to encourage trouble, and care and anxiety, which we all know so many children occasion. If I mis-

take not, your remark meant more than it conveyed ; and if I guess aright, I have to thank you for its application ; but there are two sides to the question. In fact, I believe it to be as much your fault as mine.'

Thus falsely accused, the poor wife vindicated herself, as a woman naturally would on such an occasion. Recriminations followed, and the matter was referred to arbitration. The lady's mother was besought to interfere ; other members of the family learned of the out-break ; and at last it came to the ears of the narrator. Painful as were the feelings which induced a well-conducted, amiable and strictly modest woman to submit to a detail of circumstances, to an avowal of her own innate feelings, and to a professional examination by a stranger like myself, still the necessity rendered such an appeal most urgent. What, it may be asked, could I do in such an affair ? The sequel shall prove. It is just as possible to relieve, amend, and restore, to a natural condition a perverted or an impaired function of the organization, as it is a disordered stomach, a distempered brain, an unruly heart, or an enfeebled frame. I have not yet disposed of my case : yet how can I pen and attest the sequel to give it semblance of actual occurrence ?

After an examination of the lady's physical structure, I proclaimed her capacity for sexual intercourse and for becoming the mother of children. Not only so : but I also discovered that she was finely formed for giving the highest pleasure to a companion equally amorous with herself. I may say that I never saw limbs so round and beautifully tapering to the ancle, or greater womanly beauty in those parts particularly devoted to Venus. She was one of the finest specimens of lovely and attractive womanhood that I ever beheld.

I will not attempt to picture the feelings of the husband when the verdict was rendered against him ! It was impossible to avoid beholding the great distress and, indeed, agony evinced by him. The sexes seemed for a moment

to have changed. Humiliation and despair were relieved by a grateful burst of grief, 'not loud but deep.' Contrition for a thoughtless word what will it not say? Never were lovers more lovers than this pair after this eventful incident. Is my narrative here complete? No. The husband put himself under my care; and at the end of twelve months he wrote me a letter announcing the birth of a son! The following extract from his letter may not come amiss:

'As early as ten years of age was I initiated into the properties of, and taught the abuse of a peculiar part of my organization. I have read carefully your opinion upon the subject of this terrible mal-appropriation, and I believe you to be extremely correct in the probable surmise you offer. My information was from example, and from being of an ardent and extravagant disposition, and blessed with good organic personal development, my mind was always reveling in ideal pleasures. I at length attained my twentieth year, when I became acquainted with the lady I have chosen for my wife. Of course, my feelings were, as usual, aroused when in her society, and I entertained no doubt but that I should render myself quite worthy of the honor she had done me in her selection.

'About this time I accidentally met with one of your little publications, and much do I regret I did not fall in with it years before. However, it staggered me. I became alarmed, and resolved, and re-resolved to abandon my great evil. My efforts were, for a while, successful, and then I forgot my intentional reformation, until, as our wedding-day approached, I became greatly alarmed lest I should disgrace myself on the first and fast-forthcoming occasion.

'I was so imprudent as to submit my organization to one of the frail sisterhood, who assured me I differed not from the rest of my brotherhood. At length the time of trial came, and you know the miserable result. But, thank

Heaven! after years of intolerable suffering and remorse, your prescriptions have restored me to the dignity of manhood.'

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## CHAPTER VI.

It is not only the ruder sex who are liable to impuissance or a want of power to consummate the marriage tie, but not unfrequently the fair sex are found to be averse to all copulation. In such cases they repel the husband's advances—are revolted by his caresses, and refuse all intimacy. The husbands of such wives are very unfortunate, and it is difficult to tell why such women marry at all, unless from the most mercenary motives. One newly-married man complained to me that his wife always preferred to be too sleepy, on first going to bed, to perform the sexual act, and when she awoke in the morning, she refused his attentions. When he asked her in the most tender manner to permit him to have connection with her, she replied, 'Get out, you nasty creature!' At another time, when he put his arm around her neck, she threw it off, and said hastily, 'Do you want to choke me?'

I recommended generous diet for the body, and he replied that he had been feeding her on eggs and chicken broth, but that they produced no effect. He had next procured *love-powders* from a celebrated fortune teller, and gave it to her when going to bed at night, in a glass of lemonade; but she remained as averse to connubial connection as ever.

One newly-married woman discovered, to her great mortification, that the marital embrace yielded her no delight; that she could, by no means, conjure up the least pleasurable sensation. She did not absolutely experience pain, but, from the absence of enjoyment, she looked upon the act as undignified, and her aversion to it increased every

day. She feared, and with good reason, that her apathy towards her husband, and her positive shudder when she fancied herself merely the instrument of his gratification, would lead him to seek elsewhere the pleasure she was unable to afford.

On examination I found nothing in the lady that could cause such inaptitude for the performance of the sexual act ; but I learned several circumstances that induced me to think some marital inaptitude existed ; and in an interview which I subsequently had with her husband, I found from his own statement that he was not a man of very excitable imagination—that he cared little for the dalliances of a lady's chamber, or the caresses of the owner herself—that he merely obeyed the occasional impulses of his own nature, and that he gave his companion his consent to consult me, more with a view to relieve her own mind than his.

I am persuaded that most of these cases are the result of a want of affection on the part of the husband ; and this may not always be caused by deficiency in him ; but having become united to a woman that was not naturally attentive to him, however much she may have been to others, he has been unable to feel towards her the same warmth and admiration which some other woman would have excited in him.

In the case now under consideration, the marriage had been brought about by the friends of the parties. The *suitableness* of the connection had been the main cause of the union. They were equal in point of property and social standing. Their ages were justly proportioned, and the parents of the parties had been long acquainted with each other. This was considered a sufficient warranty for them to come together, and enter into that state which is generally indissoluble only by death.

Nothing is more imprudent than marriages formed on such a basis. Persons bearing such a relation to each other may be common friends, but that is all. It not un-

frequently happens that those who are well adapted to each other in the way of marriage are strangers, of different walks in life, and whose outward circumstances are extremely dissimilar. Not one can choose for another, and friends and relatives exhibit not only great indelicacy, but a thorough want of practical knowledge, who lay traps for young people in order to bring about a marriage.

My skill was appealed to, however, in this case, and it became necessary for me to do something. My first step was secretly to advise the lady to commence an entire revolution in her dress—to procure clothing entirely different from that which she had been accustomed to wear in the presence of her husband. Her attire had been rather plain. She now affected a gayety of apparel, which transformed her outward appearance, and gave her a semblance to a fashionable woman of the world. She also assumed a lightness and gayety of manner that had been unusual to her, and moved more briskly.

I also gave the husband some secret advice. Each of them was sensible of a change in the other, although neither knew by what magic it had been brought about. The consequence of all this was, that the family increased—the old association of ideas broken up, and they were mutually fond of each other; at least to a certain degree.

A singular case of this kind occurred within my knowledge, near Bristol, some years ago. A gentleman from Liverpool had married a young widow lady possessed of considerable property. He fancied, after his marriage, that the money was the most valuable part of his bargain; and his feelings towards the lady were, at least, indifferent.

She had truly loved him, and was a woman of good form and features, agreeable, and well-informed. When she perceived his indifference it affected her deeply. She seemed to have ventured all upon the cast of a die and to have lost. Things had gone in this way several months when an old farmer, a poor but shrewd man, who had known the lady from a child, advised a ruse, which he im-



aged would bring back the truant husband to a proper sense of his wife's merits. He got her to disguise herself and pay a visit to him in the country, having previously tempted the husband in the same direction by the promise of some very fine shooting.

The husband seeing a lovely-formed lady at the farmhouse, though she was careful never to come into his immediate presence, became quite curious in respect to her, and frequently questioned the farmer, who shook his head mysteriously, and seemed disinclined to dwell upon the topic.

This only served to sharpen the desire of the citizen for an introduction to this fine woman. After he had become fairly enamored of her, the farmer promised to bring about a meeting between them, though he was very particular on one point—that his agency in the affair should be kept a profound secret.

Accordingly, one fine summer evening, it was announced to the gentleman that the lady whom he had seen, was taking a solitary walk in a neighboring grove. The gentleman was not slow at taking the hint. He hastened to the spot, and beneath the glimpses of the moon, he discovered the symmetrical form of the unknown, as she stood upon a rock, apparently engaged in the contemplation of the clouds. He advanced slowly to her side, taking every precaution not to alarm her, and when he perceived that she observed him, he made as if accident had led to this meeting.

He addressed the lady very politely, and he was glad to perceive that she pardoned his intrusion. There was a pensive softness in her voice that agreed well with the occasion, and when he waited upon her to the farmhouse, he imagined that he had made some impression upon her gentle heart. On the succeeding evening he found her again in the grove, and his vanity whispered him that her early return to their last place of meeting was, somehow, connected with the remembrance of himself.

This time their interview was prolonged, and when they parted for the night, he took the liberty to kiss her hand. She did not withdraw it, and this fact filled him with the most delightful hopes, and kept him awake nearly all night.

On the next day, as usual, the lady was only to be seen at intervals as she passed through the house, on her way to and from her room, and he scarcely got a glimpse of her countenance.

When evening came, our gentleman took care to visit the grove—but alas! the fair object of his idolatry was not there. He feared that she had gone home to her friends, and early in the morning he consulted the host. The worthy farmer told him frankly that he suspected his attentions had been too pointed, and that the lady had become alarmed in consequence of it. He was, however, assured that the lady still remained at the farm-house, of which, indeed, he soon after had ocular demonstration, as she passed out at a side door into the garden.

That evening he strayed towards the grove, in a hopeless state of mind, believing that he had lost, forever, his chance of happiness, by his own rashness. What then was his joy to see the lady seated on the stump of a fallen tree, apparently buried in reflection.

He advanced quickly to the spot, and falling on his knees before her, begged that if, carried away by an irresistible admiration, he had presumed too much upon her forgiveness and her gentle, kind, angelic nature.

‘Pray, rise, sir,’ said she; ‘this posture is improper. What encouragement did I ever give you to treat me as a woman unengaged, whose heart was free and whose hand was at liberty?’

‘Pardon, madam!’ replied he, ‘but I love you; and when was love ever known to be prudent or calculating?’

The lady seemed coy, but the gentleman was ardent, fiery and enterprising. The consequence was that she at length seemed to yield to her feelings and sank into his

arms. The warm embrace that followed, appeared to be equally satisfactory to the lady and her lover, and when they parted for the night, it was amid kisses, tears and sighs, that they vowed eternal fidelity, and a love that knew no bounds.

All that day the happy lover was rather shy of the farmer lest he should discover how far matters had gone between him and the lady entrusted to his guardianship.

Some little remorse he felt too, when he remembered the young and trusty being whom he had left at home in solitary grief, while he had entered upon the enjoyment of her property, and was now lavishing his affections upon a woman whose only claim upon him was that she had yielded up her honor to his solicitations and placed her reputation entirely in his power.

The meeting between the citizen and the unknown lady now became frequent, though their interviews were always in the evening. Onee, the gentleman sought to see her in the afternoon, but she would not grant him an entrance to her apartment, which, afterwards, she always kept locked.

She alleged, as an excuse for her refusal, that the farmer would suspect how far matters had gone between them.

The gentleman was strongly attracted to the lady, and delayed his return home on account of it. He wondered who were her relatives and what was her name, but she gave him no information on the subject until, at length, he began to suspect that she was a married woman, and had some fears that the farmer would discover their amour and expose him to her husband.

On one fine evening, while they sat on a green bank about half a mile from the farm-house, conversing pleasantly, with his arm about her waist, and the face of the lady turned partly from him, as was his wont, he said to her :

‘Alas! how unhappy I am in not having seen you before I became united for life to another.’

‘And why should you be unhappy, my love?’ said she.

‘Have I not granted you every thing that you could ask, even if I had been your lawful wife?’

‘Yes,’ said he, with a sigh; ‘but this may not last always. I know not what other ties may bind you, for you have told me nothing of your history. Perhaps that a husband may——’

‘No—no,’ interrupted she. ‘If I had a husband I should never be unfaithful to him.’

‘I am glad to hear you say that,’ returned the lover; ‘yet I am only the more unfortunate: because, if you are free, there is an impediment in the way that prevents you from being mine. We must meet in secret. I cannot openly be seen in your company——’

‘Even that,’ cried the lady, ‘I will do if it will make you happier. I will live with you openly as man and wife.’

‘But my wife,’ returned he. ‘You remember that I have one wife already, and both she and her friends would be enraged at such infidelity on my part.’

‘No, sir. I think that your wife would care nothing about it, and I am certain that her friends and relations would highly approve of your conduct.’

‘Why—no, my love; how you talk! You must suppose that I have a very extraordinary wife.’

‘You are mistaken in her, sir. She is not the woman that you take her to be. I am certain that she would be highly pleased at the intimacy between you and me.’

The gentleman looked at the lady as if he thought that she had taken leave of her senses. She now, for the first time, looked full in his countenance. It struck him that there was something familiar in the expression of her face, though it was evening. She smiled, and still the resemblance struck him forcibly. She then pulled a pair of false eyebrows from her forehead, and removed a few raven locks from her forehead.

‘Good heavens!’ cried he, starting up. ‘It is Angelina, as sure as I am a living man!’

‘Yes, my dear, it is I,’ answered she; ‘and now do you think there is any objection to our living together openly and before all the world?’

‘None at all!’ cried the enraptured husband, glad to find that she, whom he had so much admired and so deeply loved under a mask, was his own wedded wife, whom he was at liberty to acknowledge before the whole world.

The farmer was soon apprized of the *eclaircissement* and as he had been in the secret from the first, the citizen was glad to hurry home with his wife, out of the reach of the old man’s jokes and sly insinuations. Nothing ever occurred to mar the happiness of this couple, who lived many years and raised up a large family of children.

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## CHAPTER VII.

WOMAN passes through many changes. She is never stationary, but may be compared to a tree, putting forth just the tender leaves, then the blossoms, and finally the fruit.

We see, with pleasure, when the buds begin to burst, the green verdure mingles with the brown hue of the branches. The invigorating warmth of the Spring causes the whole to revive and put on a smiling face. We are enlivened on beholding this stage of rising womanhood, and participate in the joys that they experience. This agreeable impression is prolonged by remarking the progress which they make from day to day, until the moment when the blossoms are confounded with the leaves, begetting a soft ecstasy at the sight of so singular a union of such enchanting beauties.

Afterwards her beauties are full blown, and her irresistible charms bear down everything before them. She moves through the world a queen, and all hearts pay homage to her beauty.

Such is the destiny of woman, constantly changing from her birth, but by a gradual and imperceptible progress, so that her various lustres are no more than so many short solstices; and, although from one day to another we cannot define any change in her, still she is never stationary, and nothing can be more just than the parallel of the enchanting phases through which she passes, in her gentle procession, with the different phenomena and modes of existence which time and the seasons produce in a tree, from the first budding, the blossoms, fruit, and its apparently permanent state; its various shades and successive tints of the leaves, as compared with their fading, old age, and fall; nothing more exact than the tracing the different feelings one experiences, not only when keeping the eyes constantly fixed on the tree, but viewing it also from interval to interval.

But supposing this lovely tree undermined by some secret influence, by some very destructive cause, all these lovely aspects are interrupted. A thin withered foliage is all that it presents; it languishes, becomes barren, and perishes.

Such is the gloomy fate of the young woman, who, in order to produce an imperfect and unsatisfactory pleasure, has recourse to artificial means to create it, instead of waiting until a proper union is formed between herself and some congenial youth, upon whom she can lavish the rich treasures of her blooming nature, and shed the honeyed sweetness of her breast.

Instead of passing from one condition of beauty to another, she will only graduate from one state of decay to a more melancholy one; for, as everything is continually changing, Nature has willed that there should be no exceptions in those imperceptible determinations which the victims of solitary vice have exposed themselves to. Thus do they anticipate old age, with all its melancholy accompaniments; though that comes fast enough, with care, particularly to females.

The victims of this destructive habit do not participate in the enjoyment of life, being, like the man in the parable, excluded from the marriage feast because they have not on a wedding garment.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

IT IS now my painful task to furnish a few letters that I have received from those who have fallen a prey to the injurious practice of masturbation. In giving them to the reader, I am actuated by a desire to place the young on their guard against one of the greatest evils to which they can yield. The cry of anguish from the sufferers themselves surely ought not to be without its effect upon all who are tempted in like manner. Nor have the writers gone beyond the bounds of truth. On the contrary, it is impossible to tell the one half.

The first letter is from a young lady of wealthy parents, who had been favored with a good education, and all the comforts and luxuries of the higher classes.

‘ B——, *Lincolnshire*, ——.

‘DEAR SIR:—It is with trembling that I take up the pen, being both frail in body and distressed in mind. Nothing could have induced me to open my mind to you, not even the fear of death itself, had you not first alluded to the fatal cause of my malady. Much as I was shocked by your abrupt manner of alluding to it, I forgive you from my heart, as I doubt not that a real regard for my welfare, as well as your professional duties, prompted you to act in the manner which you have done.

‘The horror of mind which I experience renders it a relief to me to speak to some person of my real state, though it was necessary that such person should first make it the subject of discourse. I could never have opened my

lips about it to the most intimate friend, if the way had not been first paved for me, as you have done.

‘When I first commenced the habit, I was perpetually afraid of detection ; but I finally became so much accustomed to it that I was quite forgetful of what the consequences of my carelessness might be. It was in that way that you were assisted in discovering my secret : the disclosures of the maid, who had discovered suspicious tokens in my chamber, left no doubt on your mind.

‘In this place I ought to mention that the caresses of the other sex are very unfavorable in their tendency to one who is addicted to the fatal habit. You have seen my cousin James—a rare specimen of manly beauty, it is every where acknowledged. Being a great favorite with the ladies, he is permitted to indulge in liberties which a plain man would find it impossible to take without giving offence. He has been in the habit of seizing upon me, whenever he caught me alone, and pressing my bosom to his, kissing me vehemently on the lips, and expressing the most ardent admiration of my form. He has sometimes continued this for half an hour together. The consequence has been that the most inflammatory thoughts have passed through my brain, my veins have seemed filled with molten lead, and it was with great difficulty that I could restrain myself from returning his voluptuous kisses and fainting with excess of passion in his arms.

‘Little does he know what harm these *innocent* caresses do to one whose mind is continually filled with the most libidinous imaginings. When, at length, I have broken away from his tormenting embraces, I have rushed to my chamber, and there rioted for hours in the indulgence of those unnatural passions, and yielded to those artificial delights for which he had made me burn till utter exhaustion overcame me. Being highly excited at the time, I was not sensible of the ruin that would follow the indulgence. It has seemed as if I *must* quench the amorous fire that he had enkindled in my swelling and panting bosom,



or I should die of the terrible desire that he had inspired in me.

‘ You told me, when I saw you last, that I was possessed of a remarkably good constitution, naturally, and that had my guilty passion been lavished on a husband, I should have been a rare prize to a man who was constitutionally devoted to our sex.

‘ I think I understand you, sir. My constitution must have been good to have survived the fearful shocks that my unfortunate propensities have given it, and I doubt not that I should have made a truly devoted and loving wife, had I not destroyed the germ of virtue and constancy by this vicious habit. But I fear that all the good that was in me was, long since, destroyed. Constancy is out of the question. For several years whenever I have seen a young man of handsome face or comely proportions, my amorous gaze has been riveted on him ; his face, his lusty limbs, and other parts of his body have come under my observation and scrutiny till I have burned for him, and desired so ardently to hold sexual intercourse with him, that I could scarcely restrain myself, and have been fain, to hurry away to some solitary place and have recourse to artificial means—while at the same time I brought before my imagination the handsome youth, and tried to fancy that it was in his arms I was undergoing the burning delights which I experienced.

‘ Such, sir, are the deplorable consequences of this vice, and how can I ever hope that any man would entrust his honor in the keeping of a wretch who has no more control over her depraved appetites than to long for every man she sees ?

‘ But why talk of marriage with any body while I am evidently hastening to the tomb ? Why speak of rational enjoyment that I may never taste, and for which I am wholly incompetent ? Although to the eye of the casual observer, I am not so much altered by my injurious practices as might be supposed, yet my feelings are wholly de

praved and my imagination poisoned. My thoughts by day are full of the most lascivious images, and my nightly dreams are divided between the horrible and the voluptuous. Lassitude, total disinclination to any kind of employment, an aching weariness follows every exertion. I have pains in my head attendant with dizziness, aching of the eyes, frequent pains in the stomach, arms, legs, loins, and chest.

‘Although by the artifices of dress, I contrive to hide my real shape, yet my wasted limbs and the decay of those swelling proportions which render a woman attractive, bear witness to the havoc which long indulgence has made with what charms I possessed, or might have possessed; and these things destroy the hope of marriage, though I confess to you that were it possible for me to recover health and strength, the idea of entering into a union with the man whom I admired, and becoming the mother of a numerous offspring, is too rapturous for expression.

‘But farewell to all such hopes. My own suicidal hand has wasted the stream of happiness, and I have but one wish—that death will soon end my regrets and my misery.

‘I subscribe myself,

‘Your grateful, tho’ unhappy,

‘D. A.’

The above was an extraordinary case. The unhappy young lady who writes thus was gifted with great natural beauty and a strong mind; but to counterbalance the latter, she possessed strong and excitable feelings, together with a most fanciful imagination.

Early in life she became a prey to the vile habit. The destruction of so fine a mind and so beautiful a body well might make the angels weep.

In her letter to me quoted above, the young lady speaks of disclosures made by the servant girl which enabled me to fix with some degree of certainty upon the nature of her complaint. Alas! the unfortunate creature little sus-

pected that I had been employed by her friends to visit her because that even *they* had become well acquainted with her injurious habit. Long before the discoveries made by the hired girl, they had obtained the most direct insight into the cause of her bodily and mental ailments.

Even that Cousin James of whom she speaks, had been one of the first to find out her fault, having on one occasion entered suddenly into a chamber while she was engaged in the act with her clothes raised. But with proper tact, he turned away his eyes before she discovered him, and he walked towards the other end of the room humming a tune as if he thought himself alone. She had time to adjust herself before he turned, and then he gave a start as if he had but just perceived her presence.

'What! you here, cousin?' said he in a tone of surprise.

The young lady laughed, though a blush covered her face and neck, and she said, 'Why, Cousin James, I have been here ever since you entered.'

But this young man took a strange way to cure his cousin of her evil habit. He paid her much attention, and caressed her as described, with the idea of forcing her thoughts into a *natural channel!* His intentions were honest enough, but how absurd to try to heal a passion by the exhibition of zeal or affected passion on his part!

I took James to task on the subject, but the headstrong boy thought he knew best, and was ambitious of striking out an original path in physies.

I then applied to the parents of the young lady, who took my advice, and peremptorily forbade him to take any liberties with his unfortunate cousin. This gave another direction to his thoughts, and he took a fancy to fall in love with her. He made serious proposals to her parents for her hand.

I was consulted on the subject. I conversed with James, and told him that the young lady was not a proper subject for marriage, although I did not doubt that if she

could be prevailed upon to forego her ruinous habit for one year, she would be sufficiently restored to health to become the mother of a family.

In a week afterward I received the following note from D. A. :

‘SIR: I regret that I am obliged to address you *not* as a friend. You have violated the most solemn pledges, and have betrayed a secret which you were bound to keep most sacredly, both as a man of honor, and as a professional gentleman, entrusted by a patient who trusted you

‘What words can express my chagrin and astonishment? But I will no longer speak in riddles. You shall have the facts. While I was sitting in an arbor in the garden, yesterday afternoon, my cousin James abruptly made his appearance. Taking my hand, he began to talk in a manner which covered my face with blushes. He made a profession of the most devoted love for me.

‘I felt—oh! how deeply I felt the awful ruin that I had brought upon myself. Such a declaration, had I been worthy of him, would have filled me with the most lively transports. But with my ruined heart and depraved body, what could I be to him. I was so overcome with these reflections that, instead of replying to him, I could only burst into tears. I hung my head and sobbed violently.

‘Putting his arm around my waist, he whispered: “Believe me, dearest D—, I know all about that; so do not distress yourself when there is no cause.”

“All about *what!*” said I, no longer weeping, so great was my terror—so dreadful my apprehension.

“Console yourself, dear girl,” cried he; “it is not past remedy.”

‘My voice seemed choked, but I made out to say, with considerable steadiness, “Are you going mad, cousin? Explain yourself. You talk in riddles.”

‘You perceive that I was determined to know the worst. He then replied, with some hesitation,

“Be composed, D——, your unfortunate habit is easily cured.”

‘I heard no more. It grew dark before me, and I became insensible to all earthly objects.

‘When recollection returned, I was in my own chamber, and my mother was at my bedside weeping. I dared not look at her, for how did I know but she also was aware of the dread secret. Pray, sir, had you not better put it into the Gazette? It is a pity that so piquant a piece of intelligence should be lost to the good people of his Majesty’s dominions · and, now I think of it, you might turn an honest penny by supplying the newspaper factors with the whole history of a young girl who had ruined herself by artificial substitutes for lawful gratification. Oh! sir! is this the honor of a *man*? Is this a gentleman? Did you volunteer the information to my cousin James, or did he question you, and offer a fee for the secret? I hope he paid you well, for the news you had to tell him was so important—so valuable!

‘But enough, sir. My happiness is doubly ruined, and I feel that death is the only solace left to me. D. A.’

The conclusion of this singular epistle seemed to hint at suicide, and I ran immediately over to the house, in much trepidation. It was none too soon. In approaching the mansion I was obliged to pass a stream or small river which, winding around a grove, ran by the bottom of the orchard. I saw something white on the bottom of the stream; I hastened on till I became convinced it was the outer garment of a female. Rushing into the water I found that I had not been deceived. I dragged the young lady to the shore and laid her upon the grass. In a few moments she opened her eyes languidly, and gave me a look of reproach and heartfelt anguish which went to my soul.

I called her by name, and told her not to look upon me in that manner. ‘I have never revealed your secret,’ said

I. 'Be comforted, my dear girl, for I have hopes that all will yet be well with you!

She smiled; but it was such a smile! So full of recklessness, combined with despair, that I feared her reason was gone forever.

I took her in my arms and conveyed her home. I then gave directions that a carriage should be brought to the door, and drove her to my house. I knew that shame was at the bottom of her present misery. She believed that her secret was known to all the household, and to hide herself from their scrutiny, she had attempted suicide. Therefore, by conveying her to my house, she would see only her physician, in whom she had confided, and I should be able to bring to bear every art of which I was master, to alleviate her regrets and restore her mind to its proper tone.

She was in a listless, almost insensible condition, and I left her to repose a day or two, during which she was too much depressed to have recourse to her fatal habits; for I had put her in a chamber which was overlooked by a secret aperture above, through which I could see everything that passed without being observed.

On the third day she revived somewhat, and starting up from the sofa on which she had lain, she looked wildly about her a few minutes, as if wondering where she was. Perceiving that she was entirely alone, and imagining herself to be unobserved, she mechanically prepared to abuse herself. I hurried down stairs and rapped smartly at the door of the chamber. I heard a sudden start and a rustling of clothing, and having paused a few moments, I opened the door and entered.

She looked vexed at the interruption, but endeavored to hide her chagrin.

'Doctor, how came I here?' were her first words.

'Have you no recollection of past events?' said I.  
'Think a moment.'

She thought some minutes, but it was evident that she

could not recall the events of the last three days. At length she said, 'I do remember of being startled by the behavior of my cousin,—and that reminds me, sir, that you—'

'Nay, my dear girl,' interrupted I; 'you are mistaken. I have not betrayed my trust. Your cousin discovered your failing by dint of his own sagacity.'

'Dreadful!' cried she, turning very pale.

'Not so dreadful as you suppose, my dear. He is sorry for your misfortune, but I am confident that he thinks none the less of you'—

'Yes, sir; but what an exposure! Do you think that I could ever look Cousin James in the face again, and live?'

I took the hand of the young lady, and said, gently, 'You believe there is a Supreme Being. I know you do. Now, my girl, all infractions of his laws are attended with more or less evil. It is a truth that 'the way of the transgressor is hard,' and you must expect to endure the penalty. I have told you that your cousin does not despise you. On the contrary, he loves you with a true and honorable love. You state in your note to me, that to be his wife would give you the greatest happiness; but you also state (and I acknowledge truly) that such a one as you is not fit to be the wife of an honorable man. Such a one as you are *now*, I mean. Is it not, then, worth your while to make an attempt at reform. I truly believe that if you will place yourself in my hands, and obey me implicitly, you may be cured of your fault, and may be rendered worthy of your cousin.'

She shook her head. 'It is a dream—a mere dream—that is never to be realized, sir. I never can be anything in this world.'

For another hour I plead with her, and finally prevailed upon the poor girl to submit to my authority and to remain for six months at my house.

'Now, that I had given my consent,' said she, 'just

withdraw if you please, till evening, as I have much to think of.'

I left her, but repaired immediately to my post of observation, as I was apprehensive that she had an object in being alone. I soon discovered that I was correct. I, therefore, interrupted her again. She reminded me that I had consented to leave her till night. 'Give me this afternoon to myself,' said she, beseechingly, 'and ever after I am at your disposal.'

'No, my girl,' replied I; 'you will find it as difficult to obey me on every afternoon as you do to-day. We must strike *now*; we must act on the moment. Nerve yourself to the task, and in a few days you will be astonished at the ease with which your arch-enemy is vanquished.'

She saw that I understood her motive for wishing to be alone, and cheek, bosom and brow became as red as scarlet.

From that moment, either myself or my wife was continually in her presence. She left with my wife. Every day she took a cold bath, and as she grew stronger, I accompanied her on walks abroad, which gradually became longer and longer.

To be brief, in six months, D. A. was a blooming girl, plump and lively. I then gave permission to her cousin to call and see her once a week, and at the end of a year from the time she came to live with me, he led her to the altar.

She became the wife of her cousin James, and is now living in the enjoyment of fine health, and has three rosy boys, and is a most happy woman.

But I would not have the reader suppose that this victory was won without a severe struggle. The most painful self-denial on the part of the young lady, the most rigid attention to the rules laid down, and perpetual watchfulness on the part of myself and wife, were required in order to bring about so satisfactory a result. So awfully inveterate is this vice when once it obtains a foot-



hold, that every step on the backward road to virtue is like the struggles of one who vainly endeavors to throw a mountain from his shoulders. This should be thought of.

I will here cite a few cases that have been recorded by eminent physicians, who have given this vital subject great attention.

The following is from a young lady, and was addressed to a very celebrated French surgeon :

'I had the misfortune, sir, in my earliest youth, I believe, when between eight or ten years of age, to contract a very pernicious habit, that soon undermined my health, which has been particularly bad for some years. I labor under most extraordinary dejection ; my nerves are very weak ; my hands always in a state of tremor, and I am in a constant perspiration, with violent and frequent pains in the stomach, arms, legs, loins, and chest ; with a constant cough. My eyes are weak and continually failing,—still I keep continually getting weaker and weaker, and look even worse than I feel.'

The same medical man received a letter from another sufferer by this most pernicious habit. We give an extract : 'When quite young I became initiated into a vile habit which completely undermined my physical strength, and has sadly prostrated and disturbed my mind. Oftentimes I am completely overwhelmed with confusion, and suffer so dreadfully from swimming in the head, that I am often in dread of a fatal stroke of apoplexy. My chest is very much contracted, and it is with difficulty and pain that I draw my breath. My sleep is anxious, fitful and unrefreshing, and in the morning I awake far weaker than when I lay down to seek repose. I am very, nay, frightfully pale ; my eyes are almost useless, my breath offensive in the extreme.'

We quote from another letter, written to the same me-



dical gentleman : ' So faint and weak have I become that it is with great difficulty that I can walk a hundred steps without frequent pause. In my chest and shoulders I have severe shooting pains, particularly in the afternoons and nights. My appetite is voracious, and this causes me great uneasiness, as I suffer from severe pains in the stomach after eating. My eyes ache intolerably if I read for but half an hour. In spite of all my attempts to suppress them, I find myself giving vent to deep drawn sighs.

' Had I not been restrained by religion, I should long ere this have terminated a life that has become burdensome to me by my own fault.'

In fact, it would be impossible to conceive a more hopeless state of existence, than that of which I am about to describe the last scene ; and the fear of adding one crime to another, was no doubt the only feeling that restrained the person who was so cruelly punished from closing her mortal career thus early.

It is still the celebrated Doctor Tissot who relates the fact, and I will leave him to speak for himself.

' The disease at first only showed itself in this young woman by slow and daily progress ; but, for many months antecedent to her death, she could not stand upon her legs, nor even bear the weight of her arms and hands ; the disease of her tongue increased, and she lost her voice so that you could hardly hear her speak. The *extensor* muscles—those that support the head—allowed it constantly to drop on her chest. She was never without a pain in the loins ; and appetite and sleep both gradually left her ; and for the last months of her life she had the greatest difficulty in swallowing at all. About Christmas she was overtaken with oppression and intermittent fever, and her eyes sunk in the most singular manner. When I saw her, she was supported day and night in an arm chair, with her feet extended on another—though even then her head every moment would fall upon her bosom ; and she never was without some one close at hand to change her atti-



tude, raise her head, feed her, give her snuff, and listen attentively to all her requests. The last days of her life she was induced to speak, letter by letter, which were written down as she muttered them.'

In order not to fatigue you too much with such afflicting discourse, I have never given you any of the letters from these unhappy patients at full length, but only such extracts as I wished to impress upon you. I will, therefore, as shortly as possible, submit an extract or two from other letters addressed by the patients themselves to their physicians, and published by Doctor Doussin Dubreuil, who, in so doing, was guided only by the best feelings.

The first extract is that of a letter written to Doctor Doussin Dubreuil himself, and gives an instance when epilepsy was the result of the error of solitude :

'When about twelve years of age, I was troubled with pains in the head, and the sensation of a weight upon the brain, for which I was bled, and kept on low diet without experiencing much relief, and soon after I was surprised by an attack of epilepsy, to which I then became subject, having had a very severe one recently. Indeed, sir, I can not doubt but that it is owing to an evil habit which I contracted when very young, that I am so nervous that I can hardly move, and the smallest object terrifies me, even the threats of a child not more than ten years of age quite unnerve me, and I am unable to apply myself to anything, as the least constraint of mind brings on a fit.'

The next extract furnishes an example of repeated nervous attacks, with the falling down, and rigidity of the nerves of the patient :

'The following is the description that has been given to me of my fits. I stamp violently on the floor, and then fall, with my limbs stiffened, teeth clenched, and the end of my tongue thrust between the incisive teeth. My face and hands become livid, and no doubt, sir, my unfortunate fate is the result of those murderous self-indulgences with

which I frequently sought to gratify myself, as before that I enjoyed an excellent state of health, which was evinced by the freshness of my complexion.'

The third shows the probability of a diseased pericardium, the membrane that encloses the heart.

'I am very thin, but should nevertheless be in the enjoyment of good health, were it not for sundry pains I feel, one in particular, in the interior of the body, near the left shoulder, which I fear will cause my death, since it is in that part that surrounds the heart.'

The fourth extract gives an example of excessive pains :

'As I mentioned to you, my morals were entirely pure, and my health seemed to be unalterable, till I was fifteen years of age, and never can I reflect on the happiness I then enjoyed, without feeling the bitterest remorse. Had I but listened to the good counsel of another young girl whom I myself wished to corrupt, and who at once repulsed the propositions I made to her, I should never have fallen into the pitiable state I have been in for the last ten years. When lying full length on my bed or the sofa, the pains I experience in all my limbs makes me scream out in such a manner, as to set the persons about me shuddering, frequently involving the dear relatives who surround me in constant alarm, and no doubt my presence is fatiguing to them. I am so thin that you may count all my bones ; indeed, I have scarcely the appearance of a human being.'

The fifth extract shows an affliction of the bowels and stomach :

'My stomach is always grumbling, as if the bowels were detaching themselves from each other. The principal disease is in the stomach, which, as I told *you before*, will not digest anything.'

And the sixth extract is to the same effect, showing the probable nervous affection of the bowels :

'At other times there is a numbness, and pains in the

stomach, as if my bowels were all tightened up and strongly compressed.'

The seventh extract is an example of internal heat and the feeling of insects gnawing :

'When in my dreams, I become involuntarily guilty, on awakening, I begin to feel an internal disease, imparting the most horrid pains, which increased more and more. As besides feeling a dreadful heat, which appears to be consuming the spine of my back, my stomach and ribs have the sensation of being gnawed by insects, and justly alarmed at so deplorable a condition, I think it my duty to acquaint my Doctor with it.'

And a little further on, in the same letter, she says :

'My voice is hoarse, and I cough night and day, with a slight fever that is always increased on a repetition of my errors. I have, moreover, ague fits, and I can neither read, write, or walk, and my memory is entirely gone.'

Many other letters have been written to me on the same subject, that is, seeking immediate advice and assistance. Amid an immense number that have been written by the same person, I will only show you a few passages from three, the first and the last particularly, written at seven month's intervals, by which the duration and the degree of resistance, of those diseases which spring from such causes, may be seen.

Extract of a letter, 2d December, 1816 :

'This fearful habit has reduced me to a most frightful condition. I have not the slightest hope of living for another year, and am in constant alarm, as I see death approaching with rapid steps. I trust, however, to you for any prolongation of life I may obtain, as may be, the few healthy germs that are still left to me will be revived by your skill, and my zeal in following your advice strictly.

'I have, for a long time past, been afflicted with a weakness; that has been constantly increasing. When I get up in the morning, I am, for a short time, exposed to a giddy

ness, and all the joints of my bones rattle just like the shaking of a skeleton ; and occasionally, on getting out of bed, my nose bleeds, and I am seized with a spitting of blood, and this, notwithstanding every care and caution ; the blood on such occasions being sometimes free and sometimes clotted ; and this is followed by such nervous attacks, that I can scarcely move my arms, and then my limbs become, as it were, numbed, accompanied by pains of the heart ; the quantity of blood which I discharge, as I have mentioned, has latterly increased. My limbs are small, and I am neither fat nor tall. I derive but little nourishment from what I take, and frequently feel a sharp pricking pain at the pit of my stomach, and between my shoulders, which creates great difficulty in breathing. For three months past, I have suffered a constant agitation in my limbs, which seems to be produced by the circulation of the blood. Going up only a few stairs, or walking the shortest distance, is followed by great fatigue, and I am troubled with shivering fits, especially in the morning.'

Extract of a further letter from the same patient, in the following February :

'I am now in my twenty-first year, and dread the effects of spring ; my skin, however, is not so parched and heated as heretofore. My arms are very thin, and my veins almost imperceptible ; they seem no longer to have any blood in them. Notwithstanding all my care, I fear I never shall recover a healthy constitution, or get any flesh upon my bones.

'It appears to me for some time past I have become bent and stooping, and I suffer from constant perspirations at the back.

'My blood is still strangely agitated, and whether lying down or standing, the circulation of it and my pulse create constant excitement, particularly about my limbs and head, and when I lean down at all, I am immediately troubled with deafness. I have also a slight cough, but I think very little of that.'

This young girl deceived herself. That which she mistook for a mere cough, was the commencement of an affection of the chest, and organs of the voice, which seldom fail being injured, particularly with young girls who have fallen into those fatal habits, which reduced this lady to the deplorable condition she has so strikingly and energetically depicted.

She had previously acquainted me that her stomach had discharged, for some time, small concretions, similar to crumbs of bread, that were of exceedingly bad odor. These came very probably from the chest, and are sometimes the forerunners of consumption.

Fearing that her letters might miscarry, and that it would thereby become known that she was corresponding with me (a fear that is always carried to a great extent, especially in such complaints), this young girl always resorted to some artifice in writing to me, that she might not be known to any one but myself. Sometimes she did not limit herself to writing anonymously, but sometimes wrote as from an anonymous person; and it was in this manner that she last wrote to me for advice: an innocent artifice, which eloquently and openly condemns the vice, and is the best eulogium of good morals. Virtue neither seeks to show nor conceal herself; but to act as the person in question has done, is a plain proof that she does not despise virtue, and at the same time exhibits a sorrow that she ever forsook her paths.

In another letter, dated not long afterwards, the writer says: 'Sir, since last writing to you, some little change for the better has taken place with respect to Mademoiselle——, whom you are attending. I saw her a few days ago, and she requested me to acquaint you that she had regained some strength by carefully attending to your advice. She is still, however troubled with bleedings at the nose, though she has only had two slight irritations of the description she spoke of, within the last fourteen weeks, which disappeared without having recourse to medicine.'

She does not complain so much of fatigue now, although her shivering fits and loss of blood by the nose continue almost the same, and she has some apprehensions that she will never be entirely free from them. She tells me that her lips when she gets up in the morning are very white, and that sundry red spots are perceptible in her eyes, which sometimes speedily disappear, while at others, they last the whole day, and she generally looks very ill, and is also very hoarse; also, that whenever she eats fruit, she has unpleasant twitches in the stomach, that impede her freely breathing. The spots in her eyes annoy and disturb her much.'

'The shivering and agitation of which this person makes frequent complaint, and which she seems to attribute to the circulation of her blood, are merely symptomatic of a nervous irritation, and the extreme weakness of the nerves. Her bleeding at the nose and spitting of blood, notwithstanding its diminution, and some other symptoms, though betokening the return of strength, and the red spots in the eyes, may yet have some remote tendency to a scorbutic complaint; and as this complaint exists in her family, it has no doubt been developed in her by her unhappy secret propensities.

Excesses of fever were often the results of secret vicious habits in persons corrupted early. I do not confine myself to those excesses in which all moral feeling is lost. As to amorous melancholy, it has also been named by many physicians, *amorous madness*. The mind is, in fact, more or less affected; many of its faculties are indeed so highly excited, that the patients then only really differ from other maniacs as regards the cause of their madness. The female constitution disposes to it. Almost entirely destined by Nature to conceive and cherish nought but tender affection; intended rather for a life of comfort than of pain, of tranquillity than of agitation and distraction, there is for woman—and particularly for some women—but one



single step from a vicious secret habit to amorous madness ; that disease, in fact, which may be called madness of the heart.

This new excess is not less hurtful to the general health, than to the mind, and is equally productive of forgetfulness of all moral duties.

The following are two examples which will give you a sufficient idea of some of these different affections ; but particularly the last, on which account I chiefly cite them.

' C—— de —— was so smitten with love that she could neither work, nor walk, nor sleep, nor keep herself upright, nor even speak. According to her, every man and every woman would run and throw themselves into the sea, if the sea had been that love. Absorbed in the depth of that passion, she would frequently go into the garden and confide to the trees and flowers her hysterical passion ; or else she rushed all over the house, exclaiming, '*Love, love!*' and then would roll on the ground. The violence of her passion destroyed her health to such an extent that she could not swallow a drop of water, and took no nourishment : she burned without and within ; she could not sleep ; sometimes she was seized with the most agonizing convulsions ; sometimes she fell into a complete stupor. At length she spit blood, became dumb, and died.'

These different affections were all nervous. The patient could not swallow a drop of water because her throat was closed. The blood probably burst from her chest from the same cause. She became dumb and blind from the paralysis of the muscles of the voice and the optic nerves, or that which produces vision : doubtless after the spasms, which took place to an excessive extent, and which had too frequently occurred in these organs as well as in many other parts of the body.

A lady thirty-two years of age, of fine stature, a strong constitution, with blue eyes, white skin, chestnut-colored

hair, had been placed in an educational establishment, where the most brilliant future, where the brightest prospects were always offered to those who entered it. Some time after her marriage, she saw a young man of a more elevated rank than her husband. She was immediately smitten with him; she murmured against her lot, and spoke only of her husband with contempt.

She refused to live with him, and at length took a decided aversion, not only to him, but to her own parents, who vainly endeavored to cure her of her caprice. The disease increased: it was necessary to separate her from her husband; she spoke incessantly of the object of her passion; she became difficult to please, capricious and passionate. She escaped her parent's house to run after him. She watched him everywhere; she called for him in her impassioned songs; he was the greatest, the most witty, the most amiable, the most perfect of men. She asserted that she was his wife; that she had never known another husband. It was he who lived in her heart, who directed its movements, who governed its thoughts, who ruled over its actions. She had had a child by him, which should be as accomplished as its father. She was frequently surprised in a kind of ecstacy and ravishing thought; then her gaze was fixed, and a smile was on her lips. She frequently addressed letters to him. She made verses, which she filled with the most amorous expressions; she copied them frequently, and with great care. Though they expressed the most violent passion, they were at the same time a proof of the most perfect virtue. When she went out she walked briskly, as if she were engaged on business; or else she would walk slowly and haughtily. She avoided men, all of whom she despised, and placed far beneath her lover. Nevertheless, she was not always indifferent to any mark of interest displayed towards her; and to any overtures made to her, she opposed the name, the merit, the qualities, and perfections of him whom she adored. Often, during the day and night, she would talk to herself—

sometimes aloud and sometimes in a low tone. Sometimes she wept, sometimes she smiled ; sometimes she was angry with herself in her solitary conversations. If she was told of her loquacity, she assured them she was compelled to speak. Most frequently it was her lover who conversed with her, by means only known to herself. Sometimes she believed that individuals jealous of her happiness, endeavored to mar it by breaking up these interviews, and by striking her. (I have seen her almost furious, shrieking and declaring that she had just been struck.) Under other circumstances, her face became red, her eyes sparkling ; she could not recognise her parents or her friends : she was furious, and attempted to commit the greatest injuries. This state sometimes continued for two, three, eight, or fifteen days ; she would then feel most agonizing pains at the epigastrium, and about the heart. These pains, which were concentrated at the precordial region (the pit of the stomach), which she could not support without the strength communicated to her by her lover, were, as she said caused, by her parents and her friends—although they were several leagues distant—or by those who attended her.

‘Any great appearance of compulsion or force overawed her ; she would then turn pale, tremble—a flow of tears would terminate the attack.’

This lady, reasonable under all other circumstances, worked ; was perfectly capable of managing her domestic arrangements ! she did justice to her husband’s merit, and to her parent’s affection ; but she could not see the former nor live with the latter. This state was not brought on her by any previous derangement of health. The paroxysms of fury sometimes took place at the period of menstruation, but not always. Her appetite was capricious, and all her actions participated in the disorder of her delirious passion. She slept but little ; her slumber was disturbed by dreams and nightmare. She had frequent fits of watchfulness ; and when she did not sleep, she

walked about, talked to herself, and sung. This state of things continued for many years. A year's course of treatment, isolation, tepid and cold baths, douches, anti-spasmodics—both externally and internally—nothing could restore her to reason. The physicians who report these two cases do not say whether the patients were guilty of secret breaches of the vows of modesty; more than one fact, however, makes us think this to be the case with the former.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### SOME GENERAL REMARKS ON MASTURBATION.

IN works relating to the subject under notice, the description of the vice may possibly intimate, for the first time to the innocent, its existence; but as it is one which assails, if it does not triumph over, *all* on the ante-side of puberty, surely a description of the consequences of its indulgence cannot accompany the detail without its deterring influence. The frightful effects, although with some, slow in their progress, which befall the idolater of the practice of Onanism, should not be hidden from those who are about to, or may have already commenced the baneful practice.

Few can express so forcibly the lamentations of repentance, remorse, and despair, as those who have found themselves, when too late, shut out as it were forever from those rewards of womanhood; deprived of a sense of that which makes life the clysium it can be rendered; few, I observe, can convey so true a history of their desolate condition, as the actual victim of this luckless indulgence. Chapter-writers, usually, when describing Onanism, bind the word with such damning epithets, that deprive the hapless victim of the habit (perhaps hitherto unconscious

of its demoralizing and death-nearing tendency) of all hope; they almost forewarn him of the impossibility of escape; so that, instead of throwing up the sin or error he ought to shun, as the indispensable, and I would add, *only* means of repairing the mischief she has already incurred, dives further into folly and becomes irrevocably lost to the exercise of that power, without which she is unworthy the appellation of woman. Bad, reprehensible, unworthy, and demoralizing as this error may be, its condemnation would be better secured by the more charitable portrayal of its results.

The intention of this book has already been explained, else the less often trespass upon this unhallowed ground had been desirable.

It is a subject rarely alluded to in conversation, because a knowledge of it presupposes such to be practical; and who is desirous of criminating herself? Medical publications offer the only arena where such matters may be tolerated; and even the writers thereof have been scrupulous in meddling therewith, lest they incur a similar insinuation.

The suppression of this habit appears to have been left to the watchfulness of parents; who, knowing what may have led to the first false step in themselves, endeavor to avert the same in their children, and so far the practice might be somewhat kept under; but when we recollect the vast increase of population, the early period at which youth are, from necessity, sent to school, and there left open to example, or compelled to intermix with others; the numerous snares and temptations presented to them in large civilized towns, all the watchfulness in the world will be insufficient to keep off the habit, or to suppress or control such when once acquired. The secret of an illusive gratification is soon discovered to be so practicable and pleasurable, as to appear a mine of inexhaustible delight. Correction is in vain; it is a habit that can only be eradicated by an early and forcible representation of its fatal

consequences : when, if they be unheeded, the young sensualist will too soon have to regret the realization of that which she might have avoided.

I will consider, in detail, the pernicious and devastating consequences of the indulgence in the habit of self-pollution, and then particularize the *modus operandi* of bringing about so dire a result. In the first place, *it demoralizes the mind ; it is a practice which every person would blush to indulge in publicly, or if she thought she were suspected being guilty of. It is a misappropriation of the purposes for which we were destined : it is a weakness derogatory to the dignity of a human being ; it impedes the growth, not only of the body generally, but of individual and important organs. It checks the development and deranges the structure. It produces premature debility ; it gives pains in the loins ; it establishes general weakness, and induces even consumption ; and it is certain, if continued, to produce IMPOWENCE. The mental faculties escape not ; the mind becomes futuitous ; the very senses imperfect in their action ; and the whole economy of nature becomes perverted.*

Of all the dangerous gratifications that strew the path from youth, none are so mischievous as the indulgence in Onanism. It unhappily offers two powerful inducements ; it can be practiced in seclusion, and its effects on the health and appearance (unlike those produced by drunkenness, a night's revelry, or any other appetital excess, which tell their tale next day), from the insidious manner in which the undermining process is going on, can be, at least for a while, if not entirely, at all events partially, concealed. Unfortunately why the habit is so prevalent, is because the evil consequences are not known, and consequently not anticipated. It is folly to mine the matter. There is no doubt that it is most extensively indulged in. How few persons, indeed, can deny the imputation of having, one time or other, given way to it ! The student or divine are not exempt, nor are those whose exemplary and

moral conduct might refute such a charge, if suspicion were the only accuser.

No practice, exercise, or occupation so disturbs the free and equal circulation of the blood in the brain as masturbation. The blood may be quickened in particular parts of the system without the whole circulation participating in such a disturbance; but when that is the case, the neighboring parts to those affected are deficiently supplied, and consequently their functions become perverted or temporarily paralyzed. We know not how the communication between the cerebellum (the supposed regulator of the amitive feelings) is connected with the organs referred to, but we do know that the hind part of the head indicates, by certain symptoms, such as heat or pain, and phrenologically speaking, by size and form, the state and character of the genital organs; and we further know, that when those organs are in a state of undue excitement or disease, the circulation of the blood in the cerebellum is disturbed; and if increased, the other parts of the brain receive a less supply, and if diminished, the contrary. Hence arises an altered action in some parts of the brain, to the detriment of the proper and correct working of its functions: the effects are sad estrangements from healthful feelings. The perceptive and reflective faculties abiding in the anterior and upper part of the brain, become weakened or deranged, and hence all morbid sensations that harass the sensualist. We are capable of enduring a certain amount of fatigue or enjoyment, day by day; the excess of one may be relieved by rest on the second; but it is impossible to overtax our capability, and no reaction can be commanded. We know the vast complication of organs engaged in a single phenomena of perception, reflection or bodily movement; but they are obedient to natural demands. Let us think for a moment how we overstretch our powers, when we are obliged to call all our imagination to aid us in producing a sensation, that instinct properly direct-

ed could furnish in an instant without labor or fatigue ; but which, when sought for as it is, by a process at variance with the recognized notions of decency and rectitude, tends only to injure the fabric that contains the thinking man. The practice may be traced to the earliest periods of youth. It may certainly arise from congenital precocity : the child may acquire the practice without example ; but it is more frequently a failing acquired by tuition. Sir William Ellis mentions a case of a child reduced to a state bordering on idiocy, produced by solitary indulgence at ten years of age ; and cases have been known where the practice has been pursued by children of more tender growth.

The probable period when this habit is learned is when the girl is sent to any large boarding school, at the age of twelve or fourteen years, or at the period when she begins to associate with other girls of her own standing. It requires no strain upon our belief to trace the habit to example, and probably most readers will agree with me, that vices of this sort, once learnt, are with immense difficulty only left off. They say that a reformed rake makes the best husband, a penitent thief the best thief-taker, and the most skilled in bad habits the best preacher : be it so ; of this fact we may be certain, that without experience of the extent to which the practice of masturbation is carried,—that without having witnessed its direful effects upon constitutions that otherwise might have vied with the patriarchs of old,—that without having an interest in promulgating the fearful consequences—and that without being able to detect in whom the bane is worming its mischief to the very core of womanhood's properties—such a person had better dip his pen in stainless fluid, than blot the paper with mere denunciations against the evil, and with moral aphorisms on the consequences. To crush so devastating a habit, the picture should be drawn as it really is. As a set-off against



this pleasing illusion, the desolating effects should be well displayed. Almost all cases that have fallen under my notice of nervousness and feeble health, of inaptitude for bodily and mental occupation, of loss of power and deficiency in the generative function, the parties have more or less acknowledged to have been misled at one time or another by this corroding infatuation.

As I have intimated, the practice when once indulged in, is difficult to abandon: it grows with our growth and becomes confirmed at the expense of our strength. The patient, if I may so address the party, is unconscious, perhaps for years, of any change, no one part of the body feels weakened more than another; but there gradually comes over a creeping languor, a feeling of lassitude, a depression of spirits, ennui, a disinclination for the everyday mixture among society: this feeling at length increases so as to attract the attention of the patient or her friends. She and they are sensible that she is not what she formerly was: her face becomes pallid; the circle around the eyes depressed and darkened; a thinness is visible in her looks; her hands are generally cold and clammy; she cannot bear the cold as she was wont to do; her old pursuits have no attraction for her, nor do any new ones entice her attention; her memory becomes imperfect; her vision is not so clear nor her sight so strong as in times gone by; morbid sensations annoy her; strange feelings harass her; at length she sinks into a state of fatuity, and is carried off by some rapid decline.

This is the picture of the 'female rake's progress' uninterruptedly. There are sometimes many steps of folly between the baptism and the grave; and it does not follow that she who treads the first third should go the three fourths; hence there are many degrees of impurity, or impolity (if the word suit better), and the earlier such be checked, the less lasting the punishment incurred.

By way to bring out this draft of ills more forcibly and to the purpose, I will afford the reader a brief insight into

some of the secrets of my own consulting closet ; although deviating somewhat from my original intention of withholding entirely personal incidents, and making this little affair a work of general application ; yet, from the accumulation of facts illustrative of the position here put forth, that have presented themselves for observation in the course of my practice, I am desirous rather of foregoing former designs, and yielding to what evidently best explains the subject. I need scarcely remark, that every other evidence by which the individuals alluded to herein, beyond the substance of their confessions, may be identified, has been, and will be forever withheld.

Many of the *dramatis personæ* live to lament the folly of their precocious and long-practiced intemperance ; while there are others who, though they may blush at recognizing their own avowals, yet have to rejoice at the manner in which such became elicited ; whereby a discontinuance of pernicious customs was secured, many evils averted, and health restored.

As a justification for making these facts known, I may mention the oft-repeated exclamation that I am accustomed to hear from young women whom it was my province to meet, that they would give worlds could they but have known the ill consequences that awaited the indulgence of the error they had fallen into ; others deplore, with bitter regret, that they had not been apprised of its injurious tendency before, and express their wonderment that no popular means are adopted to inform youth of the devastating consequences of the alluring abuse. Many have suggested, that had some intelligible explanation been given to them at the commencement of their acquiring the habit, that it was hurtful to the constitution, and had also the local consequences been portrayed, they would not, at the present advanced period of their lives, have had to bewail their existing infirmity. I know many parents who have quietly told their daughters, as they neared the age of twelve or thirteen, and who (the latter), from having been subject to

association with elder girls, they (the mothers) suspected, that if not already initiated in the custom, were most likely soon to be,—they (the mothers) have lectured their daughters upon the proper object and intention of the generative system, and also detailed to them the consequences of the abuse of their functions. Such a practice (the lecturing) may meet with the reprobation of a few, as trespassing somewhat upon indelicacy, and who may also consider it impolitic to make youth as wise as themselves, as, in fact, tending to excite and bring out the passions, and lead girls only to long for that which they, otherwise would not for some time to come, have thought of.

The other evil, however, must be considered ; and taking in survey the fact, that so few leave school, or arrive at womanhood, uninstructed in the secret, I, for one, hold the example of the parents quoted, worthy of imitation. I am not prepared to advise the indiscriminate circulation of this very work as a means, because it is not confined to that subject, and certainly is more appropriate for elder heads ; besides, it is addressed chiefly to invalids : but as I cannot expect *them*, and in fact, I should hope not either, to be suffering under the severe calamities detailed herein, it surely cannot be without its usefulness to even young or, I may say, '*youngish young*' girls, if it only check progressing folly, and thereby help to avert the ills narrated. Under these circumstances, advice cannot be given too early ; and so I justify the propriety of sending to the world the hints I offer.

The female genitals occupy the same relative situation in the pelvis, as the male, but they are an antithesis to each other : the male are constructed to deposit, and the female to receive : consequently, in the female there is a conduit or passage in place of the male penis, termed the *vagina*, leading to the womb, the receptacle for the impregnating fluid. The vagina is placed between the bladder and rectum. Its entrance is marked by doublings,

or longitudinal folds of flesh, called *labia*, between the upper part of which is the opening of the urethra into the bladder, while below is occupied by the aperture, passage, or fissure, as above described : at the roof of the vagina is a fleshy ridge with a pouting apex, or point analagous to the penis in the male, except being impervious, and called the *clitoris*, which possesses the power of erection,—or rather of becoming intumescent when excited,—and also of furnishing a peculiar secretion. It is exquisitely sensitive, and believed to be the seat of pleasure in the sexual embrace : the vagina consists of a very soft, vascular, elastic, and contracting structure, constituting, when its sides are collapsed, liliputian rugæ or ridges, like the impressions left on the sand by a receding sea ; its surface is lined by a delicate mucous membrane, which secretes a lubricating fluid : it is this membrane which is the seat of gonorrhœal discharge, fluor albus, &c., and it is also subject to ulcerations and other diseases. From the clitoris is suspended an inner fold, like a graceful mantle, called the *Nymphæ*, which are also extremely sensitive, and appear to serve, as they surround the urethra, also for the purpose of directing the flow of urine. Under the opening of the urethra, adherent to the external margins of the vagina, is a membranous veil or curtain with a small central aperture, called the *hymen*, the presence of which is looked upon as the test of virginity. After the laceration or dilatation of this membrane,—which takes place through other causes than sexual intercourse,—the sides of it contract, and form little wing-like slips, to which the fanciful name of *Carunculæ Myrtiformes* is applied. Much has been said regarding the presence of this membrane in its entire state. It has been deemed by many to be there placed as a moral evidence of chastity ; and the newly-married husband is horrified if he find too much facility in effecting his privileged consummation on his wedding night. Its laceration is by no means an infallible test of dishonor. In females of feeble and consumptive health, and others of delicate constitutions

generally, the aperture of the hymen may become dilated from natural causes—from too profuse a flow of the menstrual flux, from local debility of the part itself, such as exists in the disease known by the name of the Whites; and it is sometimes to be traced to the habit of personal and solitary excitement, as will be presently alluded to. The membrane is occasionally so dense and hard as to resist sexual cohabitation; and only upon dividing it by the *scalpel* can intercourse be sustained. At other times it is so fragile and so vascular as to be torn with the least violence, and profuse hemorrhage to follow.

At the end of the vagina is the *uterus*; it is suspended by what anatomists call its broad ligaments, which have certain local attachments: it resembles, in shape, a pear. It is of a peculiar structure, capable of great distension, and possessing extraordinary properties. It is divided into a body, neck, and mouth; and, when unimpregnated, is very compact, and occupies but little space; the interior is, consequently, very small, and it secretes or pours forth, at certain periods, a sanguineous discharge, termed the *menstrua*. When conception has occurred, the mouth of the womb, which before was open, becomes permanently closed, until the period of delivery. Connected with the womb, and constituting a most important part of its machinery, there are discovered in the roof of the interior of the uterus two openings, which are the ends of two tubes of canals, called the Fallopian tubes. These tubes have their origin in the *ovaria*, which are two small bodies, encased in the ligamentous band supporting the uterus, and resembling the testicle of the male; hence they have been called the female *testes*. These ovaria contain a number of little vesicles of the size of mustard-seeds, and some of the size of a pea, in number from twelve to fifteen;—these are denominated the eggs of the human species. Annexed to the ovaria are observed, surrounding the tubes, certain *fimbriæ*, which grasp the ovaria during the copulative act, when prolific, and squeeze out, as it were, one of these eggs, and propel it into the uterus.

The uterus, or womb, is described by physiologists as being of a spongy structure ('the hot-bed of the world'), a structure that yields with its enlargement, that grows with its growth, that resumes the former size when disburdened of its contents; it is supplied with blood vessels, is duly supported, has scarcely a cavity when impregnated, and is ever in a state of preparation for changes. Of conception we shall presently treat. There is one function too important to omit in this place, and that is menstruation; a term indicating a monthly periodical discharge, that escapes or which is given off from the womb. At the commencement of this function, woman is said to have arrived at puberty; but there are cases of precocity, and others, wherein it never occurs, that neutralize this assertion; besides, menstruation being deferred or protracted, depends frequently upon the peculiarities of health. As soon, however, as it occurs, a sensible change takes place in the female economy; and certainly the other developments of womanhood rapidly follow.

Menstruation is the monthly discharge of a red fluid, common to females from fifteen to sixteen years of age to between forty and fifty; and it is held, that whilst a female menstruates, she is apt to conceive. Menstruation is a device of nature, to relieve the system or to preserve the balance of the circulation, from the non-fulfilment of her intentions by the absence of the procreation. It usually continues for four, five, or six days, and seldom exceeds a few ounces. Its suppression is usually attended with marked ill health, and many of the formidable complaints of females are attributable to its irregularities. When anticipated, the female encounters feelings of depression and lassitude, and exhibits an aspect of feeble health. As a physiological fact, women, before and after menstruation, are more desirous of the exercise of sexual privileges, and usually the approach of the menstrual flow is accompanied by a sexual orgasm. It has ever been deemed by almost universal consent, prudent for married persons and others to abstain from the sexual embrace during that period

If only on the score of cleanliness, it should be observed; besides, the likelihood of establishing irritability, and the probability of interfering with this healthful provision of nature, should deter from the indulgence. In some countries, menstruating women are excluded from associating with the other sex altogether, and are even forbade mingling with household duties.

It will be found I have devoted a separate chapter on the duties, expectancies, and abuses of married life.

The following and functional changes of copulation are as follows :

The act of connection is urged by what is called the sexual propensity. It is accompanied by feelings of the intensest kind; the acme of enjoyments is at the moment of seminal ejaculation. The *penis* is excited to erection by the influx or rush of blood into its cavernous or cellular structure; the scrotum becomes constricted, and compresses the testicles; the *vesiculae seminales* and the *prostate gland* are also elevated by the muscles called *levatoris ani*, as shown in all preliminary anatomical drawings, whence their use may now be better understood, as well as those of the perineal muscles, which all, more or less, assist in causing the prompt and forcible ejaculation of the spermatic fluid. 'In the female, the sense of enjoyment *sub coitu*, appears to be principally excited by the friction of the *labia interda* and *clitoris*, which are alike in a state of turgescence or erection. This excitement, as in the male, often reaches such a degree of intensity, that a kind of syncopic state is induced; a sense of contented lassitude follows, and the mind is permitted to return from the regions of excited imagination to its ordinary quietude.

The due occurrence of the phenomena just detailed does not necessarily secure, although it generally succeeds in producing a prolific result. Health, aptitude, and one important condition are indispensable, and the last is a *positive contact between the sperm and female ovum*.

## HERMAPHRODISM.

THE public mind has been grossly abused on this subject. It is the popular notion that beings exist possessing the characteristics of both sexes; and that such beings can perform the male and female functions of coition and procreation; and, what is even more startling, that they can copulate alone—that is, perform the two acts on their own person! The researches of modern anatomists and physiologists have completely set at rest this vulgar supposition; *it is anatomically and physically impossible*. A male apparatus cannot exist, in any degree of perfection, without reducing to a minimum of development the co-existing female apparatus. The very existence of a perfect penis with a perfect clitoris is anatomically impossible, because both organs have precisely the same connection with the bones of the pelvis.

Hermaphrodisism presents various shades of difference, rendering it sometimes difficult to decide which of the two sexes is predominant; but no instance has ever been known where the creature has begotten a child with a female, and conceived one in the character of herself. Monsieur St. Hilliare, who has devoted much time to the inquiry, gives it as his opinion, that there is a great analogy at all times between the sexual organs of the male and female, which he thus explains,—‘The urethra of the male corresponds with the vagina of the female, the testes with the ovaries, and the prostate gland of the male corresponds in situation to the uterus or womb of the female;’—and accounts for the determination of the sex according to the impulse of adventitious circumstance communicated at and during the time of connection.

It is a curious fact, that in the human embryo, whether it be male or female, the external organs of generation at one period present exactly the same form, and the uniform type is, to all appearance, female. The male embryo of a



few weeks is furnished like the female, with a little vulva ; but this fissure soon closes up, and swells behind to form the scrotum. Thus, in reference to the external organs alone, we may say, with truth, that every male has been at one time a female ; and we can conceive how an arrest of development in the external organs may make an apparent female out of a real male ; the external organs are completely independent, as far as regards nutrition and development in the nutrition and development of the internal ; so that hermaphroditism consists absolutely, not of the entire characteristics of both sexes, but the partial. Where the external organs put on the appearance of the female, by the presence of a vagina, with a preternatural clitoris of the female, there may be an uterus and ovaries, or there may be the testes ; but no instance is on record of both existing in a state of perfection ; or, if existing, of performing the two functions.

#### IMPREGNATION.

The generative structures having been described, the order of proceeding should be to consider the theory of *impregnation*. All things having life increase and multiply upon an analogous principle ; but the method of effecting that increase differs very considerably. In the human race nature has furnished the sexes apart, which it is necessary, for the purposes of reproduction, should approximate and comingle their elements or rudiments of future existence ; and that that intermixture should take place in the womb of the female. In some of the lower order of animals, and in the vegetable world, the sexes are combined in one object, which object possesses the power of self-increase. I have just stated that such phenomena are occasionally observed in the human race, but there they are morbid conditions, or monstrosities, and they cannot create alone.

This subject (impregnation) being the pith of many

readers' search, I may be excused for the ample consideration I purpose to give to it. It has been stated that the elements of the future life should commingle; these elements are the male semen and the ovarian vesicle of the female. Such appears the more probable law, although there have been skepticisms to such to the full extent. Of these it may be worth while to state one or two of the most prevalent. First, that it is not absolutely essential that the sexual embrace should take place, so that the semen of the male be but deposited in the uterus of the female. Mr. Hunter, the celebrated physiologist, advised a patient, a married man, who labored under a fistula of the urethra, through which the urine and semen flowed, to collect the latter, and inject it, by means of a syringe, into the uterus of his wife: he did so, and it is said the lady became pregnant. The story, however, is doubtful and incomplete; we are not told whether a child was born, whether it lived, and how long, &c. It is even possible that the lady might have misled the husband; she had every inducement to do so, inasmuch as he could not afford her the marital dues.

Another question is, as to the necessity of the semen being conveyed to the womb at all, to secure conception, it being contended that impregnation may be effected by the inhalation of the vapor of the male fluid, or at least by absorption, if it be but deposited barely within the vagina. To resolve the doubt, one of the most zealous physiologists undertook a series of experiments. He selected sundry rabbits, whose generative organization is analagous to the human species, with the remarkable difference of having at the end of the vagina two wombs instead of one. The experimentalist divided one of the wombs at the neck, and suffered the vagina to heal up, whereby the excised womb was excluded from any connection with that passage. The animal then admitted the male, impregnation followed, but only in the remaining womb. In another experiment both wombs were cut off, and the vagina was left, when it

healed, forming a blind sack. This did not diminish the *heat* of the doe, who subsequently received the male near fifty times at short intervals, but never became fruitful; thus establishing, at least in the rabbit, the necessity of a commixture of the rudiments of reproduction to secure a continuance of the species.

The same gentleman states, however, that he has known instances where sexual intercourse has been imperfect, that, especially, in the case where a young lady, whose notions of propriety were more politic than moral, and who permitted her lover to shed his seed *against*, instead of *in*, her person, yet who became pregnant. There are many such facts recorded, and many young ladies have had to regret a similar temerity. Much depends, however, upon the aptitude and health of the individuals, and also upon the condition of the male semen. It appears that quantity has less to do with the subject than quality. Spallanxi took three grains only of the male fluid of the frog, and mixing it with seventeen ounces of water, found that impregnation of the eggs was produced by as much of this exceedingly diluted mixture as would adhere to the point of a fine needle. Still, many of these notions may be erroneous, and it is more probable that impregnation will follow when the organs of generation are employed as instinct would teach.

Man, unlike other animals, is not smitten with desire to propagate only at particular periods. In sentient beings, every season is favorable to the flame of love.

When conception takes place, the following phenomena are believed to occur. The womb is supposed to participate in the excitement of the sexual act, and at the moment of the orgasm to receive the male seed, and to commingle with it a fluid of its own. The whole apparatus of the uterus appears influenced at the same time (some say eight days after), by a kind of electric irritability. A *vesicle*, owing to the *ovaria* being grasped or embraced by the *fimbriae*, escapes from its lodgment, and

enters the *Fallopian tube*, where it bursts, and its albuminous drop is conveyed in the womb.

From the circumstance of the male semen returning from the vagina after copulation, it has been doubted whether it was intended to enter the uterus; it certainly enters once, and that when impregnation takes place; and even then, as has been observed, a small portion suffices, for immediately after conception, the womb becomes impermeably closed. The mouth of the womb lies horizontally, like the lips of the face, whilst that of the orifice of the urethra is arranged perpendicularly. Hence the presumption, from this better adaptation to transmit and receive, that the semen, to impregnate, should enter the uterus.

This question is mooted because it has been supposed by some that impregnation ensues from the vapor or odor of the male seed ascending to the womb. Contending parties admit, while others deny, that the seed may be, and has been detected in the womb of females and animals having been slain (or who may have died) during, or soon after the act of copulation.

Impregnation has followed very imperfect penetration, such as in cases of unruptured hymen, or disproportion of parts, and other causes needless to assert here, by which the supposition is supported, that conception takes place from vaginal absorption; but it must be remembered that the seed is projected generally with great force, and that the smallest possible quantity is sufficient for impregnation—also, that the vagina possesses a constrictive movement of its own, whereby the seed is carried to the womb.

After the escape of the 'albuminous drop,' the vascular membrane which contained it is converted into what is called a '*Corpus Luteum*,' denoting thereby—for it assumes the form after a while of a fleshy nucleus—that the female has either conceived, or has been under the influence of strong amatory excitement. This *salvo* must be admitted, for *Corpora Lutea* have been discovered in

females where intercourse was even impossible; but as the detection of Corpora Lutea generally corroborates the surmise that so many conceptions have taken place as there are Corpora Lutea, it is to be presumed that the exception must be owing to some similarly powerful mental as well as physical excitement.

When impregnation has taken place, the womb begins to enlarge, and becomes more soft, vascular, and turgid: the wonderful process of fluids assuming the form of solids commences, and within a fortnight an investing membrane is formed, called the *Decidua* (I will here insert as few names as possible), consisting of two kinds of folds, one lining the womb, and the other containing the *ovum*, which has therein 'taken root.' The *ovum* is now a soft oval mass, fringed with vessels, and composed of membranes containing the early *fœtus*.

When opened, the *fœtus* appears surrounded by three distinct membranes: first, the *Decidua*; secondly, the *Chorion*, the inner fold of the former; thirdly, the *Amnios*. The *Decidua*, as before stated, lines the womb; the two others cover the *ovum* or *fœtus*. After a time, the *Amnios* and *Chorion* become adherent to each other, and a fluid is interposed betwixt the *Amnios* and *fœtus*, called the *Liquor Amnii*. The *fœtus*, as it advances, is perceived to be hanging by an organized support, called the *Umbilical Chord*, floating in the liquid before named.

The following further account may aid the description thus far given. The *ovum*, protected by a membrane of its own, called the *Amnios*, descends into the uterus, where it takes its hold of the membranes already there—the *Decidua*.

The period consumed in gestation is forty weeks, or nine calendar months, and the time is calculated from a fortnight after the suspension of menstruation. Some married ladies pride themselves upon being able to predict to a day—to tell the precise occasion when they conceive, and which they date from some unusual sensation experi-

enced at the particular embrace which effected the important change. Many medical men disallow that such tokens present themselves and are opposed to the belief which many mothers entertain, that nature is so communicative; and also are skeptical of those extraordinary influences that every day furnish proofs of maternal imagination, occasioning to the burthen they carry sundry marks, malformations, and monstrosities. Examinations have found that the order of foetal organization is somewhat as follows:

The heart and large vessels, the liver and appendages—the brain, stomach and extremities. The determination of sex and number has hitherto defied exploration. In the early months of pregnancy, the womb maintains its natural position; but as it enlarges, it also emerges from the pelvis into the abdomen. The moment of its *slipping* out of the pelvis is termed quickening, of which most women are sensible—some fainting on the occasion, others being attacked with nausea, hystria, and palpitation of the heart. Quickening usually occurs between the fourth and fifth month. The foetus is then called a child,—the law ordaining that if a woman intentionally procure, or such parties as may assist in so doing, abortion or miscarriage before quickening, it is a misdemeanor; if after, murder.

#### SENSATIONS OF PREGNANCY.

The sensations attendant upon pregnancy are general uneasiness, flushes of heat and cold, languor, restless at night, with dreams; and the most prominent of all is the sickness of the stomach, especially in the morning. It is well to have a reason handy for what else might appear, without one, very strange. Women often ask medical men *why* they should be sick when in the family way? The answer is, because it is an effort of nature to counteract the tendency to fullness of habit. At this time,

not only is the womb more active and increasive, but there is a general disposition in the system to fullness; there is positively more blood running through the veins at that period, more generated; pregnancy is to the female what spring-time is to the earth; it sets the whole system alive. Besides, pregnancy partakes somewhat of a disease; it deranges the economy of the digestive organs, the stomach becomes irritable; and, moreover, some women, or their husbands, or their nurses, run away with the idea that there are two to feed instead of one, and that, consequently, more food and nourishment should be taken by the mother—hence, women at that period oftentimes drink beer and worry their appetites—which mostly are wanting—with provocatives; so that on the whole, were nature not on the defensive, the female human frame would be oppressed with what it had to undergo, and hence sickness, in self-defence.

It is a remarkable fact, that the best-fed and most carefully and luxuriously attended women oftentimes bring forth punier offspring than those that are the most neglected and impoverished; certainly, the two extremes are bad in their way; but it is admitted that one is not better, generally, than the other; *ergo*, the system, at that time, possessing in itself the property of increase, without requiring corresponding increase of nourishment, it is evident that sickness is a feature established by nature, to indicate how little support she requires, or else the kind only which is necessary, and which is found to be that which the stomach will not reject.

Besides the excessive feeding, the pampered luxury and indolence—the last, another error of the sex, or the sex's advisers, who consider it dangerous almost to move about, lest they disappoint the many hopes in store; all these are inconsonant with the well-doing of the female, who, by spare feeding, careful selection, and moderate activity, may secure what the other plan denies, at the 'hour of nature's sorrow.'

To continue with the symptoms. Menstruation of course is stopped, with some exceptions, which may be alluded to by-and-by. The breasts feel painful to the touch, and swell, and get uneasy. All this time the womb is steadily increasing in size, and it is wonderful to contemplate the vast bulk it ultimately attains, compared with the diminutiveness of its unimpregnated condition. Well may it have been described as one of the wonders of the world. It is no less extraordinary, how rapidly, after delivery, it returns to its original size. Blood-vessels, which in the virgin state would not admit the finest pointed probe, in the impregnated state readily admit the end of the finger, and yet, when the purposes of conception shall have been answered, they then return to their original size.

The womb, primitively, is seated low down and deep in the pelvis, but when distended by the full-grown fœtus, it has arisen high up out of its cavity.

In pregnancy, the organ most seriously affected in the pelvis, is the bladder, and which is sometimes rendered irritable during the whole time of gestation, — thus we have the retention of urine caused by actual pressure; at other times an incontinence of urine (from like cause), or an inability to hold it, the water coming away involuntarily, upon the slightest exertion, especially upon laughing, coughing, sneezing, &c. Pregnant women are annoyed with cramp, numbness of the thighs, legs, &c., and which are also, almost always, more or less swollen. Sometimes the veins of the genitals are prodigiously distended, and resemble clusters of grapes hanging down, and the veins also of the legs, convey the feelings of cords, or ropes, surrounding them. These are casualties, and are not attendant upon every individual, but they are the consequence, chiefly, of early mismanagement. In allusion to the advantages of exercise, it does not follow that every female should toil in the vineyard, yet moderate activity and personal industry keep off many ills which indolence engenders, and there is



no station of life, whatever, where females are forbidden to rise from their couch. Exercise is a virtue beginning to be highly esteemed, and no doubt will, sooner or later, become a favorite. It is not a *sine qua non* that every pregnant female should suffer from a delicate stomach, or experience any of the symptoms just described, and consequently more parties than one are at a loss to know whether pregnancy exists or not.

#### SYMPTOMS OF PREGNANCY.

THERE is, perhaps, scarcely any condition of health so creative of anxiety, whether of expectation or apprehension, as to the certainty or uncertainty of that state. The newly-made wife, or the too trusting single girl, often have their hopes and fears to struggle against, and those frequently for several months, for want of the knowing of some certain symptoms, or tell-tales, by which their fate can be decided. It is a strange anomaly that circumstances should suppress natural sensibilities, and create others; that the greatest of all hopes which a female has, that of becoming a mother, should be dreaded, except it be under the auspices of a wedding ring; and it is again curious that such a dissimilarity of disposition should exist, as manifested by the marked abhorrence of those who 'detest children,' and the powerful affection of others towards all. The difficulty to detect pregnancy is occasionally very great; and if it exist with a medical man, who is supposed to be conversant with all the points of the case, how much more so must it be with a female, who knows, beyond the fact whether she has subjected herself to the liabilities of child-bearing, none. The symptoms corroborative of early pregnancy mostly to be relied upon, besides increase of size, morning sickness, and other feelings, just narrated, are the appearance and alteration of the breast, its expanse, the increased size and projection of the nipple, its darker look, with little pimpled-like eminences, and the

presence of a moisture, or the positive escape of a fluid. The most dependable fact is the occurrence of quickening. After this period, the abdomen sensibly increases in size; soon after which, the movements of the child are perceptibly felt. Still there is no positive regularity in this 'order of things,' and a degree of uncertainty now and then remains, to the last moment of delivery. It is by no means fabulous when it is mentioned, that so obscure have been the sensations and other evidences of pregnancy, that women have had doubts of their own actual condition to the last moment; and although the apparent obstinacy may have been assumed, many have denied the fact, notwithstanding the presence and cry of the child. Medical men have other aids to detect whether a female be *enciente*, than the patient herself can exercise. The vaginal examination, which can be made without offence to the delicacy of the most sensitive person, permits the detection of the condition and position of the womb, which are great helps in determining the presence of impregnation. The *Ballotement*, as it is called by the French accoucheurs, discoverable when the female is in the erect position, affords pretty strong evidence of the one state or the other. The stethoscope, applied over the abdomen, enables the listener to perceive the action of the foetal heart, and the *Bruit glacentaire*. Some medical men rely much upon the presence of a dark line running down the central part of the abdomen, and the bluish aspect of the vagina; others dwell upon the state of the urine, whilst there are those to be found who rely upon their general discrimination.

*Parturition* takes place at the end of the ninth month— but children born at the end of seven will live; and examples are related of some that have 'gone' ten. In France, legitimacy is allowed to children born on the 299th day of pregnancy. *Labor* is distinguished by a softening of the soft parts of the female organs of generation, an abundant secretion of mucus, a relaxation of the mouth of the womb, and a forcible contraction of its body: the

expulsion of the child is effected by pains of a straining nature. After the birth of the child, the womb contracts to its *normal* or unimpregnated size, giving forth a discharge, called the *lochia*, and lasts for several days, and the breasts immediately furnish the secretion of milk. Whilst under this head, a word or two may be said upon a condition of the womb, unfortunately of frequent prevalence, called *Prolapsus Uteri*, or *falling of the womb*. Such occurrences may take place with single females as well as with married, or those who have borne children. It may be held as the result of debility, and according to the degree of descent, is the inconvenience and suffering.

A partial descent of the uterus gives rise to painful dragging sensations about the groins and fundament, and it is usually attended by the 'whites,' or *leucorrhœa*, a disease of much prevalence.

If *prolapsus* takes place during pregnancy, the womb presses upon the bladder and rectum, and occasions irritability of both those structures; but as pregnancy advances, and the womb ascends into the abdomen, these inconveniences cease, and the womb oftentimes regains its tone and position after childbirth. The womb sometimes protrudes externally, and is a source of great distress.

The treatment of these cases is chiefly mechanical, besides supporting the general health; the first symptoms, however, demand efficient attention, and the medical attendant should be made acquainted with every particular.

It is a question whether the weakened condition of the supports of the womb, and the consequent relaxed state of the vagina, are not owing to the manner in which women clothe themselves. The pelvic part of the female is kept always in a state of unnatural warmth, from the load of petticoats and other unnameable portions of female attire. Contrast but the difference between the simple unlined trousers of the male and five or six-fold clothing of the other sex—either the one must yield to much warmth, or the other must strike too cold. The sedentary habits of women have, of course, much influence.

When retention of urine follows the falling down or partial descent of the womb, the female should lie on her back, press the uterus into the pelvis, and urinate in that way.

The womb, besides becoming displaced, is subject to an *eversion*, or a *turning inside out*. Happily, such cases are unfrequent, but any disturbance of so important an organ demands the promptest attention.

#### . DISEASE OF WOMEN, AND THE USE OF THE SPECULUM.

THE introduction of the stethoscope and the speculum constitute two important epochs in medical science—the former ascertaining, by the conveyance of sound, disease in the most hidden and inaccessible parts of the human frame, and the latter bringing to view structures which, without such aid, are necessarily veiled from our sight. The speculum consists of an instrument formed of silver or steel, that without pain or inconvenience is passed into the vagina, when, by a simple contrivance, it is made to expand and dilate the vaginal passage, and thereby expose to view the entire canal, together with the uterine aperture. The usefulness of such a method, whereby disease can at once be detected, admits of no dispute. It is physically painless, and if opposed to female diffidence and modesty, its importance and serviceableness should be balanced against the mental distress such a procedure may occasion. On the one hand, without its assistance, the treatment of the disease is at best but conjectural; on the other, by its aid, it is safe and sure. Much suspense and suffering is at once put an end to. Experience has proved that many local disturbances, that we believed to have been merely vaginal irritation, have been discovered to depend upon absolute disorganization of the neck and mouth of the womb. Deep-seated ulceration has been detected, and cancerous enlargements—the disease thereby having been exposed—has had the necessary and successful treatment.

The Speculum is now in the hands of every respectable medical man, and the class of disorders that hold it in requisition are being better understood, and consequently more successfully combated. In no cases is it more useful than in secretive irregularities, such as in Leucorrhœa, Gonorrhœa, or Syphilitic ulceration—for the detection and treatment of which diseases it is infallible.

In pursuance, the next subject to be introduced is no less interesting than important.

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## CHAPTER X.

### ON THE HEREDITARY TRANSMISSION OF QUALITIES.

THE preceding pages contain the introduction to this part of our subject. The anatomy and physiology, or, in other words, the structure and purposes of the reproductive organs, have been described and illustrated. In the present chapter I propose to consider how far the true aim and end of marriage is answered; namely, the procreation of children. It is not merely necessary that the two sexes should congregate for the purposes of lascivious enjoyment. There is a more important object in view—the preservation of our continuance, the begetting of children.

Nature has in this, as in other, most generously ordained that pleasure should await the issue. It may be tempered by passing pain and suffering; but who is insensible, or can be, to the instant uprising affection the parent entertains for the new-born offspring? It is a feeling indescribable, and cannot be shared by any but those it in reality belongs to.

But there are many drawbacks to even this state of happiness. The child may be ushered in with cares that soon are succeeded by sorrows and griefs, to be felt only to be known. A mother's first anxious inquiry is whether

the child be perfect. With what zealous solicitude doth she await the bystander's exclamation of admiration as to its symmetry, or healthy appearance; and how poignant is her disappointment, if a malformed or imperfectly developed, or a sickened offspring, be offered to her expectant arms?

Many a mother is doomed, in a few short hours, to lose the long-looked-for object of her cherished hopes, by some untimely, and, one might almost say, capricious end; but these disappointments rarely occur without an existing, although hidden cause. I will endeavor, as intelligibly as possible, to lay down the principles upon which the procreation of healthy children depends; to exhibit the freaks, mischances, and caprices of nature; to show also the workings of the imagination; and, as a summary, to submit such suggestions as at least shall be consistent with reason and common sense.

There is a quaint work to be met with occasionally in the top shelves of old family libraries: some public institutions may possess a copy; it is also to be picked up now and then at a book-stall: but, except it be met with under any of these circumstances, it is hardly worth while for inquirers after the subject of our present remarks, to 'buy it outright.' It is entitled 'Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.' Among other things, it contains the sages of by-gone days on the science of propagation, besides introducing you to the classics of all nations, and showing what our own neighboring forefathers thought, said, or wrote on the theory of living well, long, and in health. Some of the observations quoted therefrom, and which will be found freely used in this chapter, are novel, singular, and mirth-stirring, but no less convincing, that in many affairs of this world we have retrograded rather than advanced.

To return to the consideration of the hereditary transmission of qualities: the same laws which regulate the perfection of plants, the growth of corn, the fleetness of

the greyhound, and the symmetry of the horse, govern the physical and mental culture of man. In the vegetable kingdom, the agriculturist is aware that the success of his crops depends upon the condition of what he sows, and the fertility of the soil wherein it is sown. Precisely so is it with the propagation of the human species—the race may be improved or deteriorated, according as the laws which govern the continuance of mankind are the more or less observed.

Burton commences by saying that ‘such as the temperature of the father is, such is the son’s; and what disease the father had when he begot him, his son will have after him; and is as well inheritor of his infirmities as of his lands.’

The famous family *Ænobarbi* were known of old, and so surnamed from their red beards. The Austrian lips, the flat nose of the Indian, the Bavarian chin, and the aquiline contour of the Jew, are severally characteristic of hereditary conformation. The voice, pace, gesture, looks, with all the rest of their conditions and infirmities, descend from parent to offspring, ‘such a mother, such a daughter; their very affections—the malice and bad conditions of children are many times wholly to be imputed to their parents.’ What is most extraordinary, and the more to be wondered at, is, that a certain disorder, known to prevail in particular families, sometimes skips the father, and goes to the son, and takes every other, and sometimes every third, in a lineal descent; and though it may not always produce exactly the same, yet it does some like or symbolizing disease. The same author, whose reading and researches no man ever surpassed, quotes the recommendations of the ancient fathers, that persons disposed to conjugate, if they love themselves, and respect the common good, should make choice of those who are most differing in complexion to themselves; and he thus adds:

‘For sure I think it hath been ordered by God’s espe-

cial providence, that in all ages there should be, as usually there is, once in six hundred years, a transmigration of nations to amend and purify their blood, as we alter seed upon our land; and that there should be, as it were, an inundation of those northern Goths and Vandals, and many such like people which came out of that continent of Scandia, and Sarmatia (as some suppose), and overran, as a deluge, most part of Europe and Africa, to alter for our good, our complexions, which were much defaced with hereditary infirmities, which, by our lust and intemperance, we had contracted—a sound generation of strong and able men were sent amongst us (as those northern men usually are), innocuous, free from riot, and free from diseases, to qualify and amend for our race.’ The preceding extract is the opinion of writers centuries ago; but it is worthy of reflection to note the intermixture of nations that has taken place within our recollection, and is still continuing. Witness the manner in which this country is inundated with refugees or voluntary exiles, which time and hospitality admit not only to our tables and homes, but even to intermarriages with our own families, if not to the physical improvement of our own descendants, at least to a modification of temperament and constitution. The French invasion, conquest, and retention of Barbary, must tend to alter the physiognomy and general configuration of the Algerines.

The ages at which people marry have their specific influences. Old men's children are seldom of a good temperament; and, therefore, for the most part, wayward, peevish, sad, and melancholy, and seldom merry. It has long been a question with physiologists, what should determine the sex of a child. By some it is urged, that male offspring infer health on the part of the father; while a female progeny indicate those desiderata to be on the mother's side. There are numerous exceptions to this supposed law; but, perhaps, the opinion just named can afford greater evidences of frequent realization than the excep-



tion. Statistical observations alone can enable us to draw general conclusions.

It has long been observed that the majority of healthy children, born of healthy and vigorous parents, who have arrived at puberty, are males; while the elder and more infirm persons produce females—also, that in the higher classes of society, in the union of a man with a female ten years younger than himself, the majority of his issue will be males; whereas, if the case be reversed, that is, should the female be the senior, the majority of the children will be females. The inequality of ages of many married persons is productive of much mischief. It is most unreasonable to wed an old man with a young female—*senex maritus uxori juveni ingatus est*; and it does not bespeak much in favor of the woman who barter her person at the cost of her natural feelings. It is not the less fraught with ill consequences for an old woman to marry a young man. She cannot be secure of his affections, even though she should fulfil the marital duties; and if ever she had the sexual impulse upon her own person, she cannot fail to recollect the associations that must have obtruded themselves, when in her own youth she was, or might have been, beset by the attentions of a man as old in comparison to herself, as she is to her newly-acquired youthful husband. Necessity may clothe and disguise the human passions, but it cannot subdue them; and the sexual instinct is more urgent than all the others. Burton illustrates this latter remark by quoting a story as told of one Combalus, who, being a slightly and well-formed youth, and who, being commissioned by his lord and master, the king Seleucus, to conduct his queen, Stratonice, into Syria—suffered himself to be deprived of his virility, lest his passion should overcome his prudence. Like Potiphar's wife, her majesty caught hold of his garments, and entreated his favor; when, meeting with a repulse, she traduced him to her husband on her return. The story details her imprisonment, his examination and acquittal. Few are the examples of such stiff-necked philo-

sophy ; but it is highly illustrative that, without some such preventive, due homage cannot be secured. The Spanish Cortego locketh up what his wife's caprice might induce her to part with.

Some curious facts are observed relative to the time and method occupied in the sexual congress, especially where the parties be young, of equal age, and in good health. The first issue of young married persons is generally less intellectually endowed than the subsequently born. The impulse of excitement, depending upon the activity of the mental organs governing the animal passion, engrosses the vital energies of the parents ; and it is upon this principle that the organs which predominate in vigor and activity in the parents, at the time when existence is communicated, determine the tendency of corresponding organs to develop themselves largely in the children. It is also remarked that the first-born is frequently less physically perfect than the after-produce. Conception is the result of one perfect embrace ; and in the first night's intercourse betwixt a married couple, that act may not be effected until the *vis virile*, of at least the male, may be exhausted—and upon the principle of the qualities of the offspring depending upon the state of health of its parents, the male semen must necessarily be deteriorated after the third or fourth emission—and, consequently, less efficient for the purposes of healthy and vigorous impregnation. There are, of course, exceptions—where the parents have been in rude and rough health, with strong passions, and where the *first* sexual embrace has been successful, it has been remarked that the offspring have been endowed with the vigor, energy, and genius of the procreants, attributable to the ardor and impetuosity naturally present at the consummation of sudden or delayed expectauncy : hence have been ascribed those properties as being præëminently apparent in those born without the pale of legitinnacy, where brute passion tramples upon the modesty of nature.

## CHAPTER XI.

## NYMPHOMANIA.—SATYRIASIS.

THE prevailing grievance relative to marital unfitness depends upon absence or loss of sexual power. It has been frequently stated that the powers that be differ in individuals, and in both sexes; but it remains yet to speak of the opposite extremes where libidinousness and ungovernable sensuality usurp the place of healthy and legitimate indulgence. In the male, such a state of things is called Satyriasis—in the female, Nymphomania, or Furor Uterinus. Happily, these cases are more frequently read of than met with, but, notwithstanding, they now and then exist. Such conditions are the result, usually, of local disease, or may come under the head of monomaniacal delusion, but they also are traceable to early and depraved habits, for immorality and licentiousness are cultivated as well as modesty and decorum.

The afflicted, with either of the conditions above named, cannot conceal their misfortune. The mind loses self-control, and the individual exhibits by various outrages to decency the demoniacal influence within. The presence of the opposite sex is the signal for lascivious display; and cases are told where positive force had to be employed to protect the helpless from the outrage of the assailing sensualist. I was once consulted by a respectable gentleman who spoke to me concerning his daughter's health. She was twenty years of age, and was receiving the attentions of an admitted suitor for her hand. It appeared that she was of that highly excitable temperament, that in a confession to her mother,—from a dread of the possible consequences were her feelings unchecked,—she stated that when in the presence of her intended husband she became positively convulsed with lascivious longings; that she feared she would betray and demean herself before she became a

wife. The lady had been well educated and morally brought up, but her nervous and vital system prevailed, and her emotions became ungovernable. Upon investigation, the lady informed her mother that these excitements were happily not permanent, but still they were too frequently periodical; and notwithstanding her notions of propriety powerfully sustained her from a positive outbreak into solicitation, she feared there might arise a moment when she might lose that little self-command, and fall a victim to her misfortune; for however generous a man might be disposed not to take advantage of such a manifestation, the excitement of his position would, I apprehend, be such as to render him equally irresponsible for his conduct. If the history of every case of seduction could be analyzed, it would, I think, be found that really fewer are premeditated than arise from a combination of opportunity and impulse; wherefore the propriety of shunning temptation, or keeping those who are dearly interested about, such as our daughters, sisters, and other female relatives and friends, out of its way. 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,' should be remembered by every parent or guardian; and the little mark of confidence of leaving young people together, or suffering them to go out alone, sitting up after the rest of the family, riding in cabs, &c., &c., &c., are all risks in their way; and caution is a good lock against loss. The lady whose case I have introduced, shortly after the circumstance told, married, became a mother, and her health thereby restored to a state of tranquillity.

Excesses in married life lead to high states of sexual emotion. Many people consider what is done under the cloak of matrimony to be justifiable, and should concern no one but themselves; but ignorance of the consequences is not bliss in this instance. 'Tis better to be wise, and to know that too much indulgence cannot with impunity be long persevered in, and also to be apprized of what the consequences will be. It should be remembered 'that

the debauches of youth are so many conspiracies against old age.'

Excesses in females are productive of inflammation of the womb and its passages, and consequently ensue disagreeable discharges, frequent menstruation, even ulceration, and almost invariably sterility; lastly, the morbid excitement called 'Nymphomania.' The symptoms, when present, of this sad malady are fearfully evident, and at once betray the nature of the evil. They are recognised by sighings, 'lascivious casting about of the eyes,' red and flushed face, an impossibility to avoid libidinous advances to men, and a total disregard to all delicacy and modesty. When alone, an abandonment to masturbation is unavoidable, except the person be secured so as to prevent the act. Persons lost to sexual control, whether married or single, soon suffer in health.

The female is subject to derangements of health, induced, probably, by the nature of her occupation, or else depending upon the state of her general constitution. Women are naturally more delicate than men, and consequently are less able to withstand the vicissitudes of weather, and less able to endure the common fatigues of life. The most prominent derangement with a young female is irregularity in her periodical secretions. It has been before stated, that the uterus was subject, when matured, to give off a certain hemorrhage at intervals of four weeks. Physiologists entertain many opinions as to the cause or object of this discharge; but from its universal prevalence, and the derangement of health that ensues when it is interrupted, it is proved beyond doubt to have some specific tendency, and that tendency is to secure general health. When a female becomes pregnant, it generally ceases, and frequently it is absent during lactation, or while the mother is suckling her infant. If the female unfortunately be addicted to the *malpraxis*, so prevalent with young men, of course, it disturbs the uterine economy altogether, and she as soon experiences the ill consequence

as the other. Lassitude, drowsiness, nervousness, local aches and pains, and numerous other symptoms ensue. The accession of each future periodical discharge, if it occur at all, is accompanied with much pain and suffering, its character is altered, and the general health participates in the disturbance. Another form is the occurrence of profuse floodings, which reduce the sufferer to a state of the most extreme debility.

There are a variety of symptoms that are thus ushered in, that renders life irksome and weary, and, unless judicious measures be adopted, soon terminates the acquaintance existing between our heroine and the world she forms so charming an ornament of.

Women subject to profuse bleedings are seldom prolific. They may conceive, but they generally miscarry; it therefore behoves that prompt and judicious advice be sought and obtained at the onset of so distressing a symptom of debility and irritation. Another annoying complaint often holds possession of young females, consisting of local irritation, accompanied with a whitish or yellowish discharge, known among the sex by the name of the *Whites*—*Leucorrhœa*. It may certainly be induced by constitutional disturbance, and is very frequently the indication of such, but it is one of the invariable consequences of personal indulgence. Excess of excitement in the character of maid or wife alike produce it. It is certain symptom of weakness, and if not checked, is sure to establish sterility.

Women are not exempt from those contagious diseases which attack men. The question might here arise as to the primary origin of venereal affections: whether they really constitute a specific disease, that, if once eradicated, would be blotted out for ever among the ailments of the human body, or whether such might not again spring up spontaneously, are queries scarcely soluble, so much difference of opinion existing on these points. My own impression is, that, at all events, diseases which very much

simulate gonorrhœa, arise from sexual excitement, even with the most chaste and prudent, taking the last two words in their worldly sense. Local irritation is established, inflammation ensues; and I have known instances of such being kept up between man and wife for even years, much to their mutual annoyance and discomfort. The extension of venereal affections is more often the result, I verily believe, of incaution than design, but there are instances of heartless depravity, where young men, laboring under syphilitic affections, such as gleet, or even ulcerations of the genital organs, have intercourse with some unfortunate intimate, either of their own creation or keeping, and thereby pave the path for the spread of the infection to the next acquaintance the luckless female may attempt to associate with for her support.

It is the result of incaution, when carried home to a family. There are moments when men, even of domestic habits, well-principled and amiable men, too, from excitement commit an indiscretion they may never forgive themselves for after. An unsought incident presents itself. A man may be absent from home; his wife may be in a state of health that shall forbid intercourse; he falls in with some loose creature, loses command of his passions, incurs the risk of contagion—encounters it—is lulled into security by its non-appearance for several days—holds connection with his wife, and is horrified to find symptoms of disease in his own person the next or following day. Some men have resolution enough at once to confess their indiscretion, the family adviser is consulted, and all is soon well; the lesson thereby gained becomes a lasting one. Others are not so prudent or resolved; artifice is resorted to; the female discovers that she is unwell; may or may not suspect the cause; or, perhaps, in her own person may conceal it, considering it, possibly, depending upon the state of her own health arising from constitutional causes. At last, symptoms set in that forbid intercourse between the

parties; and then, after the disease has been raging for weeks, uncontrolled, medical assistance is sought, and much vexation and mortification ensue. The health of both parties is soon brought down by the necessary medicines, purgatives, &c., and, possibly, if the female be pregnant, she miscarries, or inoculates her helpless child with the infection she has so undeservedly caught.

Such are a few of the accidents that beset the life of young persons, single as well as married. Many escape them altogether; others fall victims, and are but brief inmates of this world, the delights of which have ever been to them but as a dream. The next peculiar and novel position for a female to encounter is pregnancy. It might be supposed that the changes which the system undergoes, and the alteration the frame itself encounters, would furnish direct evidence to a female, so that she might know she was likely to be a mother.

Women, however, are very indifferent judges of pregnancy, even when in that condition themselves, or when called upon to decide for others. Many women, although sensible of having incurred the risk of falling *enciente*, have not judged themselves to be so until within a few hours of delivery. Almost every medical man must have met with such cases; and there are many women, on the contrary, who anticipate the *denouement* in vain; notwithstanding symptoms are against them, they frequently insist upon being pregnant, till their patience, not their faith, becomes exhausted. The custom, which is still tolerated, of empanelling, in cases where a woman is condemned to die, a jury of matrons, to decide upon the culprit's plea for a respite from execution, on the score of her likelihood to become a mother, is an abuse rather discreditable to these enlightened days; especially when a verdict from such a jury is absolute. Some half a dozen years ago, at Norwich, a woman was condemned for murder; she pleaded pregnancy, in bar of execution. A jury of matrons, selected with care from the most respectable



families, was sworn in; and, after a careful deliberation, they pronounced her not pregnant. Three of the leading surgeons in that city, however, considered that they had positive evidence to the contrary, and very properly made an urgent representation to the judge, who obtained a remission of the sentence. Four months after, the woman was delivered of a child, *in terme*.

Thus far with our journey: it will now be as well for a moment (although we have only to detail the mischances) to take a more cheerful view of the picture, and admit it to be possible that young people may escape the estrangements from health, and becoming self-government herein detailed, and that they may really arrive at maturity full of blissful anticipations and a capability of receiving the reward nature has had in reserve for them. Independently of the inclination leading to the consummation of marriage, it is also essential for the health of the male and female that such should take place. Such wonderful organizations were not merely given to us to stalk about this world, but to fulfil the various desires implanted within us, all of which have some determinate effect to produce. Continence may be held as a moral virtue; but if preserved to the extent of its meaning—as in the instance of those poor unfortunate creatures whom superstition or coercion urge to immolate themselves by taking the veil, as it is called—it is an abuse of life's purposes.

The arrangements of society, however, frequently compel its adoption, to the demolition of health and happiness; as where is there a family in which one or two female branches may not be discovered (though complimentary to their integrity) the victims of its observance? Look to the numerous cases of *Hysteria*, *Chlorosis*, *Amennorrhæa* and other uterine disturbances; the various forms of *nervousness* and *monomania*, &c., and even *insanity*, that pervade the junior and elder maidenly members of society, It were, I acknowledge, difficult to control the exigencies. There is a lottery in all these affairs, and they are the more

fortunate who draw the prizes. I am no advocate for forced marriage; and were I the parent, I would rather look to the probabilities of future comfort and happiness, than rely upon the chances of wealth and distinction. The most desirable age at which people should marry, is from twenty-one to twenty-three years of age for the male, and from eighteen to twenty-one for the female.

How rarely is a love match a match of deliberation; an accidental meeting, a reciprocal glance, an exchange of truisms, a smile purchased by a flatterer's tongue, an hour's dalliance, a day's absence, and the pair are instinctively in love with each other. The greater the obstacles thrown in their way, the more ardent the race for the goal of matrimony. Possession once obtained, the mist of infatuation is soon dissipated, and it becomes scarce a question which of the two be the first to lament their indiscretion and haste. And yet what can be expected from the surrender of each other's liberty and progressing feelings, cemented by a compact made on the impulse of an excited imagination—made without a knowledge of each other's character, disposition, habit, or health? How rarely it is that disgust and disappointment do not follow, and convert that which eager hope had portrayed as the height of human happiness into a life of wretchedness and disappointment!

There are again exceptions. Some matches, early ones too, combine every essential of happiness and contentment, and realize all their hopes to the full. When such exist, it is a thrice happy world to them indeed.

Love has been the same, we may safely believe, from the remotest times to the present—the only difference existing in the freedoms and restrictions allowed and imposed. According to ancient mythology and the old writers, it appears, however, that much of the sum of life was expended in wooing and winning. The poets of old assigned to love the government of the world: the passion existed not only among living but inanimate

things. It is somewhat digressive, but also amusing, and exhibits how natural the passion is, when the mind has no other occupation. The arts and sciences may have flourished during past epochs, but they never engrossed so large a share of mental attention as at the present moment. To proceed: the poetic idea that seas and waters, as well as air and winds, are enamored of beauty, is well expressed on the occasion of Leander's nightly visits to Hero, when Neptune, it is said, with his trident, did beat down the waves.

The practice of confining women within doors, or veils, doubtless originated in those arbitrary and despotic nations from a knowledge of human nature; from a careful consideration that, however virtuous and faithful a woman is disposed to be, the tempter, man, cannot, with equal safety, be left to his own virtue; and, therefore, they wisely keep their wife's out of harm's way. Many men, at this moment breathing, have two species of vanity,—they are proud of themselves, and proud of their wives; they show both off, and whilst they get admirers themselves, their wives do likewise. It is not always confidence in a wife that induces a husband to allow her male acquaintances; it is oftentimes indifference that lulls suspicion, or the vain, feathery admiration of the lady's beauty or person may command, that the husband fancies himself the envied possessor of such a gem among her associates. Many such men made a 'rod for their own tails,'—they become accessories to their own deception. Herodotus relates, that Caudalus, out of vanity, exposed the person of his wife to his bosom friend Gyges. The fair one took the earliest opportunity of complying with the stranger's solicitations, and left her husband to lament his indiscretion.

A woman, because she has gained the conquest of a husband, ought not to lay aside those enticements that helped so much to win him. Beauty is a powerful loadstone of itself, but much more so when those artificial allurements, which art knows so well how to furnish, are

annexed to it. 'Beauty,' the old proverb tells, 'when unadorned, is adorned the most;' as a jewel will cast its own rays on a dunghill; but Cleopatra thought not so, when she tempted and conquered Antony.

Our continental neighbors, with all their levity and littleness, surpass us in many points of domestic minutiae. A French woman would consider herself, and her husband, too, infectious, if the bath was not resorted to two or three times a week, and the women are as particular in perfuming their persons and their handkerchiefs.

Married persons, although both husband and wife may be in sound health, are subject to mischances in the nuptial embrace. It frequently happens that the orgasm is not mutual, that the excitability of one party is greater than the other. I have known numerous instances where the female wanted the sexual impulse until the *vis virile* of the male was exhausted; and also others, where the female was so sensitive, as to give forth a profuse mucous secretion, to the hindrance of the copulative power of the male. Many of these cases are occasioned by the imagination of one party wandering from the act engaged in.

I have stated that many females never experience the least delight in the sexual embrace; and there are many cases where the gratification of the male is of a questionable nature; yet impregnation has followed, without any deterioration to the offspring. Women have also been known to be impregnated unconsciously while asleep, and also during inebriation. A great source of domestic uncomfot is the want of children. There may be no impediment to the performance of the act of procreation, yet the result may be infecundity. In some countries, barrenness affords a plea of divorce, of which many men avail themselves; but in this country, infidelity is the only ground for such a proceeding.

Disqualifications for marriage may exist, of which the party may be ignorant. A male may be capable of performing the generative act, yet the seminal emission shall

be unprolific. A female, in like manner, may derive a full amount of gratification, and yet be sterile. No definite instruction can be given whereby the cause of such mishap may be discovered. It is, doubtless, dependent upon some certain febleness of constitution.

A couple had been married seven years without issue. A voyage abroad was necessary, on account of family business. The lady became pregnant on the journey.

I attended a lady in her accouchement, who had been married fifteen years, without issue, and who only became *enciente* during her journey to the north, in which she was accompanied by her husband.

Cases of this sort happen every day. The state of health becomes altered by change of scene, life, and habit, and an aptitude springs up, whereby the long-wished for event is occasioned. The disproportion of the organs of generation is sometimes an impediment to the marital act, or the begetting of offspring. Many instances exist of contraction of the vagina, which occasions much inconvenience and suffering during the early months of marriage.

Curious were the speculations concerning love philters; some were given to excite, others to depress; and there are many superstitious persons at the present day who attribute their failure or success to such witeheries.

Petrarch, the historian, tells a tale of a nobleman, who, by means of a philter, was attracted to love a woman of mean condition, whom he followed till she died. He had a sumptuous coffin made for her, and would sit weeping over her. The bishop of the place, pitying his friend's misfortune, prayed to his saint for absolution from his misfortune. It was revealed to the venerable father, that the cause of this mad passion lay under the woman's tongue. The bishop searched and discovered a ring, which he removed. His patron then fell as desperately in love with him; when the bishop, in despair, threw the ring into the lake, on the borders of which the nobleman built himself a mansion and a temple, and passed there the remainder of

his days. No less strange are the ideas of the compositions of such talismans—a certain hair out of a wolf's tail—man's blood chemically prepared—a swallow's heart—the enchanted girdle of Venus, etc., etc. They say (I do not know who), 'that there is a hot bath at Aix, in Germany, wherein Cupid once dipped his arrows: which has since a peculiar virtue to make all that wash in it lovers.'

Copulation should never be an act of effort. To use a quaint but selfish phrase, 'it should only be used when a man listeth.' Much mischief may be done by fruitless endeavors; violent palpitations of the heart may ensue, that shall so quicken the circulation of the blood, and propel it with such violence towards the brain, as to produce apoplexy. I have often had the question put as to which was the most fitting season for sexual indulgence. We know that man is omnivorous, and after certain intervals is capable of reperforming the reprocreative act. Some hold morning to be the most healthy time, as the body is renovated by the night's rest; but the lassitude which follows encroaches on the business duties of the day, and it is more probable that as far as the health is concerned, night is preferable; the quietude and secrecy thereby afforded are additional incentives to love, and the exhaustion is repaired by the several hours' sleep that follows. Too frequent indulgence in venereal pleasures is strongly opposed to the procreation of children. Abstemiousness in sexual pleasures is a physical virtue where issue be desirable; and probably the period when conception is most likely to occur, is to refrain from intercourse till a day or two after the female has ceased menstruating. Women may be sterile, but they are rarely impotent. Sterility may depend upon the absence of a uterus, of which many instances are on record. It may depend upon morbid conditions of that organ where it exists; such as excessive debility, frequent floodings, prolapsus or descent of it; aversion or misplacement of it; from a retention of the men-

strual secretion, from the presence of leucorrhœa, or the debility induced by a long prevalence of that disorder. Too frequent indulgence in cohabitation, promiscuous intercourse, &c., as with those unfortunates who gain their subsistence by such means, are direct causes of infecundity. It may readily be supposed that I am the repertorium of numerous inquiries as to personal eligibility, and that many of my friends, although not invalids, nor of questionable creation, are indeed novices to the duties they are about being called upon to perform. I could tell many strange incidents that were traceable to awkwardness, diffidence, or positive fear, or to impetuosity and violence, from irresistible excitement.

To bring the subject to a close, I may observe, that although nature has often been apparently thus freaksome in the constitution of mankind, she is amply generous and kind to those who choose to study and observe her laws. She pays no distinction to the past, present, or future. For many of our infirmities we have to thank those who have gone before us, and many are of our own producing. The conjoined consideration ought to induce us to reflect how we are justified in transferring them to those who follow. There are seasons for all enjoyments, and limits set to all. If we infringe those limits, we are answerable for the consequences: there is much happiness in this world, and much misery; it is all one struggle for life; a skilful pilot will see most of it, and live longest in it.

The enjoyments of wedded life, no one but a married couple can know. That it is beset with disappointments, and that where they are encountered in the fullest acceptation of the word, that marriage is truly 'miserable indeed,' there cannot be the smallest doubt; but where is the wedded victim but has to thank him or herself for too hasty precipitation, or want of simple, common caution in their selection? However, to leave this part of the inquiry, and carry out the intention just proposed, let us see what has been said by those who have gone before us.

Allusion has been made to the necessity that sometimes exists for maidens and bachelors marrying ; necessity, we mean in a medical point of view. It is indubitable that death does sometimes ensue from continence ; yet it may not be necessary for a damsel to wed on the score of gratifying passion alone, but the organs connected with the abode of sexual enjoyments require the exercise of their function, as well as every other structure of the body. The uterus or womb of a female is destined for a specific use, as well as the stomach of an emperor ; and if either be thwarted in its absolute want, the economy of human life is interrupted, and a disturbance, according to the immediate relation it bears to the human frame, is established. Continence was no more intended for one sex than the other. Our old authority (Burton), before quoted, relates, that in the year 1419, Pope Pius II., James Rossa, nephew to the King of Portugal, and then elect Archbishop of Lisbon, being very sick at Florence, his physicians told him his disease was such, he must either lie with a wench, marry, or die.

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## CONCLUSION.

FEMALES may be sterile, but not impuissant; and where organic impediments exist, they may be impuissant, but not sterile. I propose here treating upon those causes of barrenness which may be viewed as depending not upon absolute structural, but functional derangements. Pathological examinations have detected hindrances that, had they, while the parties had been living, been understood, might have been easily removed, and the probabilities are that conception might have ensued. I was, awhile back, in attendance upon a lady, past mid-age, who had suffered under profuse vaginal hemorrhage. The lady was a widow, but had been married, and lived with her husband nearly fifteen years. Her complaint withstood the usual remedies, including the ergot of rye, and the usual styptics, when the only alternative remained of what is termed plugging the vagina with pledgets of lint soaked in vinegar or some astringent. After a little delay, and much persuasion, the patient consented to submit to the means advised, when it was found that the vagina was that of a person who had led a life of celibacy; and upon further inquiries, it was ascertained that she had never held satisfactory intercourse with her husband, although they lived happily together. The fact was, from diffidence, or an absolute dread of sexual cohabitation, the lady had been an unyielding companion, and the husband—a man of phlegmatic temperament—an unsolicitous one. The last and immediate illness of the patient in question was, however, happily suspended. But to return to the original inquiry, namely, those cases of sterility that are evidently dependent upon loss of nervous power: it is my belief that three fourths of such instances are to be found among those females who are barren. Those poor unfortunate creatures who perambulate for sustenance, rarely conceive; many, of course, owing to positive disease, and consequent

change of structure, but as many from the abuse of the sexual privilege, and consequent deprivation of tone. Numerous instances exist of women of the town who, upon the abandonment of their calling, and upon retiring into the country, or emigrating, and afterwards marrying, and leading temperate lives, have conceived and brought forth healthy children.

There are many females of the present day married, of purely moral condition, who owe their sterile state to physical and nervous debility—the causes of which are certainly numerous, and many unavoidable; but as many more may be traced to early and improper practices. I have already given it as my opinion that those indulgences are not resorted to among females to the same extent as among the opposite sex; but abler judges than myself decidé to the contrary. Many of the accidental causes of debility are too profuse, too frequent, too inefficient, and difficult menstruation; leucorrhœa, and other forms of local inflammation; many from mental operations during cohabitation, such as fear, disgust, and a suppression of the venereal orgasm; many from too early marriages, and others from unlimited sexual indulgences; and many, many more, from precocious and pernicious enjoyments. Were it possible to control the circulation of this little book, I would desire it should only fall into the hands of those who have passed the age of excitement, and who, if they have or have not experienced the errors depicted when speaking of *manstrupatio*, (for the former title sickens on repetition), have yet a duty to perform, and an inclination so to do in watching over the junior branches of society, and preventing, if possible—at all events not encouraging—habits so destructive to morals, health, and happiness. With this view—as prevention is better than cure—the following hints ought to be more acceptable. It is only of late years that professional writers have turned their attention to the education of youth; and it is much regretted that the same well-meaning philosophers have

been so chary in venturing upon the subject of the present discussion.

Several works have, however, of late been written by bold, out-spoken men. One of these persons alluding to the arrival of puberty, and the appearance of amative feelings, observes :

‘Of course, all possible efforts ought to be made so to direct young persons, that they may be least exposed to the evils that now beset them.’ Too generous diet should not be given to young persons, particularly those of robust habits.

A circumstance often happens which should, by all means, be prevented—it is the practice which old bachelors often indulge in, of romping with children, irrespective of sex, and making them ride ‘cock-horse’ on their knees. This is often productive of local irritation and bad consequences in after life.

Another custom, deserving severe reprobation, is that which we frequently observe in the streets and pleasure-grounds of cities—nurses tending young children, with their hands manipulating and toying under the little one’s garments. Ignorant mothers know not how debasing are those habits which they first teach by tickling. It is a variety of this, leading only to degrading sensuality, which the Oriental nations practice, termed shampooing—a kind of kneading of the naked body after bathing. It is performed by the soft, nimble fingers of females, skilled in the operation, and which leaves those who indulge in it in a state of voluptuous prostration. Among the Romans of the Lower Empire, women, after emerging from the bath, were shampooed by beautiful slaves, to produce, by means of the sympathy between the organs of the skin and the organs of procreation, sexual excitement.

In conclusion, let me press upon the reader, unfortunately addicted to the vile practice of self-pollution, the certain, the inevitable consequences. The roses fade from the cheeks ; the face assumes the appearance of faintness

and weariness; the skin becomes rough, the eyes lose their lustre, and a livid circle surrounds them; the lips become colorless; the features sink down and lose their natural expression, while the whole bodily and mental organization becomes disordered and enfeebled.

Fortunately, these evils, deplorable as they are, are not beyond the reach of cure.—A prompt abandonment of the cause, attention to dress, diet, manners, and thoughts. Without desiring to hold out hopes to deceive the sanguine, it is my conviction, founded on experience, that skill and care may produce much in the restoration to comparative, if not perfect health, and conducing to an aptitude to fulfil the proper ends of sexual commerce—a pure, sound, vigorous and abundant offspring.

THE END.