

**Lectures on magdalenism : its nature, extent, effects, guilt, causes, and remedy : delivered and published by special request of forty ministers of the Gospel, and eleven hundred fellow-Christians / by Ralph Wardlaw.**

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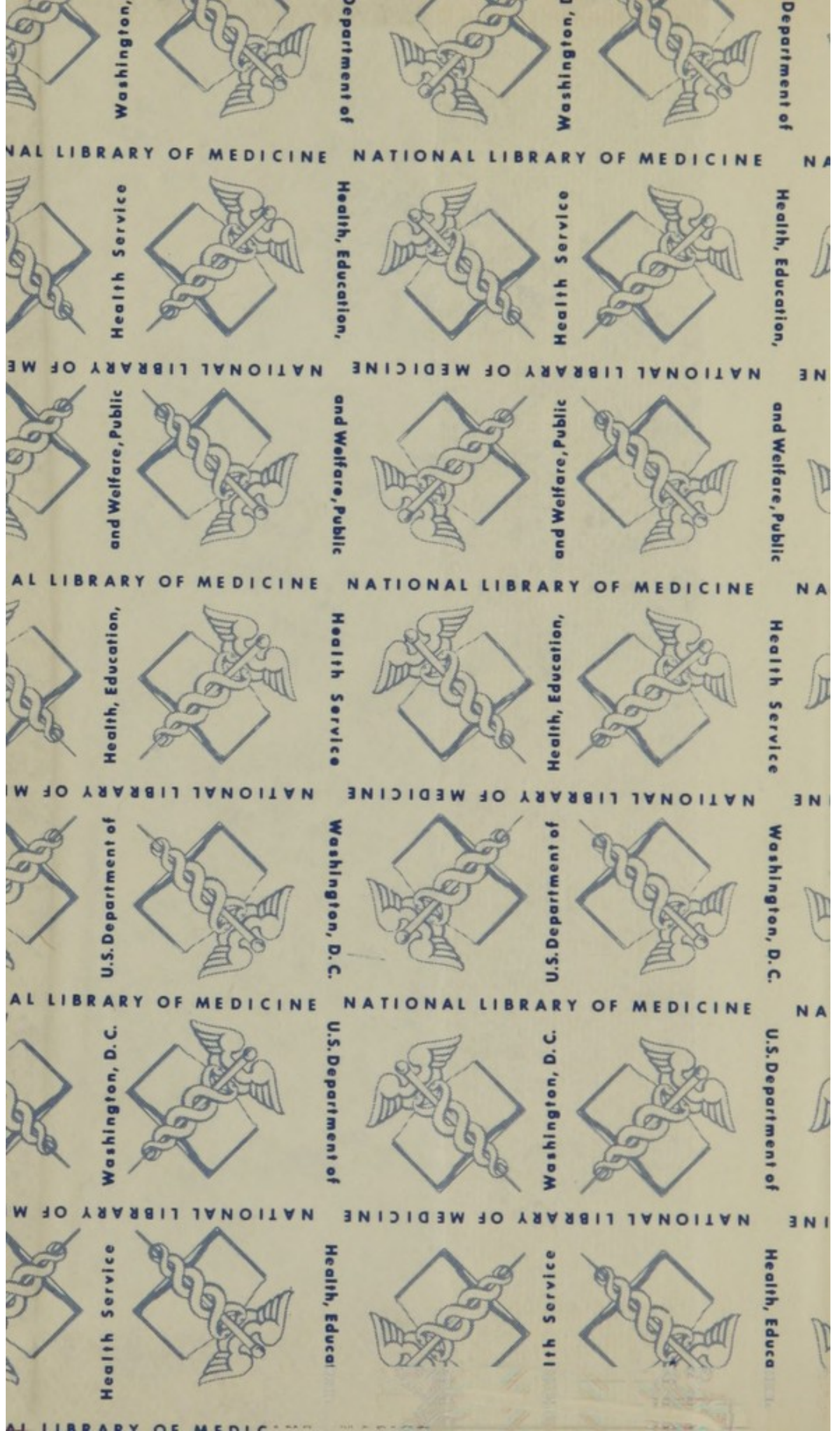
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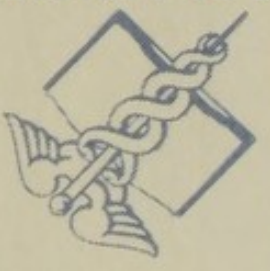
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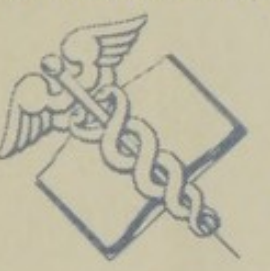
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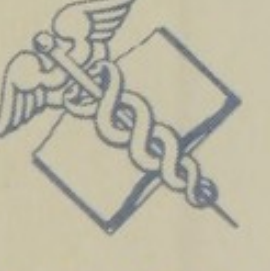
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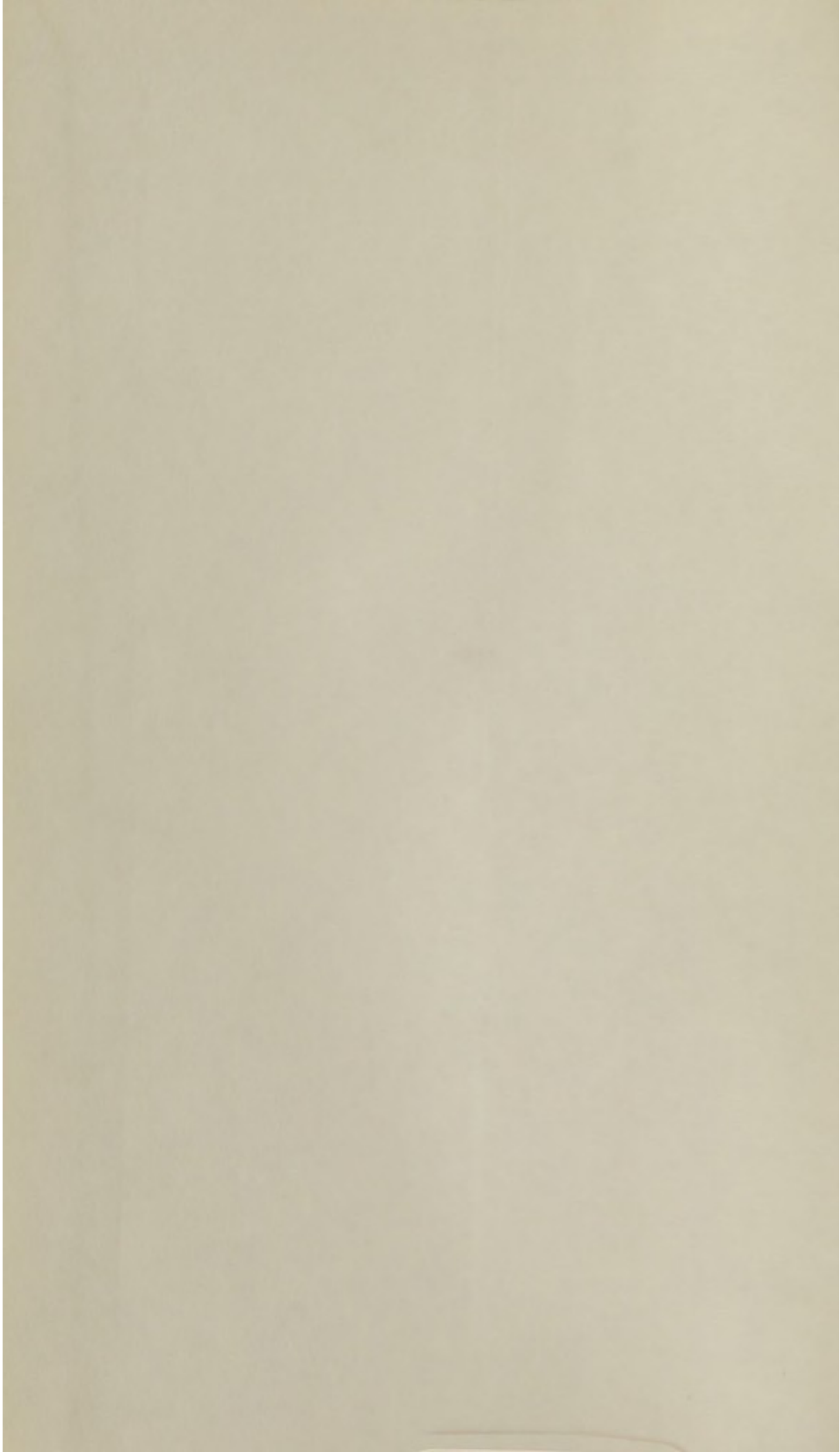
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LECTURES  
ON  
MAGDALENISM:  
ITS NATURE,  
EXTENT, EFFECTS, GUILT, CAUSES, AND REMEDY.

BY REV. RALPH WARDLAW, D. D. ✓

DELIVERED AND PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL REQUEST OF FORTY  
MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL, AND ELEVEN HUN-  
DRED FELLOW-CHRISTIANS.

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM SECOND GLASGOW EDITION.



NEW YORK:  
J. S. REDFIELD, CLINTON HALL.  
BOSTON: SAXTON, PIERCE, & CO.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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So great has been the progress of magdalenism during the last few years, and so numerous and fearful the crimes to which it has partially or wholly given rise, that the cause of morality and religion, which has been so much advanced by the issue of the following lectures in the Old World, seemed to demand their republication here ; and in presenting the American edition, the propriety of modifying the title and of rendering some of the terms in the book less objectionable, was suggested by several influential ladies and gentlemen.

Dr. Wardlaw's lectures were hailed with joy by his Christian brethren abroad, as a book much needed, and one calculated, by the learning, piety, and eloquence of its accomplished author, to be read with profit by that class to whom it is more peculiarly adapted ; and many who are deeply interested in the moral and spiritual welfare of the abandoned, have taken the utmost pains to have it circulated and read by them : and with the cheering consolation, the deep and heartfelt satisfaction,



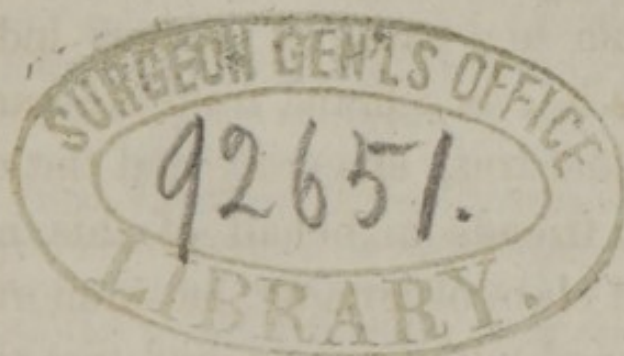
of knowing that many have thus been reclaimed from the paths of error and ruin. It differs materially from the work of Parent-Duchatelet on *Prostitution in Paris*, the most curious and philosophical work on the subject ever issued, and which should be read by every one who wishes to understand the subject thoroughly.

The Rev. Dr. Wardlaw has treated of the repulsive subject of magdalenism with great eloquence, and in such chaste language as to offend no one; and although the details are by no means agreeable, yet the whole Christian community should be exceeding glad that one who occupies so high a position in the Christian church, and whose life is so pure and spotless, has been willing, in imitation of the example set him by his blessed Master, to minister to those whose lives are spent in wickedness, and to spare no efforts to turn the magdalen from her paths of vicious indulgence, and to rescue her as a brand from the burning.

We hope and trust sincerely that the efforts of our Christian friends in behalf of this neglected and depraved class of sinning, but immortal souls, may be crowned with success, and that the publication of this little work may be the humble but chosen instrument of opening the eyes of many to the error of their ways; may incline their steps to the paths of rectitude and virtue, and teach

their hearts to look from things temporal unto everlasting life : and if but one, who has hitherto been a wanderer from the fold of her Heavenly Father, shall turn from her evil ways, and, after living in the enjoyment of virtue, and religion, and that peace of mind which the world can not take away, shall die with the hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life,—the aim of those who have watched over this publication with anxious solicitude, will be fully answered.

1\*





their hearts to love their friends and neighbours  
as themselves; and to love God above all things  
with all their heart, mind, and strength, and  
neighbour as themselves. The first of these  
commandments is to love God, and the second  
is to love our neighbour as ourselves. These  
two commandments are the foundation of all  
the law and the prophets. The third commandment  
is to love our neighbour as ourselves. These  
two commandments are the foundation of all  
the law and the prophets.

And the fourth commandment is to love  
our neighbour as ourselves. These two  
commandments are the foundation of all  
the law and the prophets.

And the fifth commandment is to love  
our neighbour as ourselves. These two  
commandments are the foundation of all  
the law and the prophets.

And the sixth commandment is to love  
our neighbour as ourselves. These two  
commandments are the foundation of all  
the law and the prophets.



## NOTICES OF THE FIRST EDITION.

"We can employ no language sufficiently strong to express our admiration of the manner in which the author has executed his delicate task. We commend the volume as the most masterly production on this very melancholy theme, in our own or in any language; and we sincerely trust that its contents will be seriously and prayerfully pondered by millions of the people. Every young man living, or intending to live, in our cities or large towns, should be supplied with a copy. Parents will incur a fearful responsibility if they do not act on this suggestion."—*Christian Examiner*.

"It may be unnecessary to observe, that in DR. WARD-LAW's Lectures there is nothing offensive to delicacy, beyond what is inherent in the subject.—Able, no doubt, these Lectures are."—*Spectator*.

"Good reason have they to be satisfied with their learned and eloquent advocate, whose lectures, now issued from the press, at the earnest request, not only of the requisitionists, but of the large audiences before whom these were delivered, will, we trust, rouse the same spirit of active philanthropy among the Christian inhabitants of every populous town and city of the British empire; for everywhere this foul crime is spreading as a pestilence, and corroding the very heart of society. We can assure our readers, that these Lectures, if read attentively and in the spirit which their perusal is calculated to awaken, will make them practical reformers, and that they will henceforth regard the monster iniquity as an enemy to be vigorously grappled with, till it is driven from the haunts of virtuous men, and compelled to skulk in the darkest recesses, where the reprobate and the lost seek a hiding-place and a refuge."—*Atlas*.

"We have seldom, if ever, read a more valuable publication, in a moral point of view. It is a book which, to be appreciated, must be read; and which ought to be



‘read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested.’ The Author’s refutation of the alleged impurity of the Scriptures is admirable; and his graphic sketch of the nature, extent, and variety of the evil, is equally masterly. All this, as we have already said, is done ably and masterly, in language remarkably ornate and strikingly eloquent, and without an expression that might offend the most sensitively delicate. We earnestly recommend this volume to all interested in the elevation of degraded humanity, and desirous of seeing this vice, the spawn of base cupidity, mitigated and suppressed. Let the young man, especially, read it, and learn wisdom from its pages; let the philanthropist read it and bestir himself; and let every reader remember, when he says with the old Roman ‘I am a man,’ to subjoin and act upon his practical conclusion, ‘whatever concerns man concerns me.’ ”—*Scotch Reformer’s Gazette*.

“We must now take leave of our author, thanking him for the good service he has done his country, and the cause of truth and Christian morality, and earnestly recommend this last, but not least, effort of his pen, to every friend of virtue and of the female character.”—*Liverpool Mercury*.

“No higher honor was ever done Dr. W. than when he was requested by the citizens of Glasgow to prepare, preach, and publish these lectures. They ought to be extensively read, especially by young men living in our cities and large towns.”—*Revivalist*.

“We can not give utterance to the feelings with which we have finished the perusal of this important volume. Its disclosures have been to us so unexpected and appalling, that we have almost wished we had remained in our former happy state of ignorance. Never did we for a moment suspect the existence, to *so fearful an extent*, of an evil in itself so unutterably debasing, and in its consequences so extensively and wofully ruinous, as that which is here brought to view. A mystery of iniquity is in these Lectures unfolded, from which every truly Christian and enlightened mind will shrink with inexpressible loathing; but unfolded in a manner which can not fail to awaken to vigorous ex-



ertion. Like every other evil, however, in order to be remedied it must be known, and to *make it known* in all its repulsiveness, with a due regard at once to fidelity and good taste, required a combination of excellencies, moral and intellectual, which rarely fall to be the portion of one individual. Having searched the various sources of information, and having selected the best authenticated facts, the result is a performance distinguished by plainness and fidelity, exhibiting a sufficiency of detail without exciting unnecessary disgust, and a moral fortitude which calls things by their proper names without the slightest tendency to foster impure imaginings."—*Scottish Congregational Magazine*.

"We entreat all our readers who have any means of bringing their influence to bear on this evil, to read carefully Dr. WARDLAW'S lectures. The subject is treated with as much delicacy as is consistent with faithfulness, and as much faithfulness as is consistent with delicacy. We are sure our readers would rise from the perusal of the volume, with a solemn conviction that this is a question that more powerfully affects the well-being of the nation, than nine tenths of the questions that agitate the political world."—*Scottish Guardian*.

"The lecturer has taken great pains to make himself master of the subject in all its parts and bearings, and he has treated it throughout with sound judgment and exquisite delicacy. There is much in the scheme which demands the attention of the heads of families, and nothing that it is necessary to withhold from the perusal of young persons who are approximating toward maturity."—*Baptist Magazine*.

"We are deliberately of opinion, that the volume before us far surpasses, in comprehensiveness and power, any work that has ever seen the light, on the agitating and much-neglected topic to which it refers. One of the most brilliant efforts of a mind whose powers have been devoted for forty years to the benefit of mankind. The most surprising and eloquent work in our language on the subject of magdalenism. Could we prevail on every good man and



woman in this country, to read Dr. W.'s second lecture 'On the Effects of Magdalenism,' we are persuaded we should do more to prepare the way for a vast melioration of this formidable mischief, than has hitherto been effected by all the acts of parliament, and all the laws of police, which have been brought to bear upon this sin which maketh desolate. We say, earnestly, to all who fear God, and who admit that sin is the cause of all national judgments—read this lecture—read it carefully—and then say if it be not your duty to attempt something to stay the horrible plague which obtains in the midst of us."—*Evangelical Magazine*.

"He has accomplished his difficult task with equal judgment and tact, without veiling the deep horrors of the widely ramified evils he laments, or falling into an error—not always avoided by those treating this subject—of ministering to a prurient curiosity, by too great minuteness of detail. Dr. W.'s statistical statements are founded on information as accurate as is likely to be obtained on so dark and complicated a subject. These lectures are for the silent, thoughtful, and conscientious reflections of women as well as of men—but we stop here, earnestly recommending the lectures to the public attention, but especially to that of Christian women—to matrons—and single women of mature age."—*Tait's Magazine*.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE REQUISITION, or MEMORIAL, referred to in the title-page, runs in the following terms :—

*“ To the Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, D. D., by Members of various religious denominations in Glasgow :*

“ REVEREND SIR : We, your memorialists, beg to represent, that we view with unfeigned alarm and regret the vast amount and constant increase of magdalenism within the precincts of our own city, with all its deplorable and widely-ramified evils, affecting the most valuable interests of the community, both for time and for eternity.

“ Your memorialists are also impressed with a conviction that the means employed for the suppression of female profligacy are wholly inadequate thereto, by reason of their fewness and limitation. Further, your memorialists feel assured that the public mind requires to be more awakened to a just sense of that wickedness which is so great a stain both on our common<sup>1</sup> Christianity and our boasted civilization.



“ On these grounds, reverend sir, your memorialists are induced to make an earnest request that you would deliver a lecture, or lectures, on a subject so truly important: anticipating, from your honored labors heretofore, the most beneficial and gratifying results; which, accompanied by the divine blessing, would, we believe, contribute to bring the public mind into a right position respecting the great evil your memorialists deprecate—and which might ultimately unite all truly patriotic and Christian men, and lead to active and strenuous co-operation for the prevention and cure of the prevailing immorality, and so advance the cause of Christ’s kingdom.”

To this memorial there was subjoined a recommendation of its object, to which were affixed the signatures of *thirty-eight* ministers of the gospel; and I should feel that I failed in justice to the cause which I was thus invited to plead, were I to withhold from that cause the weight of influence which those signatures, individually and collectively, carry with them. The list will, at the same time, show how thoroughly free of the slightest tinge of sectarian predilection the whole movement has been. As the specific designations of church, and chapel, and locality, are appended in only a few instances, it will be sufficient to give the names; and I shall insert them as they stand



in the document, according to the order in which they appear to have been obtained :—

“ We, the undersigned, have much pleasure in expressing our entire satisfaction with the above memorial. The subject is, confessedly, of great importance : and should Dr. Wardlaw accede to the request of the memorialists, we can not doubt of public attention being concentrated upon the evil in question, and trust that it may be subsequently followed by ulterior and more specific measures, of high value to the best interests of the community.

THOMAS BROWN, D. D.	JOHN FORBES, D. D., LL. D.
JOHN GRAHAM,	LEWIS ROSE,
THOMAS PULLAR	DUNCAN MACFARLAN, D. D.
WILLIAM KIDSTON, D. D.	ALEX. O. BEATTIE, M. D.
JOHN MACFARLANE, LL. D.	WILLIAM LINDSAY,
NORMAN M'LEOD, D. D.	JOHN EDWARDS,
GAVIN STRUTHERS,	GEORGE JEFFREY,
JOHN MITCHELL, D. D.	MICHAEL WILLIS, D. D.
NATHANIEL PATERSON, D. D.	WILLIAM ARNOTT,
WILLIAM SYMINGTON, D. D.	JOHN ROBSON,
PETER CURRIE,	ALEX. W. SOMERVILLE,
WILLIAM BRASH,	ARCHIBALD NISBET
JAMES GIBSON,	STEWART BATES, D. D.
JONATHAN R. ANDERSON,	MATHEW MURRAY,
ALEXANDER S. PATTERSON,	JOHN EADIE,
J. S. TAYLOR,	JOHN SMYTH, D. D.
ALEXANDER TURNER,	HAMILTON M. MACGILL,
PETER NAPIER,	ALEXANDER HILL, D. D.
ROBERT BRODIE,	JOHN M. MACKENZIE, A. M.”

Then there follow the signatures, commencing



with the committee by whom the memorial was projected and framed, of about *eleven hundred* fellow-citizens, of all religious persuasions.

Such a memorial, thus recommended, and thus signed, was at once commanding, encouraging, and intimidating : commanding, for, though couched in terms of request, it carried an authority which there was no resisting ; encouraging, for, under the shelter of such a host of approving names, I could satisfactorily ward off the charge of presumption ; yet intimidating—the very weight and number of the names engendering a sensitive dread of failure in the execution of so onerous and responsible a duty. The result, however, is now laid before the public : the request for the publication of the lectures having followed that for their delivery, and the committee of memorialists having been supported in that request by the concurrent voice of a large assembly of hearers.

The lectures, at first three in number, were delivered in Glasgow, on the evenings of the 30th and 31st days of May, and 1st of June, to an exclusively male auditory, to which the admission was by tickets : the Hon. Sir James Campbell, Lord Provost, William Gilmour, Esq., and James Thomson, Esq., one of the Bailies of Gorbals, occupying the chair on the successive evenings. And in compliance with a request made to the lecturer by the committee of the “ Edinburgh So-



ciety for the Protection of Young Females," they were re-delivered, under the same regulations, in Edinburgh, on the evenings of the 5th and three subsequent days of July (the first lecture having been divided into two), on all which occasions the chair was filled by Richard Huie, Esq., M. D., President of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh. In both places, the meetings were opened with prayer by ministers of different religious denominations.

Between the time of their delivery in Glasgow, and their re-delivery in Edinburgh, the lectures were carefully revised, and in each of them various portions, larger and smaller, of additional matter, were introduced.

R. W.

BARLANERK, *August* 10, 1842



## ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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No production of the author's pen was ever given to the world with a more oppressive solicitude as to the propriety of its publication, and the reception it might meet with, than were the following lectures. The nature of the subject, and the difficulty of treating it in such a manner as to combine due fidelity and plainness with the avoidance of whatever might be offensive to delicacy, and might thus impede rather than promote the end in view, and render prejudicial what was meant for good—will suffice, with every mind of sense and sensibility, to account for this peculiar apprehensiveness. In proportion to the degree of this oppressive feeling, has been the gratification imparted by the amount of approbation which has been conveyed to him, both by the periodical press, and by letters of private and highly esteemed correspondents. The testimony borne on the point of his chief anxiety—the degree of success with which the combination alluded to had been effected—has been peculiarly satisfactory.



There are not a few (and I know not how to blame them, for the feeling springs from principles in themselves so commendable) who are averse to having the subject so much as mooted among those whose purity and virtue are the objects of their concern. The very title of such a book they would, if it were in their power, keep from meeting the eye of any member of their domestic circle. Such attempts at entire concealment, however, can, in few instances, in a world and a city like ours, prove successful; and in some cases, there is reason to fear, where there is most the appearance of success, the failure is really the greatest: the very eagerness to conceal on the one side, giving rise to the greater reserve and secrecy on the other. I say this for the purpose, not of repressing prudent vigilance, but of modifying that overstrained and morbid apprehensiveness, which, instead of accomplishing the desired ignorance, may hinder the restraints of a salutary knowledge.

By a culpable inadvertency, the author, in the preface to the first edition, omitted to insert the names of the committee by whom the *requisition* was projected, and the signatures to it obtained; and to whom, therefore, the public are indebted for having had their attention called to the subject, for whatever interest may be awakened, and for whatever results may follow. I now, with much



pleasure, do this rather tardy justice to our townsmen—Messrs. Alex. Smith, Daniel Lindsay, A. M'Coll, Jr., John Hay, and John Ross.

The lecturer has been assailed by remonstrances from the socialists, as having, by the representation given of their principles on the subject of sexual intercourse, done them and their founder injustice. His answer to these remonstrances was, in substance, a promise to reconsider this point, and, if he should see occasion to retract or to modify any of his statements, to do so in a second edition. The result will be found in the *additional note*, at page 28.

To say more is needless. It would be only to repeat what is already said in the beginning and close of the lectures themselves. I commend the little work to the blessing of God: and to the same blessing whatever efforts may follow for the accomplishment of the benevolent object to which it solicits the public attention, and is designed to conciliate the public favor.

R. W.

BARLANERK, *January* 10, 1843.

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THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
BY NATHANIEL BENTLEY  
OF THE BARR

THE FIRST VOLUME  
CONTAINING THE HISTORY  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
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IN TWO VOLUMES  
BY NATHANIEL BENTLEY  
OF THE BARR

THE SECOND VOLUME  
CONTAINING THE HISTORY  
FROM THE YEAR 1780  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
BY NATHANIEL BENTLEY  
OF THE BARR

# MAGDALENISM:

## ITS NATURE, EXTENT, EFFECTS, GUILT, CAUSES, AND REMEDY.

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### LECTURE I.

#### ON THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF MAGDALENISM.

MY LORD PROVOST, FELLOW-CITIZENS, AND FELLOW-CHRISTIANS: The subject, on which I am about to address you, is one of the very last, as you may well suppose, which if left to freedom of my own will, I should have chosen for public discussion. But to this freedom I have not been left. A requisition, signed by about forty ministers of the gospel, and eleven hundred fellow-christians and fellow-citizens, left me no power of choice. Inclination said—decline:—but conscience put in her plea, and refused submission. My wishes were in the one direction; but duty was clearly in the other. In spite of the revolting character of the subject, I could not but be sensible that it was one of no ordinary importance, as involving, to a vast extent, at once the present and eternal interests of individuals, and the morals, and consequent well-being of the community.



I shrunk from the task imposed upon me:—but I shrunk, still more sensitively, from the possible reflection, which might have loaded my spirit afterward, of having “left undone” what, how feeble soever its execution, might have contributed, by giving the first impulse to a series of future movements, to the accomplishment of those most desirable results, by the hope of which the respected requisitionists were influenced in presenting their request. If there was presumption in undertaking such a duty, the presumption, I felt, would be still more reprehensible in resisting such an application. Yet the repulsiveness of the subject, giving force to every plea for setting it in the meanwhile aside, may with truth be added to the existence of various engagements, constant and unavoidable, during the winter months, in accounting for a delay, which certainly demands an apology. In these circumstances, then, I appear before you; and cast myself, confidently, upon your candor and indulgence.

The subject is one of great *delicacy* and *difficulty*. The latter arises, in part, from the former. It is impossible to speak of it at all, and especially to enter into it with any minuteness of detail, without using phraseology, and bringing forward statements, from which the ear and the feelings of virtuous purity recoil. And the very hearing of these, it may be alleged, is in danger of conveying a taint, especially to the youthful mind, and of introducing associations there, which might not otherwise find admission, and from which it were better kept free. But there is another view of the case. As the difficulty is almost insurmountable of keeping these subjects from the minds of youth, the question



comes to be one of surpassing consequence, whether they are to be brought before them by the friends of vice, or by the friends of virtue—whether invested with all their tempting fascinations, or stripped of their allurements, and in their true character of moral loathsomeness, and wretched and damning tendencies.

In such discussions, generally speaking, it will be found, that terms which are plain, but not coarse, are at once the least offensive and the least prejudicial. In the sacred scriptures, on all subjects of this kind, there is what may be called a divine freedom. I am aware that of some passages the enemies of revelation have laid hold; have sneered at them; have chuckled over them; have made obscene uses of them; and, with sarcastic bitterness, have founded upon them heavy imputations of immoral tendency. As, in these lectures, the authority of scripture must of course be assumed and appealed to, it may be well, in the outset, to wipe away this false aspersion, and take off the impression which, in any mind, might interfere with the efficiency of such appeal.

First of all, then, we fearlessly ask, who are the persons, what their character, by whom this charge has been brought? Have they themselves been the exemplarily pure, and virtuous, and godly?—evidently and deeply concerned for the interests of religion and of moral principle?—shrinking, with a delicate sensitiveness, from all that is opposite to virtue and to piety?—trembling to touch the unclean thing themselves, and solicitous to preserve others from the taint? Has the reason why they do not come to the Bible, why they refuse to study, or even to read or have anything to do with it—



been really a conscientious apprehension of having their principles contaminated, their refined moral sensibilities impaired, the warmth of their devotion cooled? The answers to such questions I leave to the conscience of every one of my hearers, who has ever heard the imputation of lascivious and immoral tendency thrown upon that book which we believe to be the Book of God. Further; in objecting, whether gravely or jeeringly, to particular portions of the book, have these persons shown any disposition to make the allowance, which every well-informed and candid mind ought to make, and will make, for the diversity of customs and manners, of modes of speech, and peculiarities of association, and other similar circumstances, in different countries, and periods, and states of society? Or, without insisting on these, let me rather ask, in what state of mind, and on what occasions, are such objections usually offered? Is it in the spirit of seriousness or of lightness? of sober earnest or of jest? of piety or of profaneness? of temperance or of social excitement? of ribaldry or of purity? And let it be further considered, of what a different complexion and tendency are the passages commonly referred to, from the sly inuendoes, the studied refinements, the luscious and enticing pollutions, of voluptuous writings; where the excitement of the passions is felt to be the writer's end in all that he discloses, and where the very drapery of concealment is so adjusted, as only the more effectually to stimulate the imagination! Is not the conscience of every one who opens the Bible sensible at once of a purpose and a tendency at antipodes to this?—of an intention and aim, in all the passages in question,



the very reverse of everything of the kind by which these others are characterized? Instead of alluring to sin, by cherishing any light feeling of its sinfulness, or any favorable impression toward it, is not the invariable design to set forth, in lively colors, and in lines of deep condemnation, its fearful malignity, turpitude, and guilt, the divine detestation of it, and the peril of every one who indulges in it? Is there, in any one instance, the slightest perceptible symptom of its being the aim of the writer to excite evil passions, or impure conceptions and desires? Is there not, on the contrary, on all occasions, an infinite distance from everything of the kind, and an obvious, affectionate, and pervading solicitude to attach shame and reprobation to all that is sinful, and to promote in every heart the sentiments and feelings of spiritual purity and heavenly-mindedness? I ask further:—if it were otherwise—if the Bible were really a book of impure conceptions and immoral tendency—in whose hands should we naturally expect to find it? Should it not be in the hands of those who love to have their passions stimulated, their impure desires inflamed, their propensities to evil encouraged? Might we not, as a matter of course, look for it on the table of the man of pleasure;—fingered and worn down at favorite passages, as such books ever are, by the sensual, the frivolous, and the profane? If it really countenanced sin, would it not be a favorite with the sinner? If it were a friend rather than a foe to licentiousness, would it not be liked by the licentious? If it supplied kindling and fuel to lust, might we not expect it to be the secret companion, the *vade-mecum* and bosom-friend, of the man



“whose mind and conscience are defiled,” whose “eyes are full of adultery, and insatiate of sin?”—should we even be greatly surprised to find it in the parlors and chambers of the brothel?—Is it, then, so? Is the Bible the favorite book, with such characters, or in such places? I need not answer the question. Whoever took up the Bible for such excitement, for such encouragement? Who ever thought of coming to that hallowed fire, to kindle their impure desires? Is not the Bible the book from which such characters shrink?—which they can not bear to look into, or so much as to hear named?—which they are sensible, opposes, and thwarts, and condemns them—and which they are well pleased to keep out of sight and out of mind? Such men may say what they will; but in reviling the Bible, they bear witness against themselves:—they give evidence how they dislike its very purity, spirituality, and strictness, and how fain they are to discover, or to devise, anything capable of being construed into a plausible apology for disregarding it.—Once more; I make my appeal to facts. Many are the profligates, who, by means of the Bible, have been reclaimed from the “paths of folly, sin, and shame:”—heard you ever of any who by the Bible were led into those paths? It has often been known to change enmity against God into love:—was it ever known to change love into enmity? It has humbled many a proud spirit: did it ever make an humble spirit proud?—It has softened many a hard heart: did it ever harden a soft one?—It has turned the stone to flesh: did it ever turn the flesh to stone?—It has sweetened many a bitter spring, and purified many a polluted one: did it



ever embitter the sweet, or pollute the pure?—Many have died in desperate anguish, lamenting the ill-fated hour when first they listened to a skeptical companion, or opened an infidel book, and closed and laid aside the Bible: heard you ever of any, whose last hours were embittered by the reflection, of their having listened to the instructions, followed the counsels, and obeyed the precepts, of the Bible?—No, never. That book, the faith of which has changed and purified the heart, has made it the residence of holy principles, and holy affections, and holy joys, and has thus fitted it for the present and everlasting enjoyment of the God of purity and love, that book has ever proved the rock of the soul's confidence in the dying hour; so that when, in any case, there has been *fear*, it has arisen, not from any apprehension of the insufficiency of what it reveals, but from the self-diffident suspicion of the dying saint, that he had not truly believed it and experienced sufficiently its renovating power!

Nothing can be easier, than bandying bible phrases, in the impure sportiveness of wanton libertinism;—but it is only because light associations with that book are felt to take off from the awfulness of its damnatory denunciations. It is easy to take portions of it out of their connexion, and so to turn them to purposes the very opposite of those they were meant to serve. But what should we think of the man—what of the character of his heart—what of the fairness of his insinuated inference—who should take up Solomon's graphic description of the adulterous harlot, whom he saw from his casement addressing her enticements to the simple unguarded youth, and should



gloat over it, in the prurience of his polluted imagination;—while he paid no regard to the solemn and thrilling close—a close which reads to all, and reads to youth especially, the monitory moral of the whole: “He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. Hearken unto me now, therefore, O ye youth, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways; go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.” Prov. vii. 22–27.

But besides the difficulty that arises from the delicacy of the subject, there is one of another kind. The vice is, to a great extent, a secret one. It is to a certain degree only, that it is open and known. Though in a sad multitude of cases unblushing and unconcealed, inviting notice, courting publicity, yet in an equal, if not a still greater number of instances, it is practised more covertly. The amount of the unknown, it is true, may exist chiefly among those who, happily for themselves, belong not to the number of the initiated in the mysteries of impurity; and who therefore see and hear comparatively little of it: and they who know better may smile at their ignorance and simplicity. But still it is a matter of no small difficulty to arrive at anything like satisfactorily accurate statistics. In one department there is a hazard of *over*, and in another of *under* statement. In some cases, the statistical calculations are not only different,



but so very widely different as to render it far from easy to account for the disparity, and, to one who has no means of forming a judgment for himself, but is under the necessity of trusting to the estimates of others, hardly to leave any alternative but that of striking a medium between the extremes; although, in some instances, there may be reason for leaning to the more favorable representation—in others, to the more unfavorable.

In endeavoring to bring the whole subject before you, as far as ability and propriety admit, I purpose to pursue the following order:—

- I. *The nature, varieties, and extent of the evil.*
- II. *The effects arising from it.*
- III. *The evidence and degree of its guilt, or moral turpitude.*
- IV. *The causes which contribute to its prevalence.*
- V. *The means of prevention, mitigation, and removal.*

I. I invite your attention, in the *first* place, to the NATURE, VARIETIES, and EXTENT of the evil.

On the *nature* of it, it is surely very unnecessary to dwell. The evil is what is usually designated—the *illicit intercourse of the sexes*. But I have no sooner uttered the designation, than I am reminded by it of a class of persons that has recently risen up among us, and whose members have given themselves “a local habitation and a name,” whose system of principles disowns the word *illicit* altogether. In regard to the intercourse of the sexes, they deny the legitimate authority of any restriction, admit no rule but that of natural impulse, and would reduce us to the *socialism* of the brutes. They would have us to regard all intercourse as equally *lawful*, according to



what they falsely affirm (falsely as we may hereafter see) to be *Nature's law*. Among the strange characteristics of the strange times in which we live, it is surely not the least extraordinary, that in the middle of the nineteenth century, in an age and country distinguished by the advance of knowledge and improvement, the discovery should have been made and broached, as the foundation of a "*new moral world*," that *religion, property, and marriage*, are the real originators of all existing evils—the *Pandora's box*, from which have issued all the various and countless "ills that flesh is heir to;" and that *no God, no property, and no marriage*, are the true panacea for the world's vices and the world's woes! I am not, of course, about to enter into an examination of the general merits or demerits of *socialism*. I have to do at present with *one only* of the provisions of the misnamed system; namely, the abrogation of the connubial bond, and the substitution for it of the indiscriminate inter-communion of the sexes, according to all the irregularities of temporary libidinous inclination.\* And I frankly confess that my own

\* Even of the language of Mr. Owen's own book,—"*The Book of the New Moral World*," there is no misunderstanding the meaning; although the anti-marriage principles have been much more openly and unblushingly avowed since. Thus for example, when, in illustrating one of his laws of nature—the law namely, that "each individual is so organized, as to like that which is pleasant to him, or which, in other words, produces agreeable sensations in him," and of course, to "dislike" the contrary, he speaks of the ease with which this earth might be converted into a paradise instead of a pandemonium, "by acting in obedience to the simple and unerring instincts of our organization; an organization, formed purposely to direct man, in the same manner as the general instincts of nature, to those movements, exertions, and feelings, which are necessary to his sustenance, health, and enjoyment;"—and then



loathing of the beastly system is so intense that I am unable to speak of it with patience, or to apply to it any of the terms of a smooth-tongued cour-

adds: "This law of nature is evidently intended to induce, impel, or compel, one portion of organized matter to seek some other portion of matter necessary to its best state of existence; and this law seems to pervade all nature, except when man, by his absurd artificial laws, opposed to nature's laws, interferes, and says to the Power which animates and organizes the universe, 'I am more wise and holy than thou, and I will therefore oppose thy laws with all my might, and endeavor to frustrate thy weak and foolish decrees. I will force into union, according to my notions, bodies and minds, contrary to thy laws, and compel the continuance of the union, however thy laws may repel or loathe the connexion.'

"Thus has the ignorance of man, with regard to his own nature, and universal nature, interfered in opposition to his own happiness, and to the happiness of all surrounding nature, as far as his limited powers extend. . . . He has decreed, that men and women, whose natural sympathies and affections unite them at one time and repel each other at another, shall speak and act in opposition to these unavoidable feelings; and thus has he produced hypocrisy, crime, and misery, beyond the powers of language to express."—*Owen's Book of the New Moral World*, &c.—pp. 54, 57. And again: "It is in reality, therefore, the greatest crime against nature, to prevent organized beings from uniting with those objects or other organized beings, with which nature has created in them a desire to unite. Nature, when allowed to take its course, through the whole life of organized beings, produces the desire to combine or unite with those objects with which it is the best for them to unite, and to remain united with them as long as it is the most beneficial for their well-being and happiness that they should continue together; and Nature is the only correct judge in determining her own laws. It is man alone who has disobeyed this law:—it is man alone who has thus brought sin and misery into the world, and engendered the disunion and hatred which now render the lives of so many human beings wretched. It is to secure the performance of this law, that Nature rewards, with so much satisfaction and pleasure, the union of those organized beings, who often, in despite of man's absurd artificial arrangements to the contrary, contain, between them, the pure elements of union, by being the most perfectly formed to unite together, physically, intellectually, and morally. Man, then, to be perfectly virtuous and happy, from birth to death, must implicitly obey this law of his and of universal nature."—*Ibid*



tesy. I should conceive myself to be equally insulting the understandings, and outraging the feelings of any audience but one composed of the in-

pp. 57, 58. It is needless to enter into explanation ; far less into any exposure of the gross inconsistency of the system, which talks of virtue and morality, and the power which animates and organizes the universe, while it denies all moral responsibility and moral government, and the existence of any intelligent Creator and Ruler : "The error respecting this" (another) "law of human nature, has led man to create a personal Deity, author of all good ; and a personal devil, author of all evil ; to invent all the various forms of worship of the former, and, in many instances, of the latter also ; and the modes of propitiating the favor of the one, and avoiding the supposed evil doings of the other. And yet, when the mind can be relieved from the early prejudices which have been forced into it on these subjects, it will be discovered that there is not one single fact known by man, after all the experience of the past generations, to prove that any such personalities exist, or ever did exist ; and, in consequence, all the mythology of the ancients, and all the religions of the moderns, are mere fanciful notions of men whose imaginations have been cultivated to accord with existing prejudices, and whose judgments have been systematically destroyed from their birth."—*Ibid*, p. 64. —Bravo ! "Until that I, Robert Owen, arose !" \*

\* [Both in the text and in the preceding note, I have been charged by the Socialists with misrepresenting the sentiments of Mr. Owen, and of themselves as his avowed followers. Had any farther examination of their principles, as they appear in the writings, or the accredited public lectures, of their founder, brought me to the conviction that there was truth in this charge, I should assuredly have felt it an imperative duty to fulfil the promise which I conditionally made, to retract or to modify my statements. But it has turned out otherwise ; and I can not conscientiously do either. I conceived the language of Mr. Owen, in the extracts given in the preceding note from his Book of the New Moral World, as quite sufficiently intelligible ; especially when considered as used by a man who, setting himself forward, not merely as an ordinary author and instructor of the community, but as the framer of a new constitution for human society, such as should effect infallibly the renovation of the whole race, was surely entitled to be regarded as one capable of understanding the meaning and appreciating the value of his own words. And upon comparing the language with that of the more recent "Lectures" of Mr. Owen "on the marriages of the priesthood of the old immoral



mates of brothels, were I to set about any grave refutation of it; a system which, by one fell swoop, would annihilate all the bonds of kindred,

world," I am far more than confirmed in the conviction of my having been right in its interpretation. It is true that Mr. Owen did at one time legislate for his socialist communities on the subject of marriage and divorce. But never was anything done by man more inconsistent with his own principles. Mr. Owen's fundamental maxim, on the subject before us, is that *Nature can do no wrong*; and that if men would only agree to *follow Nature*, all would be right. And by *nature* he does not mean *reason*. Not at all. It has been the interference of reason with nature, in the form of restrictions upon her dictates, that has originated in this department all the immorality and misery of the "old world." For the exemplification accordingly, of what he means by *following nature*, he *does* direct us, and that repeatedly, formally, and pointedly, to the habits of the *brute creation*, as those which should regulate ours. It were easy to extract from the Lectures passages of the most unblushing and disgusting plainness,—by which if he means anything else, or anything less, than that the intercourse of the sexes, in the human species, should have no other control than the mutual impulses of their animal nature, what he calls, in the extracts of the preceding note, the "instincts of their organization,"—and that their temporary unions should be formed and severed according to their temporary likings and dislikings, however short and however shifting,—he should cease to write, till he has learned to write intelligibly. Such passages I might transfer to my pages; but that they might thereby forfeit the character they have so generally obtained, of having treated a subject, in itself so intrinsically nauseous, with some measure at least of creditable delicacy. At the same time I must say, I have hesitated between this decision and the probable salutary operation upon the public mind of an exhibition of this part of the system, in the very terms of its founder, in all its native loathsomeness.

In his legislative capacity, Mr. Owen took a fancy for annual marriages, as some have done for annual parliaments.—A man and woman were to unite for a year;—though why *for a year*, when the "liking," on which alone the junction was to be formed, might, by the uncontrollable influence of organization, become "dislike and loathing *even in a few hours*," the man whose principle is that nature should be followed and the impulses of organization implicitly obeyed, has not condescended to explain. If, at the end of the year, both parties wished to part, they were to be separated, and at liberty. If



all the sweet and blessed charities of domestic life, and all the possibilities of regular government; of which the tendency—as even the present lecture,

the wish was expressed by one only of the parties, they were to make a farther trial of six months more; during which, of course, the party that wished to be off had it fully in his or her power to effect the end, by only (and nothing could be more easy) making the other a little more miserable: and then, as in the former case, there was to be an end of it.—Then we have another beautiful exemplification of his consistent adherence to the principle of *following nature*. That there might be no barrier in the way of as frequent changes as parties might desire, the *parental training of children*, and the whole system of domestic life—the “*one-family system*,” as he calls it—are to be abolished, and (as being doubtless *more according to nature*, nothing being more unnatural than the idea of parents taking any oversight of their own offspring!) the charge of all children is to be taken by the community,—and all the specialities of attachment to be done away with, as the inlets, in this our “old immoral world,” to all manner of malignity and mischief!

Whether this legislation of his, in a matter in which every interference of legislation is, on his principles, a presumptuous and pernicious thwarting of nature, was a kind of intermediate step, preparatory to the more full development of his plans, I will not pretend to say; but certain it is, that in his “Lectures” we have nothing of the kind. In them, he seems to feel it necessary to muster up a special amount of resolution—and he does it with a pompousness of self-eulogy sufficiently ludicrous,—as if he had ground to apprehend that what he was now about to divulge might be too much for even the initiated. And no wonder. The principles of these lectures and his system of legislative restriction, loose as it is, are at perfect antipodes.—And although he writes strong things against magdalenism, with which a careless reader of the old world might be not a little pleased, the more attentive will observe, that he is, to a great extent, using the word in a sense of his own: The vice against which he utters his bitterest anathemas, is the *magdalenism of existing marriages*;—“all married pairs, with a very few exceptions” living, according to him, “in a state of the most degrading magdalenism, enforced upon them by the human laws of marriage:”—magdalenism, in the vocabulary of the new moral world, meaning all continuance in union when liking has ceased; and the founder of the new moral world being pleased to hold that *almost all* married men and women do mutually dislike each other, and are therefore



and still more those that follow, will abundantly evince—is to results the most fearful which it is possible for the imagination to contemplate ; and which, while it professes to follow nature, “understands neither what it says, nor whereof it affirms,” being itself a disgusting contravention of all Nature’s legitimate dictates, all her finest feelings, all her most hallowed affections ; or rather a contravention, the most presumptuous, of the laws and purposes of that God,—whether intimated through nature or through his word—whose existence, providence, and moral government the system, with a miserable consistency, denies. I was about to say—but I will not, and I need not say it—pardon my warmth. I should be sorry to think

living in magdalenism ; while, on the other hand, if not the whole, a large amount at least, of what *we* are accustomed to stigmatize as magdalenism, is, according to him, the pure and innocent chastity of nature !

I say it honestly—I should have been glad, for Mr. Owen’s sake, had I found reason to retract or to modify. But I must say, and I say this honestly too,—that further examination has only confirmed me in the correctness of my statements, and proportionally increased my loathing. Those of Mr. Owen’s followers who try to put a less unfavorable interpretation on his words, at once make him out a very unintelligible writer—(which, however, on this subject, he is not)—and exemplify the reason he had for fearing that even those who had embraced his system so far as they fancied they understood it, were not prepared for the sweeping boldness of its full development. It is for Mr. Owen, not for me, to retract. It is for Mr. Owen, not for me, to expound his own language, and reconcile his own contradictions. If, as I have been informed, he has expressed himself satisfied with the *New Marriage Act*, he will have got even more to do in this way than I was aware of.

I have great pleasure in referring the reader, on this particular branch of Socialism, to a lecture by the Rev. R. Amslie, of London, entitled “An Examination of Socialism,” being the last of a series of lectures against that system, delivered under the direction of the London City Mission.]



there was one now hearing me who did not hold it in the same abhorrence with myself. On all such occasions, my secret comfort is—strangely as the term may sound in some ears—*the worse the better*. There are schemes of error and of immorality, which are invested with specious plausibilities to the understanding, and captivating seductiveness to the heart; but a system such as this gives one's mind the instantaneous and confident assurance, that there is a sufficiency of sound sense and of right feeling in the community, when its real nature comes to be fairly before them, stripped of those *ad captandum* accompaniments by which the inconsiderate may, for the time, be misled, at once to detect its drivelling folly, and to repudiate its unblushing and unbearable vileness. It is a satisfaction to be assured that the system, although (like every other, how perverse soever, which “boasteth great things,” and is lavish in its promises) it obtained, to some extent, a baseless and brief popularity, is rapidly sinking into its merited disrepute and oblivion.

The evil, then, now to be the subject of our consideration, is, I repeat, *the illicit intercourse of the sexes*. The female who submits to this is guilty of *magdalenism*. The very first offence is *magdalenism*. I am aware that the propriety of this use of the word may be questioned. *Fornication* and *magdalenism* have been distinguished; the former as meaning the act of illicit intercourse generally, the latter as including the idea of the act being committed *for hire*. And Johnson defines *magdalenism* “*the life of a public strumpet*.” It is little worth our while to dispute about the precise shades of difference between different terms. I



consider the word *magdalenism* as, equally with *fornication* and *whoredom*, applicable to the woman who, whether for hire or not, *voluntarily surrenders her virtue*. But the first offence does not constitute her who has been guilty of it *a harlot*: just as the first act of thievery is theft; but that one act does not make the perpetrator of it a thief. A harlot and a thief are designations of *character*; and a character can never be formed, nor the designation which expresses it merited, by a solitary act. One lie does not make a liar; nor one oath a swearer; nor one instance of intoxication a drunkard. Who would call the apostle Paul a swearer, because, yielding to the fear which "brought a snare," he, in one sad moment, used "oaths and curses" to give effect to the denial of his Master? And, on the same principle, who would call the woman a harlot who, by whatever temptation seduced, has but once, in a guilty and unguarded moment, surrendered her honor to violation? In the one case, as in the other, there may follow instantly the relentings and the tears of a true and deep repentance. To form the character, and to justify the designation, there must be the voluntary *repetition of the act—the giving up of the person to criminal indulgence*.

Of these females there are different classes, or descriptions, according to the degree of openness or of secrecy—of indiscriminating commonness or more restrictive appropriation—with which the sin is perpetrated. A *harlot* is generally understood of one who makes her livelihood by whoredom. This, however, may be done either wholly or in part only; and it is not, even in any degree, necessary to the character, how general soever as an accom-



paniment of it. Among the varieties there are, first of all, your *kept mistresses*;—and these are of very various grades, from the first-rate style of keeping down to the lowest; but, though varying in the scale of—(since I *must* use the word for want of another to convey the idea, though I dislike the association of it with so vile a theme)—in the scale of *gentility*, all alike in that of moral turpitude; unless, perhaps, in some instances, the highest in the former may be the lowest in the latter. There are, again, the *inmates of brothels*; and of these receptacles of infamy too, there are corresponding varieties; from the expensive and elegant accommodations of “nice nobility,” down to the most wretched styles of filth and loathsomeness; yet in their *moral* loathsomeness all the same, alike vile in the eye of that Supreme Judge with whom there is “no respect of persons,” who is “of purer eyes than to behold evil,” and who, in his estimate of comparative delinquency, “judgeth righteous judgment,” regarding superiority in education, rank, and influence, as aggravations, rather than alleviations, of iniquity. There are, still farther, those who, by different statist, are called *secret* or *sly harlots*; by whom magdalenism is not followed as their known and avowed course of life and means of maintenance; but who, pursuing other occupations, receive more privately the visits of paramours, or frequent what have been termed *houses of assignation*,—which may justly be regarded as no better than brothels under a different name,—haunts of the same pollution, under false colors,—and often, through this very description of *aliases*, only the more dangerous. The females who compose this class, are to be found



among the multitudes who are engaged in the various descriptions of feminine occupation ; and, if we may depend on the universal and unhesitating testimony of those who have investigated the facts and drawn up the statistics of the case, no small proportion of them among the domestic servants of the communities of towns and cities. " 'This description' (*la prostitution clandestine*), says Duchatelet, in his work *De la Prostitution dans la ville de Paris*, " of which many persons do not so much as suspect the existence, exerts an influence on manners much more seriously pernicious than public prostitution itself. It is it that corrupts and seduces innocence, and which, assuming appearances the most honorable, paralyzes authority, sets it perpetually at defiance, and spreads with impunity the most frightful contagion, and immorality the most flagrant." But further into detail, on such a subject, I abstain from entering : it is not at all necessary to the object I have in view.

In some countries magdalenism is *legalized* ; that is, its existence is legally recognised and formally licensed ; it is made the subject of public enactment ; and this, not for the purpose of punishing and putting it down, not for the purpose of arming the police with powers of summary coercion and repression ; but for the purpose of bringing the tolerated system under legitimate *regulation*. Thus Parent-Duchatelet, in introducing that chapter of his work on the magdalenism of Paris, which treats of the different descriptions of houses in which the sin is practised, expresses himself in these terms : " The police, finding it an impossible thing to prevent the existence of houses of



ill fame" (*maisons de debauché*), "has felt itself under the necessity—not of authorising them (for *that* it never has done), but of licensing them" (*non de les autoriser, mais de les tolerer*). And subsequently, in speaking of the most approved designation for such houses, he avows his decided preference for that of "*licensed houses*" (*maisons tolerées*), as "the most judicious and the most consistent with good morals (*la plus sage et la plus morale*), it is possible to employ." And again, after giving a graphic description of the character of a "Dame de Maison," as one who trades on the corruption of public virtue; who lives upon the libertinism and infamy of others; who haunts the steps of every young female of tempting appearance; who contrives and lays for such every description of snare; whose very business it is to seduce youth, and to purvey for profligacy; whose house is an asylum for all who are weary of parental tutelage and restraint, and whose passions long for freedom, and a school for whatever is shameless, where mere children serve their apprenticeship to magdalenism: after thus giving a description of a character of which it might seem the first of virtues to rid the world—the conclusion to which he coolly comes is, that the present state of society renders these persons in a manner necessary, and that the public good requires from the government "their special protection!" and even he adds in a subsequent passage, "the augmentation of their numbers." To my mind, I confess, there is in all this something inexpressibly revolting. I have no idea of such lawless laws as go to regulate sin; and to take crime under a kind of state patronage. The idea of licensed brothels!—of a public regis-



ter of harlots!—of a national or municipal revenue from a tax on recognised vice and profligacy! It is nauseous. It is one, of which I know of no consideration whatever that could persuade me to admit the justifiableness. Were such a procedure designed to stamp on magdalenism the brand of public infamy, it might, perhaps, admit of something like a specious apology. But it is not so. Such registering, and licensing, and taxing, can serve no other purpose than that of taking off from the public mind any desirable impression of the moral turpitude of the legalized pollution, and the enormity of its concomitant and consequent evils. To take vice under legal regulation, is to give it, in the public eye, a species of legal sanction. It can never be right to regulate what it is wrong to do, and wrong to tolerate. To license immorality, is to protect and encourage it. Individuals and houses, which have a place in the public registers, naturally regard themselves, and are regarded by others, as being under the law's guardianship and authority; not, as they ought to be, under its bann and proscription. I was glad to observe, after having written this, the sentiment of Paley, (*Mor. and Pol. Philosophy*, book 3, part 3, ch. 3), in such exact agreement with it: "The avowed toleration, and, in some countries, the licensing, taxing, and regulating of public brothels, has appeared to the people an authorizing of fornication, and has contributed, with other causes, so far to vitiate the public opinion, that there is no practice of which the immorality is so little thought of or acknowledged; although there are few in which it can be more plainly made out." It has, indeed, been alleged, that, where this mode of treatment prevails,



the prevalence of the vice itself is, comparatively, less than when it is either let alone, or is made the subject of severe legal restraints. I am slow to believe this; not merely from my dislike of the process, and a wish, thence arising, to find it otherwise,—but from my conviction of its manifest and natural tendency. There are cases, and this seems to be one of them, in which there is sufficient ground in the very nature of things, for more than a suspicion that, whatever the *facts* be, there is some mistake as to their *cause*. The tendency of the arrangement in question most manifestly is to diminish, in the public mind, the impression of the guilt and odium of the tolerated, legalized, licensed, regulated vice. Can this have a tendency to lessen its prevalence? Can that which tends to the laxity of public principle tend to the correctness of public practice? Can that which lessens the reprobation of a vice, restrain its indulgence? I presume it will not be disputed, that in few places does there prevail, through all the grades of society, a greater amount of laxity of principle, on the branch of morals now before us, than in the French capital. I stop not now to inquire into relative proportions and causes. I state the generally-admitted fact. And may not one of the causes of the fact, contributing its share toward the aggregate result, be the existence of the very system to which we have been adverting? Indeed, the low estimate of female virtue there, and the lightness and gayety with which *gallantries* (called, in the more faithful and homely phrase of the Bible, *whoredoms*), are regarded, may be partly an effect and partly a cause; and, in whichever view we consider it, the inference is the same.



On the important point of the *extent* to which, under its various forms, magdalenism prevails in our own country, and especially in our principal cities and towns, it is an exceedingly difficult matter to arrive at any certainty; or even, judging from the disparity, in some instances, between the representations of different authorities, to make any satisfactory approach to the truth. In proof of this, I shall, first of all, present you with the following extract from the review of the work of Parent-Duchatelet on the magdalenism of Paris, in the Foreign Quarterly Review, No. XXXVIII., July, 1837, pages 340, 341: "The extent of magdalenism is the first subject that engages our attention; and there is scarcely any example more striking of the exaggerations that result from the neglect of statistical accuracy. There have been frequent guesses at the number of unfortunate beings engaged in it, both in Paris and London. In the former capital, it has been publicly stated, that the number exceeded sixty thousand; and they were accounted very moderate, indeed, who reduced the number to one half that amount: but the registers of police, which have been very accurately kept for the last twenty years, prove, that there were never so many as four thousand at one time engaged in this profligate course. Colquhoun's Police of the Metropolis, a work possessing more authority than it has any title to claim, estimates the number of these females in London at fifty thousand:—but the investigations instituted by Mr. Mayne led to the conclusion, that there are not more than from eight to ten thousand, and the smaller amount is more probable than the larger. The mistake of the amount of these fe-



males is so common, and so injurious, that we think it would be useful to indicate the sources of the error. The first of these is, the fluctuating nature of this portion of the population. The superintendents of our metropolitan police have frequently noticed the rapidity and the suddenness with which many of those on whom they have kept a watchful eye disappear from the stage, leaving no trace by which their further progress could be followed. The registers of Paris contain ample proofs of the same fact; and, if anything could afford gratification in the view of this melancholy topic, it would be, that repentance appears to be more frequently the cause of their removal, than disease or death." (Would that we could believe this!) "A second cause of error is, that persons estimate the amount for the entire city from the numbers found in certain localities; and this was the source of Colquhoun's enormous estimate. Finally, we have been informed by some intelligent police officers, that the same persons haunt different parts of the metropolis at different hours, and are consequently counted many times over. It must, however, be confessed, that there are no means for estimating the amount of depraved women in London, with anything like accuracy: the nearest approach we can make to it is, that their number is not much more than double that of the same class in Paris."

Here, you will observe, we have, with regard to Paris, a range of estimate, from under *four* thousand to above *sixty* thousand; and, with regard to London, from *eight* thousand to *fifty* thousand. And in the latter case, this is far from being the full extent of the differences; for, while the me-



tropolitan police reckon the number of harlots at *seven* thousand, it has been stated by some—Mr. Talbot, Dr. Ryan, Dr. Campbell, and others—so high as *eighty* thousand! Respecting this latter statement, which rises so far above even what the reviewer just cited calls Mr. Colquhoun's "enormous estimate," the following remarks in the London City Mission Magazine for November, 1840, may suffice to show its extravagance: "Dr. Ryan has stated, in common with many others, that the number of females already alluded to is 80,000; but he does so chiefly on the authority of Mr. Talbot. In a report of the society for the prevention of juvenile magdalenism, and quoted by Dr. Ryan, it is said that 'it has been ascertained that full two thirds of the unfortunate females in our streets are under twenty years of age.' This gives us, out of the 80,000, upward of 53,000 of this tender age. By the population returns of 1821, it appears that fifty out of every hundred of the population are under twenty years of age; and that one tenth of the whole population is between the ages of fifteen and twenty. The whole number of our female population between the ages of fifteen and twenty, according to the last census, is 78,962; and can it be true that 53,000 of them are harlots?" And again, giving the result under another form: "In the last population returns for London within and without the walls, Southwark, Westminster, the parishes within the bills of mortality, and adjacent parishes not within the bills (the extent of the metropolis to which such a calculation would be confined), the number of males is given at 684,441, and of females at 789,628. By the population returns of 1821, it appears that of every 100 per-



sons twenty are under seven years of age, twenty between the ages of seven and fifteen, and ten between fifteen and twenty, leaving fifty out of every hundred from the age of twenty and upward. If, therefore, we deduct for female children under fifteen years of age, and for females above fifty only one half of the female population, we have 394,814 females in reference to whom the calculation can be made. If we divide this number by 80,000, it gives us nearly *five*; and is it true that one out of every five females in London, between the ages of fifteen and fifty, including the highest, the middling, and the humbler classes, is a harlot? If it be true, the subject should be taken up very differently from what it has been; if it be erroneous, it should be corrected, and this foul blot upon the metropolitan female character should be wiped away." But surely the very statement must be its own ample refutation. *It is not, it can not be true, nor even an approach to truth.*

These differences are so very wide, as to be really marvellous. How far the causes of discrepancy, enumerated by the Foreign Quarterly Reviewer, are adequate to account for it in its full extent, I shall not take time to inquire. Any *data* on which an accurate decision could rest, appear to be far from satisfactory.

One thing, however, I must notice, as having forcibly struck me, respecting the smaller estimates of the number of unfortunate females in London—the estimates, I mean, which state it so low as seven, eight, or even ten thousand—namely, the inconsistency between these estimates and the representations at the same time given of the *number of houses of ill-fame* in that metropolis.



According to the returns made by Mr. Mayne, these amount to 3,335 : and this enumeration "does not include the city, in which also brothels abound ;" and "the Rev. Mr. Hughes, of Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury, states that in a space of ground about 700 yards in circumference (St. Giles' Rookery), there are twenty-four houses of ill-fame, of which the average number of occupants is *ten* ; making a total of 240 in that limited area."\* Of course, we should be running into a grievous miscalculation, were we to adopt the number of such houses in this particular locality as a ratio of estimate for the whole of London, or even the number of inmates in each of them as the average for all other houses of the same description. Were we to proceed on the latter assumption, the 3,335 brothels would contain a total of 33,350 inmates ; and these would, of course, be exclusive of the vast number of a more secret description : of whom Mr. Tait† makes the number in Edinburgh considerably larger than that of the more common and openly abandoned. This writer, in estimating the number in the Scottish metropolis, makes the "houses of bad fame, including houses of assignation, licensed taverns, and eating-houses, where sexual intercourse is tolerated," about 200 ; the average number of girls who board and lodge in these houses he estimates at *three* to each : in all 600. Mr. Tait's careful inquiries no doubt satisfied him as to the correctness of this average. It does

\* "Female Virtue : its Enemies and Friends." A Discourse by Rev. Dr. Edgar, of Belfast, &c. ; p. 9.

† "Magdalenism: An inquiry into the extent, causes, and consequences of prostitution in Edinburgh," by William Tait, Surgeon, &c., &c. A work to which I shall have frequent occasion to refer. Second edition, 1842.



seem, however, a low one. According to police returns for Glasgow, the average to each of the houses of bad fame (not, however, taking in the variety of descriptions of houses included by Mr. Tait) is *seven*. A respected city missionary (to whose statements future reference may be made) makes the number of houses larger, and the average complement of each less—*four* instead of *seven*. Suppose we should take the average for the houses of bad fame in London at *five* instead of *ten*, this will still yield us the aggregate of 16,675; and this independently of the city, and independently too of all those classes that are not included among the occupants of brothels, respecting whom Mr. Mayne says, that, “in his opinion, there is no means of ascertaining the number of female servants, milliners, and women in the middle and upper classes of society, who might properly be classed with them—or the women who frequent theatres exclusively, barracks, ships, prisons, &c.” With such an opinion before me, it would be presumption to venture even a guess at the aggregate of those varieties. But it must at one glance be apparent, that, estimate it as you will, the 7,000, or even the highest of Mr. Mayne’s numbers, the 10,000, for the entire amount in London, must be much below the truth. And really, on looking at the magnitude of these discrepancies in the calculations for London, I have felt no great encouragement, after having begun, to prosecute my endeavors to obtain information from other places. Mr. Tait, who himself estimates the *public* harlots of Edinburgh at 800, and the *private* at 1,160, admits, that, even with regard to that city, there has been a range of diversity in statement



from 300 up to 6,000 ! I might copy, to a great extent, as to different cities and towns, the statistics given by others ; but what would it avail, when, from the nature of the case, anything approaching to certain accuracy is so little attainable ?

My hearers would doubtless be startled, as I was myself, by the statement in the closing sentence of the extract cited a little while ago from the Foreign Quarterly Review, in which the reviewer, after mentioning the impossibility of “ estimating the number of depraved women in London with anything like accuracy,” adds : “ The nearest approach we can make to it is, that *their number is not much more than double that of the same class in Paris !* ” — “ What ! ” we are ready to exclaim — “ London more than double Paris ! — and all that can be said in mitigation of the statement, that it is ‘ *not much more !* ’ ” Even when we bethink ourselves of what at the first moment we are apt to overlook, the disparity between the population of the two cities, we still are not satisfied. We have been accustomed to comfort ourselves with the reflection that, bad as our own metropolis is, it is not so deeply sunk in pollution as that of France ; to which, were the number of depraved women in it more than double, it would at least approach more nearly, in its “ bad eminence,” than we had weened. And here we have before us another exemplification of the extreme uncertainty attending all the estimates on this subject, on both sides of the channel. Hear what Mr. Tait says — bringing before us, not the relative proportions of London and Paris only, but also of our Scottish metropolis, and of what, in point of population and commercial importance, may be called the capital of the



United States of America—the city of New York. Having, by the mode of calculation which he describes, fixed the number of openly depraved women for Edinburgh, whether residents in brothels or in other places, at 800, and mentioned the proportion which this number bears to the “adult male population” as being “about *one* to every *eighty*,” he adds: “In London, there is one for every *sixty*, and in Paris one for every *fifteen*. Edinburgh is thus about twenty-five per cent. better than London, while the latter is about seventy per cent. better than Paris. And what is to be said of the chief city of the United States of America—of the independent, liberal, religious, enlightened inhabitants of New York? It will scarcely be credited that that city furnishes a harlot for every six or seven of its adult male population! Alas! for the religion and morality of the country that affords such a demonstration of its depravity! It was not surpassed even by the metropolis of France during the heat and fervor of the revolution, when libertinism reigned triumphant, and the laws of God and men were alike set at defiance.”—*Magdalenism*; 2d ed., pp. 6, 7. In a note, Mr. Tait subjoins—showing the ratio by which these relative proportions were estimated. “The manner in which these calculations are made is as follows: The one half of the population of these cities is supposed to be males; a third part is subtracted from this number, as being either too young or too old to exercise their procreative functions; and the remainder is divided by the number of public women in each city. The number supposed to exist in Edinburgh is 800; in London, 8,000; in Paris, 18,000; and in New



York, 10,000—which gives the proportions above stated.” Still we are in the region of uncertainty ; for while Mr. Tait gives the number of depraved women for Paris as 18,000—which, in fairness of estimate, must, like the other numbers, refer to public and known harlots—Mons. Fregier, in his work entitled “ Des Classes dangereuses de la population dans les grandes villes,” &c., states the number of the registered as 3,800, and of the unregistered as 4,000 : not 8,000 in all ! I am inclined to believe that this is either greatly under the truth, or that there must be in Paris a large amount of licentious intercourse that does not come into the ordinary estimates of magdalenism. The reviewer gives the actual number in London as *more*, though *not much* more, than *double that in Paris* : according to the statement of Mr. Tait, the number in Paris is considerably *more than double that in London* ; while, in relative proportion, the former city is *four times worse* than the latter ! And the statement of the rate of proportion between Paris and New York is still more startling than that of the reviewer respecting London and Paris.\* The Rev. Dr. M'Dowall, after stating the nature of his *data*, thus writes : “ We are satisfied we do not exaggerate, when we repeat that there are now *ten thousand* girls and women in the city of New York who live by public and promiscuous magdalenism. Besides these, we have the clearest evidence that there are hundreds of private harlots and kept misses, many of whom keep up a show

\* For a careful estimate of the number of abandoned females in the city of New York, see the Advocate of Moral Reform for June 1, 1842 : an extremely valuable weekly journal, conducted by a society of ladies, for the suppression of this vice.



of industry as domestics, seamstresses, nurses, &c., in the most respectable families, and throng the houses of assignation every night. Although we have no means of ascertaining the number of these, yet enough has been learned from the facts already developed, to convince us that the aggregate of these is alarmingly great, perhaps little behind the proportion of London, whose police reports assert, on the authority of accurate researches, that the number of private harlots in that city is fully equal to the number of public ones. This is a most appalling picture of moral degradation; and we forbear to dwell on so painful and mortifying conclusions as those to which this view of the subject would compel us. We can not forget, however, that the Rev. Mr. Stafford, formerly employed as a missionary among the depraved population of our city, published his conviction, after careful investigation of this subject, that there were 15,000 abandoned females in this city (New York); and our population, permanent and transient, was then one third less than it is now."

Such statements may well, indeed, be designated "appalling." On the general ground of the uncertainty of all calculations on this subject, as evinced in the facts already laid before you, I would fondly suspect some lurking error. But if such error there be, I have not in possession any means of detecting it.

The details, regarding these chief cities of our own and other countries, were too important and interesting to be passed over; else I should have felt that I had been detaining you too long from the city in which and in whose interests we are most immediately concerned, the mercantile and manu-



facturing capital of Scotland,—Glasgow. According to returns made by the intelligent and indefatigable superintendent of our police, Mr. Miller, there are in our city 204 houses of bad fame; of which 49 are kept by males, and 155 by females; and the entire number of females who live in these houses, is 1,475. The city missionary before referred to, estimates the number of houses at 450; and, at four to each house, the whole number would be 1,800. From the proportion received into the Lock hospital, Dr. Hannay (the able surgeon to that institution) says he is “induced to believe that 1,600 will bound the number who exclusively and openly abandon themselves to this vicious course of life in the city of Glasgow.” This is a medium between the other two. Of the 1,475 in Mr. Miller’s estimate, he “is of opinion that considerably more than one half come from the country;” and for this he naturally enough accounts, from “the fact, that, when a girl misbehaves, or becomes unfortunate, or loses her service, in the country, she generally betakes herself to the nearest large town.” “Many are supplied also,” he states, “from the large number of Highland and Irish girls, who are constantly coming to Glasgow in search of work.” Having estimated the number of females, who are inmates of brothels, as above, at 1,475, Mr. Miller adds: “I find it impossible to say how many females given to this vice there may be, who do *not* frequent brothels; and on this subject I feel a delicacy in giving even a guess.” It would be no mark of either modesty or judgment, in myself or any one else, to venture on a conjecture when an authority so competent declines it. I have before alluded to



the fact that, in regard to Edinburgh, Mr. Tait conceives the number of those whom he denominates "sly magdalenes," to be considerably greater than that of the openly and notoriously abandoned. The latter, as has been stated, he estimates, on the authority of Captain Stewart of the police establishment, at about 800; while he makes the number of the former "1,160 and upward;" the aggregate being composed of the three following divisions,—660 from among the 2,000 females supposed to be engaged in sedentary occupations,—300 servant girls, the lowest calculation in that class which he thinks can be made,—and 200 women, who are either widows or have been deserted by their husbands. Whether in Glasgow, the aggregate amount of *secret* bears anything like the same proportion to that of *public* magdalenism, I will not, for the reason assigned, pretend to say. If it did, it would oblige us to add considerably above 2,000 secret or sly magdalenes to the 1,475 frequenters of the houses of ill fame. Distressing as it would be to believe this, yet, for aught I can tell, it may be true.

I feel it unnecessary, as I have already said, on account of their unsatisfactoriness, to multiply statements relative to other places;—nor do I think it could serve any valuable purpose to dwell more in detail on this *first* branch of my subject.—In next lecture I shall proceed to the *second*.



## LECTURE II.

## ON THE EFFECTS OF MAGDALENISM.

To such as are already duly impressed with the guilt of this vice, regarded in itself, independently of all consideration of consequences, the statements under our first head, laid before you in last lecture, will be sufficiently appalling. If the number of those females be so great, who, in various ways, more secret or more open, give themselves to this course of life; how much greater must be the number of the *other sex* who are their regular or occasional paramours, their *socii criminis*, partakers in their guilt! The amount of sin, in the eye of Him, of whose law every act of uncleanness is a violation, and in the eye of every one who has learned to regard that law as "holy, just, and good," is indeed fearful. But still it is necessary, even to enable us fully to estimate, in all its kinds, the nature and amount of the guilt, to look a little closely at the attendant and consequent evils connected with this "mystery of iniquity." By such considerations some possibly may be impressed, by whom the sin in itself is but lightly condemned. And even of those whose conviction is deepest of its "exceeding sinfulness," the indignant sympathies may be awakened, and the active energies for its suppression called forth or



stimulated to livelier exertion, by having presented to their minds some of the more prominent and shocking effects of this parent evil; the poisonous and deadly fruits of this *Upas* tree; the bitter streams of this bitter fountain.

I begin with the effects of it to *individuals*—to the miserable victims of the sin themselves. This general class of effects includes varieties. They relate to *body*—to *mind*—to *present outward condition*—to *prospects for eternity*.

The *corporeal* effects themselves are frightful. For myself, I must avow it, that I had no conception of them—and I believe that conception to be very inadequate still—till the facts were, to a certain extent, brought before me by this investigation.

I have been specially and oppressively struck with the representations on all hands given, by statistes and medical authorities, with regard to the *average duration of life* among the female victims of this vice. “It may be stated generally,” says Mr. Tait (in his *Magdalenism*), “that in less than one year from the commencement of their wicked career, these females bear evident marks of their approaching decay; and that in the course of three years, very few can be recognised by their old acquaintances, if they are so fortunate as to survive that period. These remarks apply more especially to those who are above twenty years of age, when they join the ranks of the vicious.” According to the same authority—and taking the average of Edinburgh as a fair one for other places, “not above one in eleven survives twenty-five years of age;” and, taking together those who persist in vice, and those who, after having abandoned it, die of diseases which originated from the excesses



they were addicted to during its continuance, "perhaps not less than a fifth or sixth of all who have embraced this course of life die annually." "Mr. Clark, the late chamberlain to the city of London," says Dr. Ryan (*Prostitution in London*, p. 185), "calculated the duration of life" (*i. e.*, the average duration of the lives of these females, from the time of their abandoning themselves to their infamous course) "at four years; while others estimate it at seven years." The representation of Captain Miller, with regard to our own city, is in harmony with these: "The average age at which women become abandoned, is from fifteen to twenty:—the average duration of women continuing this vice, is, I think, about five years:—the most common termination of their career is by early death; and this is to be accounted for by the extremely dissolute life they lead. For the most part they live in a state of great personal filthiness; they have most wretched homes; they are scarcely ever in bed till far in the morning; they get no wholesome diet; and they are constantly drinking the worst descriptions of spirituous liquors. In addition to these evils, they are exposed to disease in its very worst forms; and, from their dissolute habits, when disease overtakes them, a cure is scarcely possible. A few become reformed by being confined in our excellent Bridewell for a sufficient length of time to allow new habits to be formed, or from other accidental causes; but the number who reform I believe to be very small."\* In speaking of the proportion who *die annually*, it may here be mentioned, that on the same principle which estimates the num-

\* "Houses of bad fame in the city of Glasgow,"—p. 2.



ber in London at 80,000, the annual amount of death has been reckoned at 8,000! Were the former estimate correct, the latter might readily be admitted; being only at the rate of a *tenth* of the whole. But of the excessive extravagance of each of the statements there is separate and satisfactory proof. We have seen this as to the *former* of the two. The following, from the same publication—the London City Mission Magazine—relates to the *latter*: “By the ‘Second Annual Report of the Registrar-General of births, deaths, and marriages,’ we find that the total number of females that died from July 1st, 1838, to June 30th, 1839, both inclusive, was 22,817. Of these, 10,496 were under fifteen years of age, and 6,335 were above fifty:—so that, instead of 8,000 harlots dying annually in the metropolis, there were only 5,968 females between the ages of fifteen and fifty died last year; and these are the only ages that such a calculation can refer to. If the calculation that 8,000 die annually be correct, every one of these 5,986 must have been depraved, and we must take 2,014 from those between fifty and sixty-five years of age to make up the number; and then, not one virtuous woman would have died last year in the metropolis, between the ages of fifteen and sixty.” This is decisive. There surely is no need, on such a subject, for going one hair’s-breadth beyond the truth. Everything of the kind indeed is, not only needless, but, in different ways, injurious. The waste of life is, even on the lowest calculations, most distressing. And wretched is the life the poor creatures live, and wretched the death they die. Besides a variety of diseases to which their dissolute habits expose



them—cutaneous, intestinal, nervous, inflammatory—the predisposition to other distempers induced by their vicious course—and the aggravated character too imparted to these by the state of their constitution—of all which the authentic medical statements are sufficiently sickening ; there is *the one disease*, with its distinctive designation, to which all the rest are represented as, in comparison, next to nothing. From the dreadful ravages of *syphilis* there are said to be very few indeed who escape. The cases of such as do are “rare exceptions.” “The great majority,” says Mr. Tait, “are affected with the disease within a few months after they have forsaken a life of chastity ; and very few escape it during the first year.” Dr. Hannay’s testimony is to the same effect : “that not one girl in twenty continues a course of vice, without contracting disease within the first three months.” I presume, indeed, that in this point all competent authorities are agreed. In multitudes of instances, as already stated from Mr. Miller, the poor suffering wretches have no means of cure :—and even when these means are provided, the malady is ever recurring ; shattering, in an incredibly short period, the soundest constitutions, deforming the fairest and emaciating the stoutest and healthiest frames, bringing on premature exhaustion, and an early grave. And the disease, when it has fairly pervaded the system, and begins to make this manifest by its external ravages, is absolutely terrific. Its effects are—extensive, severe, and loathsome ulcerations ; the destruction of the eyesight, and of the palate and tonsils ; the rotting of the flesh from the bones ; the exfoliation of the bones themselves ; till the whole



frame becomes a mass of living corruption, from which the eye, though filled with the tear of pity, turns away in sickening disgust. It is not a theme to dwell upon. But even here, plain truth is useful. I wish to sicken you. I wish to horrify you. I wish to fill you with loathing of the loathsome effect, that you may loath with a deeper loathing the more loathsome cause. And for this purpose, assuredly for no other, I risk any character I may have for delicacy, by setting before you one case;—and, although a bad, it is very far from being a solitary one:—it is thus given, in a single sentence or two, by Mr. Tait: “There is one case under the author’s charge at the present time, where the whole bones of the nose, external and internal—the bones which form the roof of the mouth—the bones of both cheeks—the greater part of the superior maxillary or jaw bones, with the teeth which they contained—besides all the softer fleshy parts connected with or covering them—have been successively separated from the body. The disease has continued for more than three years, and has set at defiance every remedy which the most celebrated medical practitioners in Edinburgh could suggest. Her face is literally rotten, and presents a large opening, into which an ordinary-sized fist may be thrust without difficulty.” I might add a great deal from the medical portion of Dr. Ryan’s work on the prostitution of London, and the publications of other professional authorities; but enlargement on such a topic would be as offensive as it is unnecessary. Mark the terms in which the respected and benevolent author from whom I have taken the above citation sums up the section on the subject of the diseases



to which magdalenism exposes its votaries : "From the effects thus produced it must be obvious, that the suffering which the unfortunate patients have to endure is very great. It is much more severe than that which arises from any other disease ; and the period of its duration is also very considerable. Weeks, months, and years, pass away, without their experiencing any mitigation of their agonies, or receiving one word of consolation, or assurance from the lips of their medical attendant, that there is at last some hope of being restored to health. The most gloomy forebodings thus continually hover around them, till death relieves them from this scene of sorrow and anguish, and hurries them, often unprepared, into the presence of their great judge."

The terms in which Parent-Duchatelet speaks of this malady, are not inferior in strength to these representations : "Of all the contagious distempers," says he (vol. ii., pp. 37-39), "which affect mankind, and which work the largest amount of detriment to his social existence, there is not one more serious, more dangerous, more to be dreaded, than syphilis. I may affirm, without fear of contradiction, that the calamities of which it is the source, surpass the ravages of all the plagues which, from time to time, have spread consternation through society. . . . It prevails among ourselves ;—it prevails among our neighbors ;—it prevails everywhere. It does not, it is true, like many other diseases, take off its victims suddenly ; but, notwithstanding that, the number of those victims is immense. Its ravages are incessant. It attacks more especially that part of the population which, from its time of life, forms



at once the strength and the wealth of nations. By the debility which it induces, it incapacitates for the production of a vigorous progeny; and, where it does not occasion sterility, gives birth to an unfortunate and degenerate race, unfit for the due discharge of any functions, whether civil or military, and which becomes an absolute burden on the community. And finally, in our modern society, there is no security against its assaults, even to the purest innocence. How many hired nurses, how many faithful wives, how many hapless sucklings, are, from year to year, the subjects of its cruel invasions!"

One thing further only would I mention on this most disgusting topic; more fearful, morally at least if not physically, than anything I have yet mentioned. I refer to the *early age* at which, both in boys and girls, this frightful malady has been known to be communicated. In the address to the public issued at the formation of the "London Society for the protection of young females and prevention of juvenile magdalenism," we have this statement: "In three of the largest hospitals in London, within the last eight years, there have not been fewer than 2,700 cases of disease, arising from this cause, in children from eleven to sixteen years of age." Of the manner in which such "poor innocents" are decoyed, and exposed to pollution, we may take due notice by-and-by. Dr. Ryan records, as physician to different charities in London, how much he has himself been shocked, and how much grayheaded members of his profession, who came to see his practice, have been amazed, at the precocious depravity apparent, "in seeing beardless boys, or rather children, present-



ing themselves for advice for venereal diseases." Mr. Tait "adds his testimony to similar facts." Mr. Miller, of our own city, testifies: "At the time of opening the House of Refuge for males, it was particularly noticed that many vagrant boys and girls were prowling about the streets. I have known girls of the tender age of from ten to twelve certified by the office-surgeon as diseased." And the esteemed city missionary already mentioned, writes to me as follows: "I visit the Lock hospital on Thursday forenoons; and I usually find from thirty to thirty-six females. They are generally from fourteen to twenty-two years of age. About ten days ago, I conversed with a girl, in presence of the matron, who was only eight years of age!! This girl's mother was also in the hospital at the time in a diseased state. The girl was seduced in her mother's house!" It would be an outrage on all right feeling, in speaking of a fact so horrible, to quarrel with a word. It must be obvious, however, that *seduction* is a term which must be used with a great latitude of meaning, to include the case of such a child:—and who is there who is not ready to join in driving from the society of human beings, with "curses loud and deep," the infamous miscreant who could be guilty of this unnatural violation?\*

And in speaking of the ravages of this frightful disease, it would be far wrong to limit our attention to its prevalence among the abandoned themselves. These ravages, as a matter of course, affect both sexes, and are communicated, by a fearful recipro-

\* In a postscript to a more recent letter, on another subject, the same correspondent mentions as having met with another instance in the hospital of similar juvenile distemper.



cation, from the one to the other ;—a consideration which, along with others of a higher order, may be pressed upon inexperienced youth, as an inducement to flee the divinely branded sin, and to “ abhor that which is evil,” lest they “ mourn at the last, when their flesh and their body are consumed, and say, ‘ How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof ! ’ ”

Among the physical evils arising from this prolific source of misery, ought also to be mentioned, the numberless cases of attempts, successful and unsuccessful, at *abortion*, and the wretched effects thence resulting, whether to mothers, or children, or both. Where *feticide* is not effected, and living children are born, what is many a time their condition ? Let a competent authority among ourselves declare : “ I fear,” says Dr. Hannay, “ to expose perhaps the blackest part of this already sufficiently disgusting and appalling picture ;—it is the fearful misery to the children of which these wretched creatures often become the mothers, and of the dreadful sacrifice of human life to this demon of horrid cruelty. Besides suffering from the diseases which they receive from their parent, and which are wrought into every fibre of their body at its earliest moment of existence, their wretched progeny experience every kind of bad usage, every form of misery, squalor, and neglect, under the tortures of which they fall, in no inconsiderable numbers, victims to this Moloch-like demon. I have not noted down this fearful part of the picture ; but I give it as my deliberate and solemn conviction, that not one in twenty of the miserable beings to which the harlot gives birth reaches the second



year of its earthly existence in any tolerable degree of health and strength."

And this statement is in affecting agreement with that of Duchatelet: "I have found but one opinion," says he, "respecting the frightful mortality among the children of harlots. This opinion has been confirmed by all the accounts I have got from the hospital, from the prison, and from every individual who has had opportunity of direct observation. Of eight children born, on an average, in the prison, four die within the first fortnight, and the other four in the course of the first year; and of ten born during one year in the hospital, five have been dead almost from the moment of birth, and the other five have gone before the full recovery of the mother."

I pass to *another* description of effects, not less deplorable, in one view, indeed, incomparably more so, those which relate to the mind and heart, to the moral principles and sensibilities. "However it be accounted for," observes Dr. Paley (Mor. and Polit. Phil., book 3, part 3, chap. 2), "the criminal commerce of the sexes corrupts and depraves the mind and moral character, more than any single species of vice whatever. That ready perception of guilt, that prompt and decisive resolution against it, which constitute a virtuous character, are seldom found in persons addicted to these indulgences. They prepare an easy admission for every sin that seeks it; and, in low life, are usually the first stage in men's progress to the most desperate villanies; and, in high life, to that lamented dissoluteness of principle, which manifests itself in a profligacy of public conduct, and a contempt of the obligations of religion and moral pro-



bity. Add to this, that habits of libertinism incapacitate and indispose the mind for all intellectual, moral, and religious pleasures ; which is a great loss to any man's happiness." Lest any one should treat such a testimony with lightness, as that of a severe moralist, from whom, on such a subject, condemnatory terms hardly within the limits of moderation might be expected, (although assuredly there never was a moralist who had less of the cynic about him than Paley), I take leave to add other two testimonies to the same effect, the peculiarly hardening and demoralizing influence, namely, of this vice. The one is from that sentimental voluptuary of skepticism, Jean Jaques Rousseau ; the other, in his own characteristic Scottish style, from the Bard of Caledonia. The former thus expresses himself : " I have uniformly observed that young persons, early corrupted, and given up to women and to debauchery, have been hard-hearted and cruel : the vehemence of their temperament has rendered them impatient, revengeful, fierce ; their imagination, absorbed by one object, has been indifferent to every other ; they have been strangers to compassion and tenderness ; they would have sacrificed father, mother, the very universe, to the least of their pleasures."\* And thus, in a poetical " Epistle to a Young Friend," does the latter impart his sound moral counsel :—

" The sacred lowe o' weel-placed love  
Luxuriantly indulge it :  
But never tempt th' illicit rove,  
Though naething should divulge it ;  
I waive the quantum o' the sin,  
The hazard of concealing :  
*But och ! it hardens a' within,  
And petrifies the feeling !*"

\* Emile—Liv. iv.



Poor Burns ! Who can fail to pity him, even however severe, on some grounds, and justly severe, may be his condemnation, when, in the closing lines of the same epistle, he sings :—

“ And may you better reckon the rede  
Than ever did th’ adviser !”\*

To these authorities I may further add that of the great John Milton, who, in his *Comus*, thus sings :—

“ When lust  
Lies in defilement to the inward parts,  
The soul grows clotted by contagion,  
Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose  
The divine property of her first being.”

And how graphic, yet how revolting, the description of his own character, before his conversion, given by Augustine !—are there none beside himself, that might have sat for the picture ? “ Thus I polluted the very life-blood of affection with the vileness of concupiscence, and its pure sincerity I shrouded in smoke from the hell of my lust ; and yet, all the while, foul and dishonorable as I was, I assumed, in the exuberance of my vanity, the mein of gentlemanly urbanity and elegance !”

Of the association of this evil, in low life, with other crimes, to which Paley alludes, I shall have occasion to take some notice by-and-by. I only remark at present, that if the debasing and cor-

\* Pity must not be allowed, however, to soften the moral condemnation. There is too much reason for thinking that few writings have contributed more than those of Burns, by the unhappy power of ludicrous association, both with vice and with its punishment, and by the fascination of the light of genius, like a lamp gleaming amid the rottenness and corruption of a sepulchral vault, to lessen the horror of evil, to promote its reckless indulgence, and to help “ fools to make a mock at sin !”



rupting influence of such indulgences on the moral principles be, indeed, as these authorities represent it; if even in the superior walks of life, it is a vice that opens the avenues to other temptations, obliterates the protecting fences of virtue, maintains a process of induration over the sensibilities of the heart, and sears to callousness whatever was tender and susceptible in the conscience; what must be its effects on those whose understandings have been uncultivated by knowledge, and their hearts unimbued by the early infusion of right principle! In cases where there has been this early infusion, and where its restraints have been overpowered by the arts of seduction; when the miserable victim is cast off by her heartless betrayer, and, in forlorn abandonment and hopeless destitution, gives herself up to a life of voluptuous profligacy, the mental agonies that are endured are many a time unbearable; these agonies drive, in desperation, to wilder excesses; and, so long as the searing process is but in its commencement, the excesses react, with a horrible power, upon the conscience.

And when the short period elapses, during which any powers of personal attraction are retained, and the poor wretch, cast off with pitiless unconcern, is left to all the rage of mortified vanity, and the burning of insatiate lust, and the workings of weak-minded but fell revenge, or to the dreadful collapse of exhausted sensuality; what must be the state of the mind, unless it escapes from its own thoughts in the madness or the stupefaction of intemperance, when neither past, present, nor future, has aught but bitterness to yield; the past and the present without pleasure, and the future



without hope ! The following description brings before us, the blended miseries of body and mind, of personal and social condition, in what may be termed the last stage of "the harlot's progress." It is a frightful, but faithful picture ; and when I have set it before you, *I shall tell you why*.—"The effects of sin are not more plainly and fearfully displayed on any class of human beings, than on fallen and decayed harlots. Their character and appearance seemed to be stamped with the indignation of Him whose laws they have violated, and whose counsels and reproofs they have despised. Everything which formerly rendered them attractive is completely banished. Every feature appears altered in expression, and gives frightful indication of the writhings of an agonized conscience. The friends with whom they associated only a short time before, are now unable to recognise them. The feelings of pride and of vanity, that were so active and powerful in propelling them into a licentious life, seem enervated or exhausted ; and they crawl forth from their dens of infamy unwashed and undressed. It is when a number of these wretched beings are congregated in one cellar, that their miserable condition becomes most conspicuous, distressing, and humiliating. The bawl and laughter of the drunkard, the oaths of the profane, and the shrieks and cries of the penitent, are inharmoniously mingled together ; and even the same individual is to be found, at one time laughing, now cursing, and now weeping for her sins. The effects produced upon the mind of the spectator by such evidence of mental disquietude, are greatly heightened by the bodily wretchedness which presents itself to his



view. The apartment in which these creatures live, exhibits the same impoverished aspect which is so deeply impressed on its miserable inhabitants. Not a single vestige of furniture which is deserving of the name, is to be seen within its walls. Beds and bed-clothes are out of the question. They are looked upon as fortunate who have a little dirty straw upon which they can lay themselves down to rest. Many are in possession of no such luxury, and sleep night after night upon the hard boards which form the floor of their uncomfortable dwelling. The dress of the unfortunate females themselves is often not sufficient to cover their nakedness, far less to protect them from the cold. Their clothes, if they have any, are seldom cleaned; and, when the reader is informed that they are never changed, day nor night, for weeks or perhaps months together, he can form his own idea as to their comfort or appearance; for it would be offensive to the feelings of humanity to attempt to describe them."—Then there follows a statement of what was witnessed by the author himself, in one of the lowest description of brothels, when he was professionally called, on a Saturday night, in December, 1839, to visit one of its inmates, who was dying;—and, as I wish you, for the reason which I shall assign immediately, to have a full impression of the horrors of this last stage of the harlot's wretchedness, I must extract it: "On entering into the house, it appeared to be crowded with women almost in a state of nudity, and also two ragged blackguards of men, who had the discretion to retire. The hovel consisted of two apartments, in the inner of which the patient was lying in a corner,



on a piece of old carpet, without one article conducive to her comfort. She was without covering of any description ; and without any kind of dress save an old merino frock, which the author had seen her wearing during the whole of the preceding year. On inquiry, it was learned, that other five females lodged in the same house, the whole of whom and two strangers were present. Three of them were lying drunk on the floor, unable to stir or to speak. The others had been recently fighting, and the blood was running down their cheeks. One only, out of the seven assembled, seemed to be sober enough to understand what was said to her, and all the dress which she possessed was a single petticoat. . . . This house was without bed, chairs, or stools. In one place only there was a little straw. A few large stones were placed round the fireplace, upon which the inmates sat. A whisky-bottle and a wineglass appeared to be the whole stock of crockery. There was not a single particle of food within the door ; and none of the women had a fraction of money with which they could purchase nourishment for the one who was in distress, which was all that was considered necessary for her relief." (Tait's Magdalenism, pp. 216-219.)

And now, some of you may naturally ask me—*is this fair?* Why dwell on scenes of such low and disgusting loathsomeness? Is this a just average specimen of the whole system? Is there nothing superior?—nothing more refined?—nothing less revolting? And if there be, why take an *ad-captandum* advantage, by giving such prominence to the very lowest and worst grade of the



evil? My answer to such questions forms my promised reason for having introduced at all these disgusting details. The answer and the reason are one. It is—the affecting and fearful consideration, that *to this lowest grade, in all its horrors, the entire system tends.* Yes: I repeat it, and press it on your serious attention,—*the tendency is all downward.* The case is, in this respect, *unique.* Even in thievery there may be an advance. The boy, of the lowest grade, who, by his inferior practice, comes to be a dexterous pick-pocket, or a clever abstracter of the contents of a till, may in time rise to the envied, though unenviable, celebrity of a Barrington. He who first pilfers a penny from a shop, if he gets forward in the arts of villany, may find his way to the thousands of a bank. But in the present case, *rising is a thing unknown.* It can not be. It is all descent. The young woman, who begins her shameless career in a low brothel, and among the refuse of the other sex, does not rise from the lower to the higher, and push her way upward, till she become the mistress of a peer. Mark me: let me not be misunderstood; let me not be supposed to say this, as if I conceived the guilt would, in that case, be the less. Far be the thought! It would be the very same same in the rising as it is in the sinking scale. I am speaking at present, not of the *morality*, but of the *misery* of the case. And again I say, the tendency is *all downward.* Gentlemen in high life may think lightly of their gallantries. *They* do things genteelly. They seduce in style; and they keep in style. They conceive themselves to lay under a kind of obligation the females whom they



honor with their preference. And alas ! the poor females, in the vanity of their hearts, often think so too. But the honor is infamy ; the flattery is ruin. Not only is the sin the same in the highest as in the lowest, but soon the poor victim, who has yielded to the temptation, comes to know what I mean by the *tendency downward*. Whether seduced in private, or beguiled into one of the superior receptacles of infamy, it is seldom long ere satiety and the passion for change throw her off. She is turned mercilessly adrift. Her seducer has gained his end, and thinks no more of her. Another, and another, have taken her place. But O ! it is chilling to the heart, to think of the downward career, of whose beginning that seducer has been the guilty cause. Surely, did his selfish and heartless voluptuousness allow him for a moment to trace it,—had he one warm drop of sensibility remaining in his heart's blood, he could not but recoil and sicken at the thought. It is all down—down—rapidly down ; down from stage to stage, till it terminates in some such scene of squalid wretchedness as the one just depicted.

After what has already been laid before you, it can not be to any of you matter of surprise to learn, that *suicide*, and attempts at suicide, are frequent among these miserable beings. “ About a third or a fourth part of them,” says Mr. Tait, “ attempt suicide at one time or other : and perhaps about eight per cent. are successful in accomplishing it. It appears to be very contagious ; for if one has been known to have endeavored to take away her own life, a number of others will soon do so also. Several months will pass over, without anything



of the kind again taking place ; and then six or eight cases will occur in the course of one or two weeks. The author knew of four having tried to poison themselves by laudanum in one night ; and in the course of next fortnight he heard of other six." "It is believed, that a great number of harlots deprive themselves of existence, without any person having the least knowledge or suspicion of it, as they suddenly disappear from the midst of their companions, and are never heard of afterward." "The great majority of harlots," says the superintendent of our own police, "appear to entertain no sense of religion whatever. Many cases, however, occur, of females brought to the office in a state of insensibility from poison, or from having attempted to drown themselves ; and, on being questioned as to their motive, the uniform answer is—'I am tired of life,—I am very unhappy,—allow me to die.' Many of these unhappy creatures might be saved, if a refuge were provided to which they could betake themselves. I have seen cases, where the poor creatures labored under the deepest remorse for past misconduct ; and they seemed only to require a home to save them from perdition, and render them in time useful members of the community. I may add, that the greater part of these females in a short time become so depraved, that they do not appear to know what moral responsibility means. They regard themselves as outcasts of society and act upon that conviction." To the humane and pious mind this is very shocking. We do not wonder to hear, that attempts at self-destruction are most frequent "among those who have recently departed from the paths of virtue ;" the anguish of spirit



consequent on their fall, from the stings of conscience, and from a keen sense of the loss of honor, and character, and confidence, and everything on which future prospects in life depended, sufficiently accounting for the fact:—yet many such cases may well be traced too to the accumulation of misery in the unhappy creature's progressive descent, rendering her "tired of life,"—and also to that mental imbecility and insanity, which, by all medical authorities, are numbered among the evils incident to such a course of life. "It is worthy of remark," Dr. Ryan says, "that this frequency of mental alienation, and impairments of mind, has been observed in all ages." The love of life is the first and strongest principle in our nature; and, whether it be hopeless *guilt* that overcomes it, or hopeless *misery*, or both together,—what must be the weight of oppression, or the agony of desperation, that drives to such an extremity! Even although there may be little if any thought or apprehension of an *hereafter*, yet is the act of self-destruction a sadly convincing proof of the cessation both of enjoyment and of all hope of its return in the present world. And in those cases,—of which, in such a country as this, there are not a few,—where there is the knowledge of God, and Christ, and judgment, and heaven, and hell, what a phrensy of felt and hopeless wretchedness must that be, which can find no refuge but by plunging, in unrepented guilt and unsanctified pollution,—with curses, it may be, on the past, and a reckless braving of the future,—into the abyss of a dark eternity!

I feel it quite unnecessary for me to enlarge on the misery produced by this vice *in the circle of*



*domestic life.* I shall leave, in a great measure, to your own imaginations, the wounded honor, the offended pride, the shame, the indignation, the grief, the pity, the bitterness of disappointment in retracing the pleasing promises of the past, and the dreary, heart-sinking blight of all that was cheering in the anticipations of the future ;—which are the inevitable results, when a daughter, or a sister, has strayed from the paths of purity. O the conflict, to parents especially, between duty and affection,—the former seeming to require one course, while the latter pressingly dictates another ;—alternate convictions, desires, and determinations, dividing the judgment against itself, and rending the very heart asunder ; now hope prevailing, and now fear,—but the hope feeble, and the fear strong ;—everything suggesting the recollection —(if indeed the remembrance can ever be said to be for a moment suspended)—of their lost child, once their treasure, now their shame ! The very caution with which, in their presence, friends avoid every subject which would call up the bitter association, is itself a touching reminiscence ; while every day's incidents and rumors are incessantly opening and irritating the sore. And possibly—(the case is neither an imaginary nor a solitary one)—the natural and proud revenge of a brother for a sister's violated honor, may challenge to the measured field of death the perpetrator of the foul deed ; the sister's seducer may become the brother's murderer, and the parents may have to weep over the grave of a son, as well as over the ruin of a daughter ! And even should that daughter, forsaking the paths of sin and shame, find her way back to her abandoned and dishonored home, the very pleasure



of her return is but a "bitter-sweet;" the venom which the barbed arrow carried with it to the heart, can never be thoroughly extracted; the very smile of parental love is ever after a pensive smile, and is followed by the sigh and the tear of hidden sorrow. And not less distressing are the feelings of every right-principled and right-hearted parent, when a son—the rising hope of the family—has fallen before the temptations of bad companionship and the fascinations of the "strange woman." Alas! that by any this should be so very much less thought of than the other! Far be it, that I should wish the abhorrence of the other mitigated!—no; I would have it deepened. But I would that we heard less frequently the gentle terms of alleviation and half apology, in which, with regard to our own sex, this sin is too often spoken of;—that we heard less of the *indiscretions* and *irregularities* of youth; to which, by some parents, it appears to be almost taken for granted, as a matter of course, that young men should be found, in a greater or a less degree, giving way: "They are only like their neighbors; where is the youth to be found that is blameless?" It is very sad, when that which ought to "pierce" the parental heart "through with many sorrows," should, in so many instances, be so lightly felt, and so lightly spoken of.

O! of what an amount and variety of domestic misery has this sin in diverse ways—whether committed by sons or by daughters, by husbands or by wives, by fathers or by mothers—been the prolific parent! How many hearts has it broken! what anguish, what resentment, what jealousy, what alienation, what strife, what blood, has it caused! what scorpions has it thrown into the



circle of family concord ! what infuriated and revengeful passions has it enkindled ! or what heavy and deep-sunk melancholy has it brought over the broken spirit—melancholy which refuses to be comforted, and looks for rest only to the grave !

And from this point I am led, by a natural association, to the evils resulting from this vice *to the public*. The feelings of distress which I have been depicting are far, alas ! from being the feelings of all parents, and of all families, in the circumstances supposed. Many parents there are, who seem strangers alike to the dictates of conscience and to those of natural affection. Brought up themselves in licentious habits, they train their children to the same course. Their sole calculation respecting them is, to what profitable account they can be turned ; whether it is by working, or by stealing, that they can make most ; and if they can unite the two, so much the better. When their girls grow up, this vice is regarded, both by parents and children (children and children's children of "the wicked one"), not in its sinfulness and its dishonor, but only as one among other means in their choice of getting a livelihood. They throw themselves upon the town, or they are put out to the trade of infamy by their unnatural fathers and mothers. The habits of vice and licentiousness in which boys and girls together are thus trained, may contribute, with other causes, to account for the notorious fact of the almost invariable connexion between magdalenism and different descriptions of crime. In all the representations of those public functionaries who have the best opportunities for observation, this fact stands prominently out : "A large proportion," says Mr. Miller, "of



the robberies from the person, committed in Glasgow, take place in houses of bad fame; or by harlots on the streets or elsewhere. The value of property reported to the police as stolen from the person in 1840, within the Royalty, was £2,268, 18s. ; but it is believed that robberies to a considerable amount take place in brothels, or are committed by depraved females elsewhere, that are never heard of, from the unwillingness of the persons robbed to expose themselves."—"Robbery," says Mr. Tait, "is another consequence of magdalenism. While the latter is openly tolerated and encouraged, the former will also continue to exist. The extent to which this crime is carried on is very great. No man who goes into the company of harlots is certain that he will effect his escape without being robbed. Scarcely a week passes, without such cases being recorded in the public papers. Let the records of the justiciary courts be consulted, and it will be found that nearly one third of those who are convicted of robberies and larcenies belong to the class of harlots ; and it is almost needless to say, that nearly as many are acquitted for want of evidence, and thrice as many more against whom no charge is brought, as the conviction of the one party must necessarily disclose the guilt of the other. The amount of the sum stolen is often very considerable." A number of instances are introduced in the work for illustration and proof. It may not be perfectly correct, perhaps, to speak of this as simply "*a consequence of magdalenism.*" In very many cases the crimes of theft and robbery must have *preceded* harlotry, and the habits of dexterity in their perpetration have been previously acquired—this vice



only opening a new field for the successful exercise of this dexterity. True it is, however, that in low brothels, the receptacles of vileness and vice, there is a concentration of the arts of fraud and the practices of plunder. Their female inmates are the thieves; the "fancy-men," or "bullies," of these inmates—their professed protectors, though often their greatest abusers—receive their share of the spoil; and their keepers are, to a great extent, the resellers of the stolen property. Theft and robbery are reduced to a system. And this, among other reasons, renders such houses fair objects for the interference and coercive suppression of the legislative and municipal authorities.

But this is not the only way in which harlotry promotes dishonesty and crime. It is not merely that these abandoned females pilfer in the brothels from those who frequent them, and extend their nefarious practices to the streets and lanes of the city: there is a species of robbery traceable to this source, which is of a description even more lamentable. I refer to the temptation which it holds out—and often too successfully—to young men, to defraud and rob their employers, in order to provide themselves with the necessary means of pursuing their dissolute courses. A course of licentiousness can not be followed without expense. When a young man has once given way before temptation, and has come to the fatal resolution of making his own inclinations his rule, he feels the sin to be sweet: he is by this means tempted to its repetition; every repetition relaxes the hold which virtue had of his conscience, and wreathes the chain of vice more closely round his deluded heart. He has got among those whose sole ob-



ject, though carefully concealed, is to *fleece* him. They ply him with all their arts of obscenity, flattery, and banter ; coaxing him with honeyed words, or stinging his pride with the taunts of ribald sarcasm. And if his male associates in licentiousness chance to be such as possess means of gratification more abundant than his own, the snare becomes more than doubly perilous. *Money he must have.* He can not be behind his companions. With a throbbing heart and a trembling hand, he makes his first petty embezzlement. He succeeds in concealing it. Another follows. The success is equal. He gets emboldened. Fraud succeeds fraud. Suspicion arises. Vigilance is awakened. Detection ensues. Character, and confidence, and situation, are forfeited. And the fate of the infatuated youth is either a prison and transportation, or a total abandonment to low vice and villany, terminating in premature exhaustion, disease, desertion, misery, and death.

Every one who wishes well to the rising youth of our own and other cities and towns, must deeply lament the increasing number of female seducers. Many of them may themselves have been the subjects of seduction by the other sex. But they become seducers in their turn ; and, whether from the first entering spontaneously on a life of magdalenism, or throwing themselves on the town when cast off by the heartless despoilers of their virtue, they become, emphatically, moral pests of the community. In our days, as in Solomon's, the harlot "lieth in wait as for a prey ; and increaseth the transgressors among men."—"Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner."—"Her lips drop as a



honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil : but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword : her feet go down to death ; her steps take hold on hell : lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them." But, in spite of the warning which follows, coming with the united authority and kindness of Heaven—"Remove thy way far from her ; come not nigh the door of her house"—how many of our young men, the inexperienced and thoughtless, the unsuspicious, light-hearted, and gay, are thus haplessly led astray ! The vice, in certain circles—circles, alas ! of no narrow limits—is one of those in which it is hardly reckoned consistent with the character and pretensions of a *lad of spirit* to be uninitiated. Such inexperience—the happy ignorance and virgin purity of youth—exposes him to the sneers, and winks, and shrugs, the banter, and the pity, and the laugh, of his companions. If, when "in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night," he is assailed by the artful blandishments of the harlot, any of these companions happen to be with him, and, amid merriment and jeering, set him the example of what they call *manly spirit and independence*, how can he withstand the united assault ? the fascinations of female gallantry, working on passions which are in all the strength of youth, while the principles of restraint are in all youth's weakness—aided by the raillery, the cajoling, the persuasion, the all but absolute force, of associates, who tell him, while they exchange glances of provoking scorn and pity, he may go home, if he will, to his *mammy* and to his *Bible*, and to the *leading-strings of the nursery* ; that *he* may take *his way*, and leave *them* to take *theirs* ; insinuating, perhaps,



at the same time, that "deep waters flow stilly;" that they know full well what way his inclination lies, if he had but spirit enough to dare to follow it; and that, after all, he is not, at bottom, a whit better than themselves! He hesitates; he turns away; he looks back; he blushes for his very virtue; they follow up their advantage; he yields; and he is lost. It is to be feared that the number of young men, of whom this, or something like this, is the history, is far from being small. And especially is this the fate of many who come, in boyhood and youth, from the comparative inexperience of the country. For these, both abandoned men and abandoned women are on the lookout; who throw their toils around them in such artful ways, that to escape from their meshes would be a kind of moral miracle. And thus the number multiplies of those whom the necessary expenses of one sin drives to the commission of others; whom incontinence tempts to dishonesty; who from the shop or the warehouse abstract the hire and the presents of the kept mistress or the brothel; who from the cash drawn during the day provide for the sensual pleasures of the night; or who, if pursuing those pleasures in a higher grade, practise their swindlings on a larger scale; and perhaps at length, getting desperate, draw fictitious bills, and, with the proceeds, flee their country.

And while thus, in such a variety of ways, the prevalence of this vice cherishes, as in a hot-bed, theft, and fraud, and embezzlement, and lying, and forgery; it spreads, wide and more wide, the general debasement of moral principle, and hebetude of religious sensibilities, manifested in profane swearing, in filthy conversation, in the ridicule of all that bears the semblance of piety, in sabbath-



breaking, in rivalry at framing the most tremendous oaths, uttering the grossest obscenities, or accomplishing the most dexterous or most daring acts of wickedness, and in that contempt of goodness, and obliteration of right feeling, which, to the extent wherein it prevails, cuts up by the roots "the righteousness which exalteth a nation," and to the seriously thoughtful mind holds out so fearful a prognostic for the time to come; "sin" being, under the administration of Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," not the "reproach" only, but the peril of a community, the prominent and appalling attraction to the lightnings of his vengeance. Men may, indeed, think lightly of it; but they only think lightly because they think ignorantly, inconsiderately, or selfishly. By all historically-recorded experience we are borne out in the assertion, that the prevalence of this vice tends, in a variety of ways, to the deterioration of national character, and to the consequent exposure of the nations among whom it abounds to weakness, decline, and fall. I believe it will be found, that an average of the general state of morals, in different countries might be pretty fairly struck, by simply ascertaining the degree in which this particular vice prevails; the average of national virtue augmenting as this diminishes, and diminishing as this augments. In this view, the suppression of it, by every legitimate means, becomes a matter of interest to patriotism as well as to piety and benevolence; to the friends of public as well as of private character; of national as well as of personal well-being; to the soundly-principled and conscientious magistrate, as well as to the minister of Christ. The means themselves of such suppression will hereafter be considered.



## LECTURE III.

## ON THE GUILT AND THE CAUSES OF MAGDALENISM.

IN order the more strongly to impress upon your minds the duty and the necessity of bringing all accessible means, that are right in principle and capable of beneficial application, to bear upon the great practical end mentioned in the conclusion of our second lecture, I now proceed to consider—

III. THE EVIDENCE AND DEGREE OF THE GUILT, OR MORAL TURPITUDE, of the sin under discussion. This has all along been assumed; but has not been sufficiently brought out by illustration or argument. I speak of the guilt, not of the vice itself alone, but of every kind and measure of countenance or encouragement, positive or negative, that is given to it.

I have already more than hinted my concern, that the estimate, prevalent in general society, of the moral evil of the vice in question, should be so very low. Among the reasons accounting for this, may be mentioned the fact, that, with one of the sexes, the indulgence of it extends at once *so far up* and *so far down* in the social scale; whence arises the further fact, that there is no one in the catalogue of reputed evils, for which there exists, on the part of that sex, so strong and so general a propensity to discover or invent excuses and alleviations.



One of these is so common, that it presents itself for notice at the very threshold of this department of our subject. There can be no very deadly harm in it, it has been alleged ; seeing it is only *following nature* ; for *why has nature given us appetites, but to be indulged ?* Now this may sound plausibly : but a very brief examination is sufficient to show, that even its plausibility is derived from its harmonizing with inclination. It is only one out of numberless examples, which go to show, how readily the human mind satisfies itself with anything that bears the semblance of an argument, when it is on the side of the heart's tendencies. Nature, rightly read, teaches no such lesson ; but gives, on the contrary, indications the most palpable and decisive, of its being a violation of her will. I trust I need not say that, when I thus adopt for a moment a common phraseology, I would be understood as meaning by *nature* nature's *God*. His lessons are to be found in the two volumes of nature and of revelation ; and on the present, as on all other points, the lessons of both are in perfect coincidence. It is true that we have natural appetites. It is true, that with the exercise of those appetites the God of nature, the divine author of the constitution of our frame, has been pleased to associate sensations of enjoyment. And in this we have a manifestation, not of *benevolence* alone, but of *wisdom*. The pleasure was necessary to these appetites answering their ends. The pleasure itself was not nature's end, but something subservient to its effectual attainment. Many and striking are the marks of this wisdom. In regard to some of the functions of our wonderful animal mechanism, functions which are necessary every



moment to its continued vitality, the wisdom appears in so constituting the internal structure of our frame, as to make them go regularly on, independently of the volitions of our minds. Such are the functions of respiration, and the circulation of the blood. We should have had much more than enough to do, had we had these processes alone to attend to. In other cases, by the same wisdom, the end is effected in another way, namely, by the attaching of sensations of pleasure to the indulgence of the natural and necessary appetite. Thus, it is necessary to life, that men should eat and drink ; and eating and drinking are sources of enjoyment. The Author of life has not left its maintenance to depend on what is painful, or even on what is indifferent, but, with a characteristic union of wisdom and kindness, on what is directly pleasurable. On the principle of the plea we are considering, the glutton and the epicure, the men who, instead of eating to live, live to eat, find their plausible ground of self-justification in their respective indulgences. Thus, then, it is in the case before us. The sexual intercourse is necessary to a most important end, the very perpetuation of the species. And, with the same union of wisdom and kindness, the Author of our constitution has connected this too, not with pain, but with pleasure. It is evident, that, had the fact been otherwise, the race would not long have subsisted. But it is no less evident, that to seek the mere pleasure, independently of the end which the pleasure was only meant to subserve, is *not* to follow nature. It is to abuse nature's kindness, and nature's wisdom ; ungratefully and criminally to abuse them, by following a course, which, as we shall notice immediate-



ly, tends to subvert, instead of subserving, nature's purposes. The God of nature has connected the wise and kind arrangement to which we have been referring, with certain *restrictions*. These restrictions are marked by nature, as well as by revelation: and the mere voluptuary, who sets at naught these restrictions, and follows the libidinous impulses of his animal appetite, not for the sake of the end for which it has been implanted, but solely for the sensual pleasure that is incidental to it and conducive to the end, so far from following nature, is only availing himself of nature's beneficent arrangements, for the sake of self-gratification of the lowest kind, regardlessly of nature's real and divinely characteristic intentions.

I have said, that Nature has marked her own restrictions, in regard to the way in which she designed her end to be attained; and to follow nature, is to seek the attainment of the end in that way and under those restrictions. Various and impressive facts concur in evincing, that, for insuring the preservation and increase of the race, nature's way is not the way of indiscriminate promiscuous indulgence, but that of peculiar conjugal appropriation; in one word, that the law of nature is, on this point, the same with the law of revelation, "that every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." Of these facts I may just mention, without dwelling upon them, the *average equality of the sexes*; and the *general barrenness and unproductiveness* of the system of magdalenism; the latter distinctly proclaiming its unnaturalness, by its contrariety to nature's admitted end and primary law in the creation of a male and a female—a law which, expressed in the



terms of holy writ, is—"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." That the system of conjugal appropriation is, beyond comparison, the most steadily efficient for the maintenance and numerical increase of the race, experience has placed out of the range of doubt. The barrenness of magdalenism is proverbial; and against the prevalence of the vice, were there no marriage, there could be no security. "The number of abandoned women," says Captain Miller, "who become pregnant, or at least whose offspring come to maturity, is very small—probably not one in fifty:—but on this subject I can not speak with any certainty." Certainty or precision is not necessary:—the general fact is enough. And the fact stands confirmed by the best authorities. "On a review," says Parent-Duchatelet, "of all the returns made to my inquiries, together with what I have found in various ancient and modern books, the conclusion forced upon me has been, that a thousand of these women yield scarcely six births in the course of a year." He confirms this by statements from lying-in hospitals, &c.:—and the general result is, that, how frequent soever conception may be, the retention and birth of living, and still more of healthy children, is exceedingly rare. And on the contrary he states, that when they relinquish their guilty vocation, and become attached by marriage to one man, the barrenness ceases, pregnancy becomes regular, its course auspicious, and its results happy; the children which are its product being as healthy and lively as those of other wives. But there is still another way, in which nature, or rather the God of nature, has stamped on magdalenism the brand of,



guilt and reprobation. I allude again to that most fearful distemper, which, while never in one instance does it visit the "bed undefiled" of conjugal fidelity, is so intolerable a scourge of incontinence. Is there no lesson in this?—no divine intimation of the right and the wrong, the lawful and the lawless?—no seal of virtue, and stigma of vice? That a disease, involving a complication of diseases—of which I have said enough before to satisfy you, that it is one of the most dreadful that can invade the human frame—should to so great an extent be the effect of the one species of intercourse, and never at all of the other; a disease, which, while it commits such ravages on its immediate subject, is also, many a time (in not a few cases through the innocent and doubly wronged wives of faithless and adulterous husbands) communicated to helpless children, so as to make their early death a deliverance and a blessing; and, in some instances, taints the blood, and debilitates the constitutions, of successive generations:—is not this, I ask, fairly interpreted as nature's warning voice;—the voice, it may be, of severity—yet of a just and salutary severity, and of a real kindness;—a voice dissuading from the one course, and recommending the other;—a voice loudly and sternly repeating Nature's, and the God of nature's, own original law—"Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband."

To any who know their bibles I need not say, how perfect is the agreement between all in nature that is indicative of divine condemnation, and the more peremptory and uncompromising sentence of revelation. Here there is no dubiety;—no ambi-



guity in the oracles of this shrine. Here, all impurity is laid under the heaviest of divine anathemas. It stands branded, deep to the very bone, with the mark of the curse. It is not here a mere *failing*, an *irregularity*, an *indiscretion*, a *venial fault*. It is numbered among the sins which exclude their unrepenting perpetrators from the kingdom of heaven, and "because of which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." And the entire Bible is in the same strain; full of commands to abstain, of denunciations against transgressors, and of recorded judgments as the execution of such denunciations; and full too of intimations of a future vengeance unutterably heavier than aught ever inflicted in the present world.

Thus the facts of nature and the pages of revelation speak the same language. We are left at



no loss. In the word of God especially, all is plain dealing. "Fornication and all uncleanness" have their place there among the sins for which "the wicked shall be turned into hell." In the face, then, of these lessons of nature and revelation—that is surely a very presumptuous and a very perilous position, which by some has been taken up, and which I have myself heard maintained, that *the existence of this class of females is necessary to the preservation of the general virtue of the community*. There would otherwise, it has been surmised, be little security for the chastity of our wives and daughters from the wild passions of a lawless libertinism! A question or two here naturally suggest themselves. First of all, I would ask, what special title have the wives and daughters of those who employ this plea to the protection of *their* virtue, more than *other* wives and daughters? Why are theirs to be protected at the expense of the others, and not the others at the expense of theirs? Who, in the community, are to be the victims—the vice-doomed safeguards of the virtue of the rest—the wretched safety-valves of unprincipled and unbridled passions? Are we to have a decimation by lot of the virginity of the country?—or is some inferior class to be sacrificed to the demon of lust, for the benefit of those above them? That the evil has always existed, is a melancholy truth:—that it must always continue to exist, is the affirmation, made with all the coolness of indifference, of the reasoners in question; although it is not quite the faith of the Christian. But what if this were equally true with the other—the future doomed to be coincident in character with the past and the pres-



ent? It is still a widely different thing from the position, that *vice is essential to the preservation of virtue*. That were indeed a hard necessity. Where is the individual—male or female, and in what rank soever of society—whom I am not to dissuade from vice?—whom it would be wrong so to dissuade?—the successful dissuasion of whom would be an injury to the public?—by prevailing with whom to give up her evil course, I should incur the responsibility of one who shuts a high-pressure safety-valve?—where the individual, whose body and soul I am bound to leave to death and perdition, lest perchance some others should come to be exposed to temptation?—If harlotism be *sin*, I am bound—and so is every one else—to prevent it, as far as possible, *in all*. The idea of countenancing, or even winking at it, in some, with a view to its prevention in others, is an outrage on everything that deserves the name of principle. Who are the men whom you find arguing for such a toleration? Did you ever hear any one use the argument, who had himself a right impression of the sin and guilt of the practice—who was himself a man of religion and virtue? If any but heartless libertines have ever adopted it, surely it must have been with a strange inconsideration of their ground. Generally, if not universally, it will be found, that the men who talk thus of the necessity of this vice, are the very men from whom the alleged danger, if it exist at all, originates; men who have no impression of the evil of doing that themselves from which they are so dutifully solicitous forsooth to preserve others; who are determined on their own indulgence; and who throw over it this among other flimsy cobweb



coverings. Away with it! It will not bear a thought; far less an argument. In the department of morals, the maxim that "*of two evils we should choose the least*" admits of no application. There is no liberty left us to choose, either the least or the greatest. The idea that any sin requires to be tolerated, in order to prevent more, involves an impious reflection on the Divine Being, for which there never has been, there is not, and there never can be, the remotest ground. That which he demands, in regard to "the flesh with its affections and lusts," is—their "*crucifixion*." Our maxim, as to all that is morally evil—the only safe one for either ourselves or others—is—" *de-lenda est* :"—and, both in ourselves and in others, we are bound, to the utmost extent of our power, to give the maxim realization. "As to the usual apology for this relaxed discipline," says Dr. Paley (he is speaking of the public toleration of this vice), "the danger of greater enormities, if access to abandoned women were too strictly watched and prohibited; it will be time enough to look to that, after the laws and the magistrates have done their utmost. The greatest vigilance of both will do no more than oppose some bounds and some difficulties to this intercourse. And after all, these pretended fears are without foundation in experience. The men are in all respects the most virtuous, in countries where the women are most chaste."

But I have not yet done with the moral turpitude of the offence. I have been regarding it as in itself evil; as *a sin*, stamped as such by the hand of Nature, and branded still more clearly and deeply as such by the hand of God in revelation.



But, to have a full view of the case, you must think further of the *effects of magdalenism*, as they were formerly, though far from fully, set before you,—the various and dreadful results to which, both in this world and in the world to come, it gives rise. Is there no moral evil in *being accessory to these*?—no violation of the claims of righteousness and benevolence?—no offence against the great rule of all equity, and honor, and love, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them?” By any man who reflects for one moment on these results, can any answer but one be given to such questions? And be it remembered, every man is accessory to those results—to one and all of them, in all their horrible multiplicity and extent—who, whether by his personal example or in any other way, contributes to the support and countenance of the system. There are not a few, it is feared, who never think of this; who indulge in their own gallantries, and look no farther, conceiving that they have to answer only for their own,—that with those of others they have nothing to do. But I wish them to think of it. I wish all to think of it. Such men are far mistaken. Their gallantries *can not* be taken by themselves. They form part of an aggregate; and the amount of that aggregate they contribute, in various ways, to increase. They go to the upholding of an extensive an extending system of sin and misery. And *in this tendency*, apart from their own intrinsic guilt, they are deeply criminal. The man who by his practice, by his writings, by his conversation, by his company, countenances this vice, stands chargeable with his share of all its attendant and



consequent miseries, throughout the entire range of its prevalence ; with his share of all the bodily disease, the torture, and the premature death ; of all the loss of character, respectability, maintenance, and comfort ; of all the deprivation of moral principle, all the lying, dishonesty, theft, obscenity, and profaneness ; of all the secret and open crime ; of all the agonies of mind, all the searing of conscience, all the intemperance, all the jealousies, quarrels, battles, and blood ; of all the abortions, infanticides, and suicides ; of all the shrinking and shrieking fears, and all the still more appalling hardihood and heaven-defying callousness, of the dying hour ; and of all the untold woes which, in the unseen world, await the guilty soul, that enters it steeped in sin, and fit for no region there but that of the " worm that dieth not : "—yes ; with his share, larger or smaller as it may be, of all the wretchedness and ruin which, in time and eternity, this prolific parent-sin produces ! O let not the man of incontinence measure his guilt exclusively by the number of his own direct personal trespasses against the laws of chastity. These may be many, or they may be few. Every one of them, in itself, involves deep and soul-ruining criminality to the perpetrator, how many other persons soever there may be to whom he can point, whose gallantries are both more frequent and flagrant than his own. But let him remember, that this is not the limit of his moral delinquency. Let him take a survey of the general evils of the system—than which, when all its varieties are taken in, there is not another " so full of wo ; " no, not *intemperance* itself, many and miserable as its evil consequences are ;



it may slay its thousands, but this slays its ten thousands:—and let him shrink, with dread and horror, from the thought of in any way contributing to the continued subsistence and extension of this pandemonium, this hell upon earth, this dismal concentration of pollution, and guilt, and blasphemy, and wretchedness!

And in speaking of the guilt of the general system, and of all the countenance that is given to it, I know not that I can have a more appropriate occasion for noticing a class of persons, whom one can not but regard as the very impersonations of satanic malignity,—the most loathsome of the emissaries of hell. I refer to those persons—to be found in connexion, I believe, with both the higher and the lower description of brothels, though more especially with the former,—who go under the name of *procurers* and *procuresses*. The designation is quite sufficient to show their hellish vocation. Such it literally and emphatically is. They are agents of the tempter. They watch for innocence. Night and day, they are on the lookout for such virgin virtue as, by any art of insinuating affability and kindness, and of false representations and alluring promises, they can contrive to decoy to those retreats of impurity, where, in utter ignorance and simple-hearted unsuspectingness of what awaits them, they are handed over to the company of some wretch, experienced in the wiles of seduction;—a wretch, who gives his orders for virgin innocence, as he does for his haunch of venison or any other dainty article in his bill of fare;—a wretch, to whom it gives not the concern of a moment what it may cost to others, provided he have but his hour of



choice pleasure ;—a wretch, who has made female nature his study, with no other view than that of detecting its weaker points, and working upon them for its destruction,—and who, by artfully-devised conversation, all, though at first imperceptibly, tending one way,—by flattery, by hollow promises, by enticing blandishments, by wine, by force, or by a combination of them all,—all alike accursed,—effects his nefarious purpose.—O ! one's blood boils over, to think of the agents of a system so monstrous ! And yet these procurers and procuresses have been known to frequent the very house of God, in pursuit of their diabolical ends,—on the scent for their prey. When we think of the absolute devilishness of the occupation, it becomes, so far as our own city is concerned, a satisfaction, to have the testimony of Capt. Miller, that there are comparatively few who are engaged in it. In reply to a query put to him on the subject, his words are : “ There are, I believe, a few individuals in Glasgow, who employ themselves as procuresses ; but the number is very small.” Since, however, this is a part of the system elsewhere, and is carried to an extent which one would fain discredit, would the evidence but admit of incredulity, I should be unfaithful to my duty, were I not to bring it more fully before you. The following paragraphs, without comment, will give you quite enough of it ; and I should be sorry to think that there was one individual within these walls, on whose mind the impression produced by the reading of them was any other than one of unmingled and unmitigated detestation, followed by the irrepressible desire, that not private means alone, nor alone the



united moral efforts of Christian benevolence, but the strong and punitive arm of the law, were made effectively to reach, and thoroughly to put down, a system of such atrocious infamy.

Here too I might quote from Duchatelet, by whom the same class of persons is described ; but I have enough, and more than enough, nearer home. The first of my two extracts is from the Sixth Report of the London Society for the protection of young females, before alluded to ; it is the entire section entitled—"PUNISHING OF PROCURERS AND PROCURESSES." "Last year, at the time of the Annual Meeting, the committee reported, 'That they were engaged in prosecuting a woman, named Emma Stone, for decoying a child, eleven years of age, from her parents, into a brothel.' The crime was clearly proved against this woman, and she was sentenced to a twelve-month's imprisonment, with hard labor. Cases of this kind are always difficult of proof ; and this will, in some measure, account for the very few in which the committee have been enabled effectually to interfere. They are, nevertheless, exceedingly numerous ; to prove this, it need but be stated, that the keepers of brothels at the west end of London, supply their houses with a constant succession of young females, through the agency of the procurer. They do not retain any of them more than one or two months, keeping them confined to the house during that time, and then allow them to depart, or turn them out if necessary. Those who have the moral courage, and are enabled to return to their parents, endeavor to hide the defilement which they have contracted, and for which they could obtain no redress ; but being generally of



that age when the judgment is weak and the sense of shame strong, and finding their characters gone, their means of subsistence taken from them, and being polluted, probably in mind as well as in body, by the criminal intercourse to which they have been daily compelled to submit, they give themselves up for lost, and continue the course into which they have been entrapped ; the final result of which is, that, shut out, not only from the sympathies of their own sex, but from those of mankind, and treated with the greatest brutality, especially in the latter part of their career, they eventually perish, either by suicide or disease, the effects of misery and destitution. A few weeks since another case was brought under the cognizance of the committee. A woman had, by some sinister means, become possessed of the person of a young female from the country, the parents of whom were dead, and who had been residing with her uncle, a clergyman. This woman immediately forwarded a letter to a gentleman in the city, stating that she had just received a beautiful young girl from the country, and making an appointment for the gentleman to meet her in the evening at a brothel, in a street near to Charing-cross. Upon the receipt of this letter, the gentleman immediately placed it in the hands of the committee, who adopted such prompt and decisive measures as they believed were calculated to save the girl from present destruction. In the course of the investigation it was discovered, that this woman had been in the habit of procuring females for the basest purpose for a long period. At the time she offered this young creature, as described, she had possession of another, whom the committee, being aware of



the fact too late, were unable to save. An application was made to the magistrate at Marlborough street police office, for a warrant against her, who regretted that, however diabolical the conduct of the woman had been, the law gave him no power to interfere. Thus she escaped the punishment she so justly merited, and was let loose upon society to pursue her dreadful trade. These cases might be multiplied, but the committee desire not to extend their report to too great a length; they can not, however, omit to mention the fact, that by such means, many of the houses kept by foreigners are supplied, and who are at considerable expense in obtaining respectable young women from the Continent, by engaging them as nursery-governesses and for other employments. After their ruin has been accomplished, they are dismissed, and fresh victims imported to supply their places. They trust that ere long this crime will be met by some stringent law, and thus an end be put to this odious and disgusting traffic. They call again upon every one who values the purity of the domestic circle and the welfare of society, to assist in suppressing this detestable crime, and in promoting the interests of virtue and morality."

My other extract is from the work of Mr. Tait, to which I have already acknowledged my obligations, and may have to do so again. Speaking of the procuresses, he says: "Having spent a great proportion of their days in scenes of the utmost wickedness, and seen all the vicissitudes of their profession, they are consequently versant in all the particulars relating to it, and prove useful assistants and admonitors of those who have newly opened an establishment on their own account.



Most of the genteel brothels have one of these debased characters attached to them ; and by her instructions the keeper is in a great measure guided. Besides acting as house-keepers, part of their business is to seek out nice-looking girls as lodgers ; and, in order to do this successfully, they have generally a number of agents in different parts of the town employed to ferret out such servants, sewers, or unprotected females, as they imagine will answer their purpose. Those thus engaged are small shopkeepers, green-wives, washing and mangle women, and some of those who keep public lodgings, who have many opportunities of meeting with strangers who come to their houses for a night's protection, and of advising them to brothels as servants, &c. But as nothing is so much calculated to convey an idea of the extent and enormity of this evil, and of the characters of those employed in it, as the following statements of Mr. Talbot from the work of Dr. Ryan, the author will take the liberty of quoting them. He represents them as 'the most abominable wretches in existence, alike reckless of themselves and of those who may become their prey. Some procurers are men moving in the most respectable classes of society. These are attached, for the most part, to brothels kept by foreigners, and are often sent to different towns and villages on the Continent to engage young girls from their parents, as tambour-workers, dress-makers, &c. ; and a quarter's wages are advanced to the parents to lull their suspicions. When these inhuman monsters have obtained a sufficient number, they bring them to London, where their modesty and virtue are sold to some profligate wretch for from £20 to £100. After a



short period, these children are said to become stale, and are turned into the streets (contaminated or not) to starve.' He again remarks, that 'procuresses are employed in this metropolis and elsewhere to watch stage-coach offices, and to offer advice, aid, and lodging, to girls who come to London to obtain situations. Others frequent servant's bazars, or rather sinks of iniquity, workhouses, prisons, penitentiaries, for the purpose of luring servants, and decoying innocent and inexperienced girls, by every artifice and cunning which infamy can suggest. I have known procuresses who were sent seventy miles from London, and no expense spared in their horrible traffic. Others prowl about the streets of London day and night, for the purpose of entrapping the unwary; and thus the demand for fresh victims is supplied.' In reference to another kind of procuresses, Mr. Talbot observes: 'The Sabbath is a favorite day with these wretches; and they watch young children going to Sunday schools, and entice them to their haunts; nay, I believe children have been actually taken from the schools in the sight of teachers and companions, they having no idea of such a shocking system being in operation. As soon as the children are secured, they are sold, and their ruin sealed perhaps by some hoaryheaded debauchee, at an enormous price!' The whole system here depicted, is one of such a horrifying description, that nature shudders at the thought of it. Edinburgh being comparatively a small city, may not present the evil in the same magnitude or enormity as London; yet it is much to be feared that an evil of the same kind exists on a small scale. Mangle-wives have been reported to be established,



even by gentlemen, with the sole intention of entrapping servant girls for the gratification of their own ungovernable propensities ; and, at the moment when he writes, the author has in his eye a small green shop, in a respectable street, the keeper of which—an old kept-mistress—was a few years ago installed into that situation by two or more gentlemen for the purpose alluded to ; and in which no fewer than eight decent servants of families in the neighborhood, have been unsuspectingly seduced in the course of the last year. 'This was accomplished by inviting them to tea on the Sabbath evenings, and afterward treating them with wine till they were nearly intoxicated, when these gallants were introduced, and of course joined them in their merriment, till they attained their object.' (Magdalenism, pp. 101-103.)

"GENTLEMEN!"—"GENTLEMEN!"—and *must* we indeed use the name in such an association? I can hardly bring myself to utter it. It is one of the disgraces and curses of modern society, that such paragons of heartless and lawless infamy should bear the designation : men, compared with whom the thief who picks their own pockets, and whom they would curse and kick into the kennel, or order to the watch-house, is a pattern of honor, and respectability, and worth! Pardon the burst of honest indignation : you can not wonder at its forcing an utterance, after what I have just read to you. And if we are shocked at the atrocity of such an occupation, what are we to think of the guilt of those for whose gratification it is instituted and maintained? and what of the guilt of the whole system of magdalenism, which thus accumulates upon us as we advance? and what of



the consequent guilt of all who, with their eyes open to its horrors, contribute in any way to its continuance, or even fail to do their utmost for its suppression?

IV. Let me now go forward to the *fourth* branch of our subject—THE CAUSES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE PREVALENCE OF MAGDALENISM.

It may seem to some of you, as if this should have occupied an earlier place in our discussion. It appeared to me, however, on two accounts, preferable to introduce it here: *first*, that it was at least quite as natural, if not more so, to have before us the nature and extent, the effects, and the moral turpitude, of the evil in question, ere we proceeded to trace it to its causes; and *secondly*, that, since it is, in no small degree, by rightly ascertaining the principal causes to which any evil is attributable, that we are prepared for considering the most eligible and promising means of its alleviation, it was not undesirable to bring these two parts of the subject, as much as possible, into juxtaposition.

Yet it is not my purpose to enter here into much of minute detail. The causes which, by various authors, have been assigned as, some more and some less, conducing to the melancholy aggregate of wickedness and misery, are numerous. I can only select some of the more prominent.

Whenever we think at all on the subject, the first thing which, in the order of nature, forces itself upon our notice is, the strength of the *sexual propensity*, and the comparative weakness of the moral principle which ought to hold it in restraint. This, however, is a topic of which, whether absolutely or comparatively, I shrink from the public



discussion ; and am glad to think that I can waive it, without materially, if at all, affecting the completeness of my argument, or the force of my appeal. It may be enough, on a point of such peculiar delicacy, to say, that while other causes blend their influence with this, it is absurd to suppose that, but for this, they could operate with such fatal success : nor can it admit of a doubt, as to either sex, that this cause does at times cloak itself under the allegation of others, which can be pleaded in extenuation with less of shame.\*

It is abundantly obvious, that the causes of this vice are to be sought, not among females alone, nor even among females chiefly. A large amount of them, in addition to the one just mentioned, is to be found with the other sex, and arising out of circumstances by which the conduct of that sex is, either necessarily or culpably, affected. I can not help thinking, for example, that some of the usages of modern society, by the way in which they almost unavoidably influence the procedure of our young men, contribute not a little toward the regretted evil. *Early marriages*, wherever they can be contracted with any ordinary regard to prudence, are among its best preventives ; and *whatever contributes to hinder the formation of these*, may be regarded as standing chargeable with their share of its encouragement, as ranking among the causes of magdalenism. I deny not that prudence is a

\* These brief general sentences I have substituted for a few remarks of a somewhat more extended character, which, though they could be made with propriety and freedom before an entirely male auditory, it harmonizes better with my own feelings to suppress in publication. Were they necessary to my purpose, I should think the delicacy false that omitted them.



virtue, and that the question of marriage is a proper sphere for its exercise. But there can not be a doubt, that high notions, which, by the refinement and extravagance of our times, have been introduced, of the *style* in which young men entering on life must set up their domestic establishment, have, in many instances, laid restraints on the early cultivation of virtuous love, and prevented the happy union of hearts in youthful wedlock. I can not look upon this as at all an improvement on the homely habits of our fathers. Many are the young men who are thus tempted to remain single by their felt inability to *start* in what is regarded a somewhat *creditable style*. Would to God I had the ear of all the youth in our city, and in our country, that I might tell them of the sweets of early virtuous union; that I might earnestly and affectionately urge them to consult their own best interests, and to set an example pregnant with the most beneficial results to the community, by bidding defiance to the tyranny of fashion; by returning to the good old way; by finding a partner who will marry from love, and who will be willing, and more than willing, to begin upon little, and by the blessing of providence, to rise gradually to more. *That* was the way in the olden time; and, although no croaker for the superiority of all that pertained to ancestry, *this*, most assuredly, is a point in which I should "say of the former days they were better than these." I would say to the rising youth—the hopes of coming generations—"Moderate your views; defy custom; marry; fear God; be virtuous; and be happy." Could my voice and my counsel prevail, what a salutary check would be given to the prevalence of the vice which is our



present subject ! Virtuous love operates with a most beneficial influence on the vicious principles of our fallen nature ; nor are there many sights on earth more delightful for the eye to rest on, than that of youth joined with youth in honorable and hallowed union, union of heart as well as hand, and living together in all the faithfulness and tenderness of a first love. Even should their outset in conjugal life be somewhat stinted, how much better a little mutual self-denial, than that cold calculating celibacy, which is ever looking forward to some distant stylish starting-point, and which, in the meanwhile, is so frequent an occasion of young men's "falling into temptation and a snare," and into "foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown them in destruction and perdition !"

Another prominent cause of the prevalence of magdalenism, is to be found in the *low and light conceptions*, existing throughout society generally, *of the evil of the sin itself* ;—and in the *ignorant and inconsiderate estimates of the train of miseries* which, in this world and the next, attend and follow it. Whatever tends to maintain upon the public mind light impressions of the turpitude of the vice, and of the fearfulness of its effects, contributes proportionally, of course, to its extension and perpetuation. What, then, is the state of the fact ? Take the higher circles of society. Does this vice stand there, with anything like the stigma attached to it which it deserves ? In these circles, it is impossible for a man to be a detected thief, or a detected liar, and to continue to hold his status as a gentleman. He is *cut*, as the phrase is, by every man who himself has any pretensions to the designation. Club-rooms and drawing-rooms are



closed against him. He is "sent to Coventry." And while this is the deserved fate of such characters, it is too often the fate also—(then most undeserved)—of the man who has so much of the principle of moral rectitude in him, as to refuse submission to the world's law of honor, and rather to be called a poltroon than to violate his conscience. He, too, in fashionable circles, is blackballed and bolted out. But the man of gallantry—does *he* meet with any such rebuffs? On the contrary, does he not find his open way into what the world calls the *best society*? Is he not the pride of the club-house,—the ornament and magnet of the drawing-room? Is it or is it not so;—that the man who, night after night, is making himself familiar with pollution; who bargains for unfallen innocence; who, by "perjured arts and smooth dissembling," beguiles that innocence to ruin; who boasts of such exploits; who casts off victim after victim to its unpitied destiny, so soon as it has served the hour's purpose of his lawless lust;—to whom be his station in society what it may, and by what epithets soever of apologetic courtesy his vices may be glozed over in the circles of gayety and fashion, the Bible, with "divine plainness of speech," assigns his place of reprobation among the "whoremongers and adulterers whom God will judge;" that that man, for whom, and for whose career of selfish and pitiless vileness, there are no terms of execration sufficiently strong; that *that* man finds his undisputed place in the first circles?—he passes from the brothel to the ball-room; from the scene of ruined innocence to the scene of courtly splendor and gay festivity:—he smiles and is smiled upon:—he is followed by glistening



eyes from group to group: the men are jealous of him:—the fair (let us sincerely believe *in ignorance*) “lift the light of their countenance upon him;” their hearts beat pleasure on his approach; they court his hand, and envy the favored ones on whom it is bestowed? This state of things is “for a lamentation.” It indicates a prevailing looseness of principle, and indifference of feeling regarding the vice in question, such as tends painfully to lower the tone of one’s hopes as to any general and effectual reformation. The mischief is rooted in high places. It is the sin of the rich, as well as of the poor; of the peer as well as of the commoner; of the lord of the manor, as well as of the peasant. It pervades all ranks. Here lies one of the great difficulties the moral reformer has to contend with. [I feel here that I must “do nothing by partiality;” that I should act unworthily of my trust if I did.] How can *they* be expected to legislate freely on the subject,—how can they fail to be shy of restrictive and punitive measures,—who are conscious, possibly, that any law, approaching in its principle and in its execution, to impartiality, must first affect themselves? And it is very manifest that, if there are to be laws,—laws of more stringent and effective restraint and coercion,—they *must*, in their provisions and in their application, be impartial. They must not be confined to the lower haunts of profligacy. Granted, in as strong terms as you please to express it, that these are dens of infamy; foul hotbeds of all descriptions of mischief; schools of intemperance, larceny, robbery, and all manner of crime; and that they are, therefore, pests to the community; still it must not be forgotten, that it is in the higher



walks of gallantry,—in the brothels and assignation-houses of our nobility and gentry, that the jewel of virgin purity is incomparably most in danger; that it is for *their* supply the wretches are employed, whose arts and deeds of demon treachery we have a little ago detailed; that, according to the *tendency downward*, formerly pointed out, it is from these higher quarters that the lower and the lowest are, in part, and to no small amount, provided; and that in these the sin against God, and the crime against society, instead of being of less heinous offensiveness, are only the more flagrant, in proportion to the education, the rank, and the influence of the parties, and the knowledge they can not but possess of the consequences to the community of the libertine excesses in which they indulge. What are we to think of the state of the public mind regarding this vice, with the two following facts before us? They belong to high life; but every one knows to what an extent the lower grades of society take from the higher their “form and fashion.” I give you my authorities for them, and have no reason to doubt their authenticity: “Some time ago,” says Mr. Tait, “a most elegant piece of plate was presented to a common brothel keeper in this city” (Edinburgh), “by the gentlemen who were in the habit of frequenting her house, as a mark of esteem”—(*esteem!* I know not whether this is only Mr. Tait’s ironical word, or whether it was *bona fide* the term used in the *inscription*, which, doubtless, this piece of plate, like every other, would bear, recording, for admiring posterity, the reason of its presentation!)—“as a mark of esteem for the excellent manner in which she conducted her establishment,



and for the great anxiety she had always manifested to render it worthy of their approbation and patronage!" The other fact is of a kindred description. It was openly stated, without hesitation, and without contradiction, by Mr. Greig, the respected travelling agent of the London Society for the protection of young females, when he was recently in this city: "That a festive meeting—(a *dinner*, I presume, according to the etiquette when distinguished personages are to be complimented)—was not long since held, in a brothel of the highest description, by the gentlemen accustomed to frequent it, at which a nobleman presided, to express their gratitude, congratulations, and good wishes, to the mistress of the establishment, on her retiring from business and transferring the house to another; and to show countenance and good fellowship to her successor, on her entrance on her honorable charge!" I leave the facts without comment. They hold out a strong temptation to sarcasm, were one in a humor for it. But the subject is too serious for jesting.

Is it not, then—O! is it not, supremely desirable, that public sentiment and public feeling could be brought to bear, more justly and more beneficially, on this monstrous enormity? Let gallantry, in the higher circles, get its proper name; and let the man who practises it get his. Let it no longer be, that the guilty should escape, and the innocent suffer;—that "the whoremonger and the adulterer" should continue to be received to the unblushing familiarity of social intercourse, while "the iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children," by the proscription and exclusion of the blameless progeny of his illicit amours. Let it no longer be—that, while the liar and the thief



are hooted and hissed out of society, the spoiler of virgin innocence—the mean and selfish robber of the weak and the defenceless—woman’s robber of her most precious possession, the pearl of her purity, and with it her peace, her self-respect, her character, her reputable subsistence, her place in the esteem and affections of her former friends, her prospects in the world, and, possibly and probably too, her health and her life ;—that *this* man should still be the *gentleman* and the man of *honor* ! Let him be branded as he deserves. Let the fair frown upon him. Let the whole world of female virtue look upon him with indignation, as the worst enemy of their sex ;—who, instead of regarding woman as formed for man’s virtuous and happy companionship—the companionship of mind and heart—degrades her to a mere instrument of his selfish and sensual gratification. Let them shrink from his approach. O ! if there be one case, in which *pride* might with truth be called *becoming*, surely this is such a case ;—the indignant pride of the whole sex concentrated in the bosom of the individual ;—each feeling the wrong done to all ;—the spirit of lofty scorn beating in the breast, and mounting to the cheek, and flashing from the eye, of offended womanhood, on the traitor, who dares to trample her honor in the dust, and yet to approach her with the bows and smiles of a graceful urbanity, the lips of winning flattery, and the presumptuous assurance of her favor !—So long as, in general society, this vice continues to hold its association with *honor* ;—so long as no brand of disgrace is attached to it, as there is to others ;—the roots of the evil, it is to be feared, although they may be partially loosened and pulled up, can



never be thoroughly disentangled and cleared away from the soil of social life. And in this view of the case, the female portion of the community have much in their power. Let them but agree, that they will withdraw their countenance from every known polluter and dishonorer of their sex. Let him be loathed for his vileness, condemned for his meanness, frowned upon for his treachery, and abandoned for all the three. They would thus contribute more effectually to the suppression of the monstrous abomination, than any association, however zealous, however able, and however active. Could it be brought about, that this vice, instead of being passed quietly over as a thing not to be spoken of, and about which it would never do to be particular—and even, under the designation of gallantry, smiled at, as being, if a vice, among the expected and pardonable vices of a gentleman—should stamp disgrace on the name and on the memory of its perpetrator—our end would be gained. And who have so much in their power, for bringing this about, as *the virtuous women of our land*?

“Where shall the traitor rest—  
He—the deceiver?  
Who could win maiden’s breast—  
Ruin—and leave her?

“*Shame and dishonor sit  
By his grave ever :  
Blessings shall hallow it—  
NEVER !—O NEVER !*”

But I am forgetting that I have not yet arrived at the *means of suppression*.\*

[\* NOTE TO 2D ED.—Since the delivery and first publication of these lectures, strange disclosures have come before the public, affecting illustrative of the heartlessness of this vice, and of the general profligacy which, when already existing, it in-



Associated with the cause of the prevalence of this vice which has just been mentioned, and as contributing to maintain the light notions of the vice to which I have referred, I might point your notice to much of the *reading* of the day; to certain descriptions of novels; to voluptuous poetry; to lascivious songs and ballads, adapted to both grosser and more refined tastes, and associating with comic humor what ought never to be thought of but with serious reprobation; together with the character and tendency of the drama, in theatres, superior and inferior, though, perhaps, especially the latter, a character and tendency apparent in the notorious facts, that the theatres are one of the favorite resorts of abandoned women, and these of every grade that can afford to obtain admission, from box to upper gallery, and the resort too, consequently, of those whose gallantries they expect, creases, and which, when not previously existing, it seldom fails to produce. No fewer than four of our English nobility have given themselves an unenviable notoriety, and have been pilloried to the equal scorn and loathing of the community, for the unblushing shamelessness of their amours, and the unprincipled conduct accompanying them. It were most unjust to their compeers in rank, to take them as a specimen of the average of virtue in the class to which they belong. But here is a case for testing the spirit of *female virtue* in that class. If the high-born ladies of our country do not, in such instances as these, where no ignorance can be pleaded, make a stand against the perpetrators of such dishonor upon their sex; if they continue to receive with all the customary etiquette of honorable society, men who have rendered themselves so unworthy of their courtesy and their smiles, men, who, though *noblemen*, have shown anything but the character of *noble men*; if, in one word, they do not, in their own way, "send *them* to Coventry," as *they* may have sent others of their own sex, far less deserving of such excommunication;—what are we to think of the average of principle in this the highest class of our female population? It is a testing case. There could not be a fairer opportunity for feminine virtue to take up the position of high-toned resistance prescribed to it in the text.]



or whom they lie in wait to decoy ; and that the purlieus of the theatres are generally thick-set with houses of assignation and of ill-repute. On such topics, however, and a variety of others, I find it necessary to decline entering. They would not, indeed, be *digressions* : but my limits interdict them.

In the chapter of his work “on the magdalenism of Paris,” in which he treats of the causes of this vice, and the proportions in which these causes, respectively, contribute to the aggregate result, Parent-Duchatelet, after enumerating, and distinctly illustrating, more than a dozen of those causes, presents us, in the close, with the following statement of the cases of 5,183 of the registered magdalens of that city, of whose fall the origin had, by their registration, been ascertained :—

“The extreme of misery, sheer destitution,	1,441
Loss of parents ; banishment from home ;	
entire desertion, . . . . .	1,255
The support of parents old and infirm . . . . .	37
Elder daughters of orphan families, for the	
bringing up of brothers and sisters, and	
in some instances, of nephews and	
nieces . . . . .	29
Widows and forsaken wives, for the main-	
tenance and education of large families . . . . .	23
Come to Paris from the country, for con-	
cealment and a livelihood . . . . .	280
Brought to Paris, and there abandoned, by	
military men, clerks, students, and others . . . . .	404
Female servants, seduced by their masters,	
and dismissed . . . . .	289
Kept mistresses, who, after a longer or a	
shorter time, have lost their paramours,	
and been thrown into straits, . . . . .	1425



With regard to this enumeration, though I have no intention of enlarging on its various items, I may be allowed to offer one or two remarks.

*First* of all, from the character of the parties, it can not fail, in many instances, to be exceedingly difficult to get, with any certainty, at the truth; there being so very little dependance to be placed on their veracity, and so endless a variety of considerations, interested or capricious, real or imaginary, that may tempt to mis-statement and prevarication: and then, *secondly*, although all the causes enumerated are of such a kind, that they can hardly fail to be found operating in other countries as well as France, and in other cities as well as Paris, yet the diversities in national manners, and in feminine occupations, in different countries, may give rise to very considerable corresponding diversity in the relative proportions of their influence. In regard to the first of the causes mentioned—*destitution*; it is, of course, everywhere confined, in a great degree, to the lower classes of the female population—from which, indeed, the ranks of prostitution must ever be principally recruited: and respecting our own city, it is observed by Mr. Miller, “that in times of commercial distress, when many poor people are thrown out of employment, there is always a large accession to the number of girls who seek a living by magdalenism;” “and at the present moment,” he continues, “from the pressure of the times it is supposed, the police observe many girls about the streets not before recognised, belonging either to the suburbs of Glasgow, or to the neighboring manufacturing towns and villages. Many of these girls return to a lawful course of life, when work



can be found ; but a considerable number of them are irretrievably lost." On the same principle, however, it generally happens, that there is a smaller amount of this vice from this particular cause, in towns where there is any adequate employment for females, than in others. "In Edinburgh," according to Mr. Tait, "there is not employment for above two thirds of the working female population:" and, in harmony with this, he subsequently adds, "The circumstance of Glasgow, Dundee, and Paisley, furnishing fewer harlots to Edinburgh, in proportion to their population, than the other large towns in Scotland, is sufficiently explained by these being manufacturing towns, and providing much more employment for the female part of the population. It is also a fact, that Edinburgh is a source from which harlots emanate to supply all the large towns in Scotland. So far as the author has been able to ascertain, from information which has been furnished to him from different quarters, he is led to infer, that for every harlot Glasgow sends to Edinburgh, the latter returns about three."

It is melancholy to think of the number, in the above list, of "*orphans*," and *children "abandoned by their parents."* This gives a very sad view of the parental character. Parents who abandon their children must, in a far worse sense of the word, be themselves abandoned: and of orphans and forsaken children who throw themselves on magdalenism for a livelihood, the probability is, that the parents were of a similar character, and that the magdalenism is only the following out of the vicious principles instilled in their early training. It is, on another and a different ground,



affecting to reflect on the number who are represented as devoting themselves to this guilty course from the impulse of *natural affection*,—in order to the maintenance of families and of other relations. In such cases, I confess myself somewhat uncharitable. I will not deny that in some instances, when all attempts at finding employment fail, the poor wretches, both widows and others, may be driven by desperation to such a resource; but in most instances, there is surely ground for apprehending that there must be in operation, along with a palpable deficiency of right principle, a positively vicious inclination. In this suspiciousness, however, I may not, perhaps, be making sufficient allowance for the strength of the impulse of a mother's agony, when "her children cry for bread, and she has none to give them." "There are, perhaps," Mr. Tait says, "no fewer than fifty or sixty families in Edinburgh, who are almost wholly supported by the clandestine vice of the mother; and three times that number who are partially maintained in the same manner." In the three items of the enumeration—"404 brought to Paris and there abandoned," "289 servants seduced by their masters and dismissed," "and 1245 mistresses who have lost their paramours," from various causes, but doubtless from desertion among the rest—we have an affecting indication of the heartless selfishness of vice. And in the cases of desertion, the sickening effect upon our spirits is not much the greater or the less, whether it arises from satiety and the love of change on the one side, or from unfaithfulness on the other.

There is a cause of the prevalence and spread of this vice, which is merely hinted at by Duchat-



elet, and which, from the circumstance of its not, in any great extent, bearing application to Edinburgh, is not mentioned by Mr. Tait,—which it would be wrong for me to pass over; I mean the *corrupting influence of extensive factories*, usually termed *public works*: those especially, in which young men and young women, in large numbers, meet and work together. There are certain principles, from which, in the present state of human nature, we might *a priori* anticipate, from such establishments, unfavorable results to the morals of those by whom they are frequented. The infection of vice, alas! is much more readily caught than the spirit of virtue. The latter is incomparably more in danger of being tainted by a contact with the former, than the former is likely to be rectified by association with the latter. The diffusive contamination of vice is fearful. If in any public establishment the case should occur (I fear a rare one) of the many being right-principled and virtuous, and the unprincipled and vicious being the exceptions, the good, in such a case, may keep each other in countenance, and retain their position: though even then there is a melancholy risk,—the proverb, of “one infected sheep spoiling a whole flock,” being applicable, with a mournful emphasis of truth, to the contagion of immorality; even one tainting a second, and, by union with that second, doubling her power for the corruption of more, till, with a growing rapidity, the depraving influence pervades the whole,—the “little leaven leavening the lump:” and when the majority are without right principle, at what premium would a moral casuist ensure the purity of any virtuous young woman who enters such a school?



The consciousness of vice can not endure the presence and the reproofing contrast of virtue. It "eyes it askance with jealous leer malign," and determines its ruin. It becomes, in such cases, the immediate aim of the vicious to undermine the principles of the virtuous; and they rest not, till, by all possible arts of temptation, they have succeeded in making them like themselves. The new comers are thus by degrees familiarized with evil; and by such familiarity the resistance of the good principle is gradually weakened. Placed among "fools who make a mock at sin," they can not long withstand the power of ridicule and banter, blended with the arts of cajolery and flattery, of sly insinuation, alluring description, and boastfulness of freedom. They are shamed into vice by universal example; or they are driven to it, in desperation, by the misery which, in numberless and nameless ways, is inflicted on their insufferable singularity. It is sadly true too, that the elder corrupt the younger; pouring into the ear of the mere children that work by their side all that is fitted to initiate them into vice, to counteract any sound and healthy principle which perchance had been instilled into their infancy, and to prepare them for an early entrance on a course of practical pollution.

Admitting the truth of all this, there is yet, on such subjects, no little difficulty. Nothing is easier than to deal in sweeping and unqualified assertions. I might adopt the terms of Fregier, as quoted in the review of his work in the newly-published number of the London Quarterly, and say, that among the girls of such establishments "*chastity is almost unknown.*" But I should feel



that, by a charge so broad and indiscriminating, I was almost sure of being, to some extent or other, unjust—unjust to both employers and employed. All are not alike. All proprietors and masters are not alike ; all factories are not alike. So universal an indictment, therefore, while it might be fully deserved by some, might be but partially, and that in various degrees, applicable to others. Substantial equity would almost require *data* furnished by the examination of every extensive establishment in the kingdom. Being, of course, in possession of no such *data*, I deem it better to take up the general position, about the truth of which there can be no question, that in the aggregate of these public works, though to a greater or less degree in each, there prevails a melancholy amount of the pollution which is the subject of these lectures—there being, in them all, from the promiscuous assemblage of so many youth of both sexes, a tendency to its production, and the amount depending on the general vigilance of proprietors and overseers, and especially the care bestowed by them upon the education of the younger workers. The Quarterly reviewer of Fregier's work says : " We confess with sorrow our belief that there is in France more paternal watchfulness, more kindly feeling, on the part of manufacturers and master-workmen toward those whom they employ, than there is in England ?" By *England*, I presume, we are here to understand the southern part of our island—England *proper*. I have just seen this statement, and am in possession of no such information relative to the two sides of the channel as could enable me either to affirm or question its correctness. If it be true of England, which I



am exceedingly loath to think, I hope it does not extend to *Scotland*. But should it be a just account of the manufacturers of our island at large, it will be well if proprietors and superintendents take the hint, and by a speedy, principled, and thorough amendment, look to their own and their nation's character—at once wiping off reproach, stemming the tide of personal and social corruption, and promoting the first and best interests of individuals and of the community.

Under the two general heads of NATURAL and ACCIDENTAL causes of magdalenism, Mr. Tait mentions, in distinct sections, as belonging to the former head, *licentiousness of inclination ; irritability of temper ; pride, and love of dress ; dishonesty, and desire of property ; indolence*—and, as pertaining to the latter, *seduction ; inconsiderate and ill-assorted marriages ; inadequate remuneration for female work ; want of employment ; intemperance ; poverty ; want of proper surveillance of their servants on the part of masters and mistresses ; ignorance, or defective education and religious instruction ; bad example of parents ; harshness and unkind treatment by parents and other relations ; attendance on evening dancing-schools and dancing-parties ; theatre-going ; desecration of the sabbath ; the publication of improper works, and obscene prints ; the countenance and reward given to vice, and the small encouragement to virtue*. Of these twenty particulars, the greater number, though not the whole, are also mentioned by Duchatelet, and by other writers. Each of the twenty is by Mr. Tait made the subject of illustration, and various appropriate and striking facts are adduced in proof of the reality and extent of its operation. But to enter now into



a field so wide and diversified, is out of the question. A few brief remarks, as in the former case, are all that I have time for, or, indeed, that I consider necessary for my purpose.

I have before said enough to show you that I consider Mr. Tait fully justified, alike by the nature of things and by experience, in placing among his natural causes "*licentiousness of inclination*"—a cause which Duchatelet has not admitted into his enumeration. *Irritability of temper*, which certainly does appear in a somewhat "questionable shape" among causes of magdalenism, resolves itself into one of the varieties of another cause—that, namely, of *want of employment*: referring, as subsequent explanation shows it does, to the case of household servants, who, on account of the insubordination and the insolence, the "answering again," the pertness and impropriety of words and conduct, to which their hasty and ungovernable tempers give rise, have been turned out of successive families, and tempted thus to throw themselves upon the town. Of the "*love of dress*," this author says—and it is presumed all who have, with any attention, observed the character of the class of females to whom he refers, will be easily persuaded of its truth—that "there is not, perhaps, in the lengthened catalogue of causes of magdalenism given at the head of this chapter, one more general or more powerful than this ambition for fine dress." Duchatelet speaks in similar terms of the fondness for showing off in expensive finery, as "*une des causes les plus actives de la prostitution*." It is indeed a crying evil. Even where the desire can be honestly gratified, it is injurious; stimulating and nourishing the vanity and love of



admiration by which it is engendered, and, especially when associated with any degree of superior personal appearance, becoming the means of exposure to temptation, and proving a fatal snare. But in how very few cases is it that the propensity *can* be gratified honestly! The competition for finery, especially when it becomes (as not seldom it does) a competition with superiors as well as equals—an aping of their mistresses, as well as a rivalry with their fellow-servants and others of like station—requires more for its gratification than either female house-servants receive in the form of wages, or female workers in the form of payment. And the suspicions induced by the showy and even expensive finery of not a few in these classes might (if general report is at all to be credited) be verified to a melancholy extent by an appeal to fact: the silks, and laces, and veils, and trinkets, being known, in too many instances, to be “the wages of iniquity,” the “hire of the harlot.” That *seduction* is a very frequent cause of this vice, there can be no doubt; although in not a few instances it may be far from easy to determine the proportions of the guilt belonging respectively to the two parties, the seducer and the seduced: the ready compliance of the latter almost depriving the term seduction of its appropriateness. In many more, however, the term is, alas! too appropriate, emphatically, nefariously appropriate. “So far as can be ascertained,” says Mr. Tait, “about eighteen per cent. of all the common women have become so in consequence of seduction; and eighty per cent. of all who have been seduced have been led astray by individuals moving in a higher sphere than themselves. The means which in many instances are used by the se-



ducers to accomplish their object are such as are unworthy of any one aspiring to the name of gentleman. He who can unblushingly, by falsehood and artifice, seduce a virtuous and unsuspecting female from her friends and home, for a moment's gratification to his animal appetite, and afterward desert her to a life of misery, wretchedness, poverty, and suffering—which, perhaps, may be terminated by self-destruction—has no claim to any such title." I have already (strongly enough I trust, though not too strongly, for that is impossible) given utterance to my fellow-feeling with this sentiment. But, in the indignant terms of our national bard—(would again that all he sung had been, both on this and on other subjects, of the same high moral tone and tendency!)—such

"Wretches, villains, lost to love and truth,"

with

"Honor, conscience, virtue, all exiled,"

in whom there is

. . . "No pity, no relentless ruth,"—

have been and still are to be found, who not only lay claim to the title, but would almost make the claim exclusive, appropriating it as their own and their fraternity's special denomination; who, in the same breath, boast of their own honor, and boast of the number of virtuous and unprotected females whom they have robbed of theirs; boast of their honor, and glory in their shame. I have before said enough of them. They are to be found among all professions in the superior grades of society;



and in no one of them (I grieve to say) are they more rife, than in that where *honor* is all in all—delicate as a hair-trigger, sharp and keen as a sword's point. O that I could induce every youth now hearing me, to adopt, with regard to such characters, in the full spirit of indignant loathing—the language of the good old patriarch—“My soul, come not thou into their secret!—unto their assembly, *mine honor*, be not thou united!”

That “*ignorance, or defective education and religious instruction*,” is to be reckoned among the causes which eminently contribute to the increase of the sin of prostitution, as well as of other descriptions of evil, will not be doubted by any who either believes his bible, or credits the records of experience. The mind that is uneducated, and more especially the mind that is uninstructed in the principles of true religion, must ever be the easier prey to the temptations of the world, the devil, and the flesh. This cause of abounding evil is entitled to the more particular mention, because it is one which for a good many years back, it is to be feared, has been not a little on the increase—in consequence of the periodical depressions in the trade and manufactures of our country, by which wages have been so much reduced, and work itself, even at such wages, rendered so scarce and precarious, that the working classes have not had the means of attending to the education of their families, being hard put to it for their mere subsistence;—and it is one too to which the operations of Christian benevolence are quite capable of being extended, so as to mitigate at least, if not to remove it. “That the soul be without knowledge it is not good,”—is an inspired maxim, the truth



of which is attested by every day's experience. And it should be recollected, that knowledge is not the mere *ability to read*. Reading is but the means of knowledge; and in multitudes of instances, even the early acquired ability to read is never applied to any profitable use:—and ignorance, instead of being the mother of devotion, becomes the mother of a progeny like itself, of irreligion, vice, and crime. Even the mere ability to read is, in a great many instances, wanting, among these abandoned females. Mr. Tait, indeed, speaks of the number in Edinburgh who could not read as “*smaller* than might have been anticipated.” In a statement, on the other hand, which I have received from Dr. Hannay, the proportion of those admitted into the Glasgow Lock hospital who are unable to read, is *greater* than I at least should have anticipated. Out of 389 patients 150 could read well, 80 imperfectly, and 159 could not read at all. Thus, as Dr. Hannay says—“Fifty per cent. of them can not read at all, or so imperfectly that their reading is of little or no use to them:—and I have ample reason to believe, that only 30 out of 320 can write well;—out of the same number 70 were found to write imperfectly, and 220 can not write at all.” I shall have occasion to refer to this authority again.

Passing over the other causes, which all exert their peculiar kinds and measures of evil influence,\* let me conclude this lecture with a single word as

[\* NOTE TO 2D ED.—I have heard surprise frequently expressed, that I have not said more on the subject of *intemperance*, among the causes of this vice. This assuredly has not arisen from any want of disposition to give it its due measure of prominence in the catalogue of evils and evil-workers. That in multitudes of instances, intemperance and lewdness are



to the last of them—"the countenance and the reward given to vice, and the small encouragement to virtue." Under this particular, Mr. Tait presents us with the following most astounding statements: "It has been shown by a very moderate computation, that more than £8,000,000 sterling is expended annually in London for the support of magdalenism alone, £6,400,000 of which is pocketed by brothel-keepers. Some wealthy pampered brutes dole forth readily £100 or more as the price of the virtue of an innocent child, and would grudge to contribute one shilling annually for the support of an institution which had for its object the restoration of such victims to their friends and society. In Edinburgh, the sum annually spent for magdalenism is supposed to be about £200,000. Add to this £14,000, which is £50 a night for ten months in the year for the support of the theatre, and £10,000 for kept-mistresses; making in all, for the maintenance of these sources of crime and moral pollution, the handsome item of £224,000 sterling. If this sum were appropriated to the pro-

shown by experience to be kindred vices, and that the former many a time leads to the latter, is not to be denied. It is long since Solomon placed among his dissuasives from "tarrying long at the wine"—"mine eyes shall behold strange women;" and how often have fools who have disregarded the dissuasion become, when in their cups, these "strange women's" miserable victims, plundered and stripped, without knowing by whom! Still, however, my conviction is, that lewdness is to the full as often a cause of intemperance, as intemperance is of lewdness, the latter being chargeable with the former in all cases in which it resorts to it as a means of attaining its nefarious ends; and, moreover, that by thousands and tens of thousands, the sin of lewdness is practised, who are in a great degree, or even wholly free from the charge of intemperance. If others, however, should think differently, God forbid that I should mitigate the evil of either vice, or their reciprocal tendencies to promote each other!]



motion of morality and religion, it would support 6,000 paupers at ten shillings a week—200 additional schools in Edinburgh for the instruction of the children of the working classes gratis, with an endowment of £100 as the annual salary of the teacher—sixty additional clergymen for “excavating the heathen” in the Cowgate and other destitute parts of the city, with £300 a year each—furnish 6,000 paupers with two suits of clothes in the year at £2 each, so as to fit them for attendance on public ordinances, build sixty new churches at £3,000, for the new incumbents, and 200 new schools at £500; and, after the first twelve years, leave an annual surplus fund of £24,000 for charitable purposes, and the encouragement and promotion of morality throughout the country.”

The respected City Missionary to whose estimate of the amount of magdalenism in Glasgow I referred in my last lecture, has presented me with the following calculation of the average sum expended annually on this vice in our own city,—vouching very decidedly for its being within the mark; and, as it includes only what is paid, pilfered, and drunk, in *known houses of ill fame*, if the calculation itself even approach to correctness, it can not fail to be within, and greatly within it.

“Number of houses of ill fame . . .	450
Average number of the vicious, four in each house, . . .	1,800
Number of bullies or “fancy-men,” . . .	1,350
Mistresses of said houses, . . .	450
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Total living on magdalenism, . . .	3,600
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Men visiting each house weekly . . .	80
Number visiting the 450 houses . . .	36,000



The girls in the third or lowest class houses receive, on an average, from each visiter 1s., making the sum, weekly, of	£1,800
Robberies, 2s. 6d. weekly from each is a low average,	4,500
Spent on drink, 2s. weekly for each visitor.	3,600
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Total for magdalenism weekly	£9,900
	<hr/>

Making a total annually of . . . £514,800

The adoption of Captain Miller's lower estimate of the number of houses and of harlots, would considerably reduce this amount. But then what has been mentioned must not be forgotten, that not only is the calculation taken from the lowest description of brothels, but there is no account made of the sums expended, in various ways, in what may be called the higher walks of this vice, the entire system of more private magdalenism. At the aggregate of these sums I dare not, without data, venture even a guess. But it must be very large. Taking all together, how vastly must the amount exceed what is contributed in our city for every description of benevolent objects, whether connected with the temporal or the eternal interests of mankind! And is not this very heart-sinking? And when this is placed beside the amount expended otherwise on intemperance and kindred evils, how heavily do we feel the necessity we are under, of looking, for some measure of comfort and relief, to our bible, and missionary, and school, and tract, and freedom societies, with all the other philanthropic institutions of our country, whether



for bodily or for mental health, for physical or for spiritual purposes of mercy ! And even when we do look to these, the comparison brings out so mournful a contrast, that it fails to rally our sinking spirits, and to lighten them of their gloomy forebodings : it can but throw some relieving sunshine on those gathering clouds of divine indignation, from which, as they lower and thicken over our land, the voice of the "Just One" seems to say, in accents of thunder, "Shall not I visit for these things ? Shall not my soul be avenged of such a nation as this ?" Yet *there is hope*. There is much in our country of all in which the "Just One" delights ; much of divine truth, and much of its influence ; much of the spirit of godliness ; much of the "salt of the earth ;" much done for God's glory, much for the world's well-being ; and little ween the men of this world, how largely they may be indebted to those hosts of daily prayers, which, while they hold them in derision, "have power with God and prevail." The terms in which the poet addresses the metropolis of our country, may, in the spirit of them, and in all their emphasis, be applied to our country at large :—

"O thou, resort and mart of all the earth,  
Chequered with all complexions of mankind,  
And spotted with all crimes : in whom I see  
Much that I love, and more that I admire,  
And all that I abhor : thou freckled fair,  
That pleasest, and yet shock'st me ; I can laugh,  
And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,  
Feel wrath and pity, when I think on thee.  
Ten righteous would have saved a city once ;  
And thou hast many righteous ; well for thee  
That salt preserves thee : more corrupted else,  
And therefore more obnoxious at this hour.  
Than Sodom in her day had power to be,  
For whom God heard his Abra'am plead in vain !"



## LECTURE IV.

ON THE MEANS OF PREVENTION, MITIGATION, AND  
REMOVAL.

I now come to that part of my subject toward which all that has preceded has been pointing, and without which it would be of little avail. I am to consider in this lecture—

V. The MEANS OF PREVENTION, MITIGATION,  
AND REMOVAL.

In the review of Parent-Duchatelet, formerly referred to, in the Foreign Quarterly Review, the able writer, in entering on his task, takes occasion to "point out a great error, to which philanthropists are liable, and which has produced many calamitous results. It is simply," he continues, "that many aim at extirpating an evil which can never be wholly removed, and that, from their failure in finding a specific cure, they infer it to be idle to attempt alleviation." Now the spirit of this observation is most just; but to me, I confess, the expression of it appears faulty. Had it merely been said that the impossibility, so far as evinced by experience, of effecting the entire removal of any evil, is no valid reason for withholding whatever efforts are practicable for its mitigation, the maxim would have been unobjectionable. But surely no amount of experience whatsoever can be a sufficient warrant for *not seeking its extirpation*. This



*must* be a duty. Let our success, or our expectation of success, be what it may, extirpation assuredly requires to be our *aim*. The same thing holds true with regard to the vices of the social system, which is true as to the evils of personal character. Our not being able, as Christians, while in this world, to reach the point of sinless perfection, can never be a satisfactory excuse for not *aiming at it*. Not to aim at it, is to be satisfied with remaining sin. So as to the prevailing evils in society. Our *aim* should be their *annihilation*. Of that aim we may fall mournfully short; but still our eye should be upon it, and our exertions toward it. The reviewer's illustration from *poverty* is evidently drawn from a case that is far from parallel. When, after introducing it, he says, "We claim for the other evils which afflict humanity the same *enlightened tolerance* that is bestowed on poverty," he places on the same level, he includes in the same category, things in their nature essentially different. In some cases, it is granted—nay, in very many—poverty may arise from the operation of principles which are in their nature immoral; but poverty is *not itself a sin*. I can, therefore, freely apply the phrase "enlightened tolerance" to *poverty*, while I more than shrink from the application of it to *harlotry*; especially after the survey we have been taking of the amount of both its intrinsic and its incidental turpitude. And I still further demur, when the critic adds that "magdalenism is *a vice inherent in the social system*." That it is inherent in the social system, as that system exists under the corrupting influence of our nature's depraved passions—that all along, since the entrance of sin, the sexual intercourse



has, in a greater or less degree, been debased and polluted by the all-pervading and all-tainting principle of evil—is a truth—a truth as sure as it is sad. But this is not imputable to the social system itself. It is incidental to it only; not inherent in it. Had the dominance of the original principles of our nature continued, “the social system” would have given birth to nothing but purity and happiness. And to sin as such, to moral corruption and debasement as such, we can allow no such thing as tolerance; far less can we consent to dignify such tolerance with the epithet of “*enlightened tolerance*.” *Sin* must have *no quarter*. It is, at the same time, quite true, that high and firm as is the position we must take in regard to our *aim*, the entire extirpation of such an evil is more than, from all past experience, we have any reasonable ground to anticipate; but then, of an evil so monstrous in itself and in its effects, even the partial prevention and the partial removal are much, and are worthy, for their attainment, of all our personal and combined efforts.

The means which may be brought to bear on the accomplishment of these desirable objects, are chiefly of two descriptions, *moral* and *legal*: the *operations of Christian and humane benevolence*, and the *interference of legislative enactment*.

In entering on the consideration of the *moral* means, I may repeat that the object is twofold—*prevention* and *alleviation*. Now, for the effectual accomplishment of this double design, it must be obvious that it is not enough for us to work directly on the minds of those unfortunate and guilty beings themselves, whom we can succeed in bringing under our beneficent influence. We must stir up



public interest, and let me say, especially Christian interest, in their behalf. And this, which might be conceived to be very easy, is as far from being so as possible. The prejudice against them is natural and strong. And if the prejudice bore no other phase than that of a loathing of their vileness, it were well. But Christians are too much in danger of forgetting, what never for one moment should they allow to slip from their minds, that the more odious their vileness, and the deeper their guilt, the more imminent is their danger, and the heavier the sentence of woe that hangs over them; and that therefore the more fervent ought to be the pity with which they are regarded, and the more earnest the solicitude for their recovery. Hatred of their *sins* must on no account be allowed to degenerate into hatred of their *persons*. To hate their sins, we learn from God; but to hate their persons, we can learn only from the devil. What should have been our condition, and that of our entire race, had not this distinction been made by the God with whom we have to do!—had not he who hated the sin looked with compassion on the sinner!

I make my *first* appeal to the *pulpit*. The theme, I am well aware, is one on which the ministers of the gospel can not dwell, frequently or freely, before promiscuous auditories. Yet there is a danger of an excess of squeamishness, such as it is not easy to reconcile with faithfulness. In a city like this there are few sins from which the *rising youth* are exposed to greater peril. *They* require to be warned, affectionately and earnestly warned, against this as well as the many other “snares of the devil.” *Parents* need warn-



ing, to watch over this department of the morals of their sons with a sedulous and monitory care. *Masters and mistresses* need warning, to keep an eye of vigilant kindness upon their young domestics. And *these domestics themselves* need warning, to beware of the vanity, and of the flatteries, the false promises, and the unnumbered and nameless arts of the liers-in-wait for their virtue. When either such subjects come in a minister's way, or when special circumstances demand the notice of them, or when the description of congregation in which he labors, as consisting largely of particular classes of hearers, calls for their more frequent introduction,—it becomes imperative on him who would be “clear of the blood of all men,” not to shrink from them, but with all “plainness of speech”—a plainness which may be used without the remotest approach to coarseness, and in perfect harmony with the claims of the chastest delicacy—to “reprove, rebuke, and exhort,” with all fidelity. Allow me to give weight to these observations by the following energetic appeal of Dr. Dwight, “Theology,” sermon cxx. : “Is it not a plain and prominent part of the counsel of God to forbid, to discourage, to prevent, this profligate conduct of mankind? Why else was this precept” (the seventh commandment) “inserted in the decalogue, and promulgated amid the lightnings of Sinai? Why else is it, throughout the Scriptures, made the subject of such forcible prohibitions, and the object of such awful threatenings? What reason can be given why it should not be introduced into the pulpit? Can common sense either prove or discern the usefulness of excluding it? Is it fit, is it safe, is it not preposterous, is it not ruinous



to the best interests of mankind, to leave the whole management of it to loose and abandoned men, and to suffer them, from year to year, and from century to century, to go on in a course of corruption, seducing and destroying thousands and millions, especially the young, the gay, and the giddy—while we, ministers of Christ, divinely appointed to watch for the souls of men, quietly sit by, and see them hurried on to perdition? Shall we be awed by the cry of indelicacy, originally raised by the most indelicate of mankind, only to keep the field open for its own malignant occupancy? Shall we not infinitely rather lay hold of every opportunity, and all the means furnished here and elsewhere” (that is, in the pulpit and out of it), “to rescue our fellow-creatures from destruction?” And, although from the pulpit we could not enter into any such details as have been introduced in these lectures, yet the cause of the wretched victims of pollution might, for their own sakes, for the rising youth’s sake of whom they are the tempters, and for the sake of the community and of the church of God, be occasionally pleaded, and appeals made in their behalf to Christian feeling and to Christian faith.

I have said, to Christian *faith*: for on the present subject, there is, I fear, among Christians, a culpable lack of faith. The impression is, to a great extent, prevalent, that magdalenism is a case of *hopelessness*. Now let my fellow-Christians remember, that, while they are professing to found their despondency on the scantiness of past results, when compared with the extent of effort and of means, they may, unwittingly, be inverting the order of cause and effect, and pleading, as the ground



of their unbelief, that which is itself the product of their want of faith. The very means, of whose failure they complain, they have been using in *hope*, rather than in faith,—and even that hope slender; with an unworthy doubt hanging constantly over their minds, whether the grace of God was free enough for the reception of such abandoned outcasts, rich enough for their forgiveness, or mighty enough for their conversion! Their prayers have been unbelieving prayers; their efforts unbelieving efforts. They have proceeded too much on a *peradventure*:—their supplications are not sufficiently pervaded by confidence in God's faithfulness to his promises, or in the omnipotence of his word and spirit. And in due proportion, perhaps, to the scantiness of their faith, and of the honor they have given to the God of grace, has been the stintedness of the harvest they have reaped.

On this branch of my subject, namely, the use of moral means for the accomplishment of our benevolent end,—so far as that end is the reclaiming of the already vicious,—I would venture, not perhaps unqualifiedly, but to a considerable extent, to question the correctness of a maxim laid down by Duchatelet,—or rather, approved by him as the sentiment of others, from whom he quotes, and of whose practical wisdom he expresses a high estimate,—in regard to the place which the truths of religion ought to hold, in the order of their application. He speaks of the "*Bon Pasteur*" Asylum,—but of course not exclusively, the same general principles being applicable to others; and, indeed, admitting of application out of an asylum, as well as in it: "It must be by slow degrees that



the admitted inmates are brought to join in all the customary religious exercises. Virtue must be rendered agreeable to them ; they must be taught the exercise of self-respect ; and special care must be taken to avoid the use of discouraging terror. The earthly advantages of virtue should, in the first instance, be set before them, rather than its future heavenly rewards. It will be well to teach them the duties which we all in common owe to God and to society, gently to point out to them their violations of these duties, and to show them the necessity at once and the means of making atonement for what has drawn upon them public displeasure, and excluded them from social intercourse. Let them but have a conviction of the possibility of their regaining the esteem of others, and being reinstated in their own ;—let them but try their strength, and be satisfied that this is not utterly unattainable ;—they will then, of their own accord, apply themselves to those religious exercises, to which they now yield a compulsory submission ; and we shall no longer have the mortification of seeing the doors of the penitentiary closed for ever on those who, weary of such disciplinary constraint, prefer returning to their former ways.” Now, let me be understood. The mental characters, the knowledge, the moral and spiritual condition, and the natural and acquired tempers, of the subjects on whom we have to work, are so exceedingly diversified, that it is not to be supposed the very same course of treatment could be equally suitable for all. I am also well aware of the extreme difficulty of introducing into minds which have, not a few of them at least, been almost without a thought of a divine Being beyond what is in-



volved in blaspheming his name, and by a course of profligate indulgence have been confirmed and indurated in the habits of vice,—anything like a connected system of religious truth,—especially when they are set to the learning of it as a part of their allotted and required tasks,—and are thus led to regard it as an article of their discipline rather than a kind prescription for their good, and to feel it a toil rather than choose it as a pleasure. And I would still further admit, that everything ought to be done in the way of pressing upon them the temporal evils of vice, and the temporal benefits of virtue, and of employing all possible affectionate persuasion to lure them from the one to the other,—to convince them, and induce them to act on the conviction, how very essentially such a change will contribute to their present interest and enjoyment. Yet, making all these admissions, I can not but more than suspect, when I look into my New Testament, that the plan of Duchatelet is hardly in harmony with either its principles or its facts. From some parts of the connexion indeed in which the passage just cited stands,—where the nature of the religious instructions imparted, and of the religious exercises in which they were obliged to engage, is incidentally brought out,—we can not greatly wonder at the whole proving even much worse than a failure. Mark the reply which Duchatelet received from a number of them to his interrogatories on this subject: “We hear nothing but about hell, and the necessity of penances and mortifications; we are for ever reminded of our past lives; we are obliged to repeat prayers which we do not understand; we are treated like children,—punished by having our gown for a time ta-



ken from us, or by having to wear a black bonnet, or to remain on our knees, or to kiss the ground ; and by way of penance, all our means of paying our homage to the Virgin will be taken from us ; and when too late, we may see them pass into the hands of others, without any power to recover them." All this is sad enough ; sad that, in any way, whether by slow degrees or immediately, the poor creatures should be brought under a system so worthless and delusive. But even taking our author's own words apart from any relation to such a statement, no one who understands the gospel can fail to be sensible of the defective and mistaken views of it which they discover. There is too much of regard to the outward forms of devotion,—too much of the merit of repentance,—too much of the idea of compensation for the past by reformation for the future,—and too much of the principle of confining our aims to such reformation, and of seeking its attainment, in the first instance, by the influence of temporal and earthly considerations. My conviction is, that, if we would effectually obtain our *whole object*, we can not begin too soon with the simple elements of evangelical truth.

Not only is there to be found, among those harlots on whom we have the opportunity of bringing our moral means to bear, a few who are possessed of more knowledge than the rest ; but even with regard to the very worst and most ignorant of them all—the Bible way of getting at the heart—of reaching the very root of the evil—of effecting a change in the dispositions and springs of action—is, to urge "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ;"—to tell the tale of



the cross ; to exhibit, in all their divine simplicity, its terrors and its attractions ;—to hold forth to them the boundless love of a sin-hating but sin-pardoning God—the God who while he hates the sin, loves the sinner—who has “remembered them in their low estate,” and who “delights in mercy ;”—the merits of a divine Savior ; the preciousness, and the permanent virtue, of his blood ; the untrammelled and universal freeness of his grace. This is the refuge from despair. It is a refuge for all—a refuge for the worst. Let not Christians forget Him who said to the weeping penitent that washed his feet with her tears—“Thy sins are forgiven thee :—go in peace !” If you would soften the hard heart, you must employ, for your purpose, the omnipotence of love. You must work upon it by the mercy of the cross—the mighty, melting mercy of the cross. The truth revealing it is simplicity itself, and the right perception of that truth, is the inlet to all the rest. Get but the mind of the most ignorant and most obdurate to catch a glimpse of God’s delight in mercy through a divine Savior ;—the heart bends to the power of redeeming love ; the tearless eye fills ; the once untamed, but now timid and trembling spirit, receives peace—a peace, not from light thoughts of sin, for how could they be lighter than they were before ?—but springing from the faith of that simple truth, which at once impresses with sin’s “exceeding sinfulness,” and shows that sin forgiven. Let Christians remember, that when the Baptist preached repentance, and pointed to “him who should come after him”—“the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world,”—while the proud Pharisees “rejected the counsel



of God against themselves," "the publicans and the harlots believed him." It was the words of Him "into whose lips grace was poured" that broke and healed the heart of the "woman who was a sinner" before alluded to—probably just such a character as some of those whom we are desirous to see rescued from the ways of death, and from the death to which those ways lead. The tale of the cross has the same power as ever. Under the teaching of God's Spirit, there is no hardness which it can not soften; no power of sin which it can not subdue; no impurity which it can not cleanse; no length and strength of habits of evil which it can not counteract and rectify; no fears which it can not quell; no broken spirit which it can not heal. There is not unfrequently to be found, among Christians themselves, a kind of harshness of feeling toward the description of transgressors of whose case we are treating, that is far from being in harmony with the lovely example of their divine Master. Was *he* indifferent to the sin? Who among his followers can see and feel its sinfulness as he saw and felt it, or can hold it in the abhorrence in which he held it? Yet he never turned away from the sinner; and not a word of unkind and repulsive harshness, even to the chief of sinners, ever fell from his lips. I am far from meaning by this, that all are to be treated in the very same way, and all spoken to in the same terms, and tone, and manner. But, generally speaking, it is kindness that is the key to the human heart; a key, by the right application of which you may open an entrance to it, when every other means fail you. And the influence of kindness is often the great-



est on those who have been least accustomed to it. A poor orphan girl, who, for some cause had been dismissed from one of the haunts of magdalenism, made her appeal, as stated by Duchatelet, to a benevolent lady :—she was received and spoken to with kind compassion :—“ she burst into tears ; and, being questioned as to the cause of her emotion, replied, that it was the first time in her life she had found one who took an interest in her, who spoke to her with gentleness, or who showed her any friendly feeling.” And assuredly there could be no greater incongruity, than exhibiting the mercy of God in an unmerciful spirit—than telling a fellow-sinner of the love of Christ in the temper of those who said—“ Stand by thyself ; come not near to me ; for I am holier than thou !” I have spoken of this means in general terms ; because it may be used by Christians individually, as well as within the walls of a penitentiary. And by whomsoever it is used, nothing can be of more importance than its being *rightly* used. It is the gospel—the gospel in its simplest and most elementary truths—the gospel, as concentrated into the one sentence—“ The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord,”—it is this truth, this gospel, that is able to change the heart and to save the soul. O ! the first and grand object is—to get the poor sinful creatures convinced, that, while their sins have doomed them to hell, the God who has pronounced their doom is in earnest in offering them mercy ; that there is no sin for whose guilt the blood of the cross is not a sufficient atonement ; and no character of which the sins are so numerous or so aggravated as to be



beyond the range of infinite mercy—mercy shown to be infinite by that very atonement.

It is with the acceptance of mercy that the religion of *every* sinner must begin. The great question is, in regard to this part of my subject—What, in dealing with the victims of profligacy, is *your aim*? Is it *reformation* only—or is it *conversion*? The answer to the question should be—it is *both*. Then, which is the better way to proceed?—to begin with the one, or to begin with the other? I should think the most reasonable answer here would be—begin with the one which is sure to be followed by the other. You may possibly reform, without converting; but you can not convert without reforming. The question bears a close analogy to one in the department of missions. *Civilize first*, said many; *then christianize*. The plan has been tried: the experiment has been made:—but it has invariably proved a failure. Whereas, the instant Christianity has been received, civilization, in the form of all descriptions of personal and social improvement, has followed in its train. I would not say, that every attempt at reforming the victims of prostitution must prove a failure. I have admitted the contrary. But the cases of success are rare; and even when you succeed, you have left incomparably the more important part of your work undone; and what you *have* accomplished does not at all insure it. You have effected good for the body and for time; but the soul is still without the “vital spark of heavenly flame,” the principle of the new and better life;—and eternity is still unprovided for. You have thus done the least, and left the greatest undone. Would it not be better



to aim at once at the greatest,—seeing this has the special advantage, that it is impossible to effect it without the immediate sequence of the other? You go to the root. The principles of conversion are the principles of all reformation. They are the divinely-implanted seeds in the soul, which will germinate into all the fruits of virtue and godliness in the life. If you fall short of the “new heart,” you fall short of the only security for an effectual and permanent change: and, although, to a certain extent, you may benefit the objects of your benevolent interest in regard to this world, you fail of their soul’s salvation.

With regard to public institutions for the benefit of harlots, allow me to begin with a remark or two on the subject of *Lock hospitals*. These, most of you are aware, are receptacles for the diseased, and have, for their immediate and primary object, the treatment and cure of the body. Now, even on moral and religious grounds, apart entirely from the claim which all suffering, whatsoever may have been its cause, has to suffering, whatsoever may have been its cause, has to pity, I should conceive it unmerciful to object to such institutions. The disease in question, if left to itself, would hurry its victims to a wretched end, and thus put a speedy close to the possibility of any further means,—or any means at all,—for their spiritual and eternal benefit,—for their rescue from sin and perdition. On this ground, therefore, even were there no other,—for the sake of “giving them space for repentance,” I would plead for the cure of their bodies. At the same time, it must be admitted, that, when regarded simply as hospitals for the healing of the body, they do wear



somewhat of the revolting aspect (for such it can not but be to the Christian mind) of places for re-fitting their inmates for the renewed prosecution of their vile and guilty career; and appear as if they almost held out an encouragement to their continuance in it, by the very knowledge of the means being thus at hand of repeated cure. On this account, it does seem most desirable,—perhaps, in order to the full reconciliation of the mind to the system, I might say indispensable,—that every Lock hospital should, to a certain extent at least, be, at the same time, a penitentiary; containing, in its constitution, some provision for the soul, as well as for the body: and, since the patients can not, of course, remain after they are sufficiently convalescent to be removed, that there should be associated with it another institution of a different kind,—for moral and religious discipline and training, into which, if (as is presumed) there can be *no compulsion*, they should be *persuaded* to transfer themselves. I can not imagine anything more inconsistent with genuine benevolence, than to have a house filled with patients, suffering in their bodies from the effects of soul-ruining vice,—in which, while the most skilful medical attendance is provided for the cure of their maladies and their restoration to corporeal soundness, their guilty and polluted spirits are suffered to remain in all their ignorance and depravity, without an attempt to instruct, reclaim, and save them. What an anomaly this, in a country calling itself *Christian*! In the Lock hospital of our own city, I rejoice to say, the souls of the inmates are *not* overlooked. How far now any existing institution among us possesses



the character of a *penitentiary* for females of the description in question, we shall inquire immediately.

There can be no question, that a large amount of benefit, both temporal and spiritual, has resulted to fallen females, from the institution of asylums, under various designations, as places of refuge from the temptations of the world, and from the imminent danger to which, in their state of outcast degradation, they otherwise stand exposed, of returning to their former courses. The following statement I lay before you from the London City Mission Magazine for September, 1837. I read it myself after writing the preceding paragraph; and it will be observed how precisely the two institutions first mentioned accord, in the nature of their relation to each other, with the suggestion which that paragraph contains, and which indeed can hardly fail to present itself to every Christian mind:—

“The Lock hospital is the oldest institution in London for the benefit of degraded females, and is devoted entirely to the cure of such as are diseased. It was founded in the year 1747, and since that period to the present, 45,448 have been cured by means of this valuable hospital.

“The Lock asylum was founded in July, 1787” (forty years after), “for the reception of penitent female patients when discharged from the Lock hospital, and up to Lady-day, 1837, the number of women received into the institution was 984” (in half a century! an average of not quite 20 annually); “of whom 170 have been received by their friends, 281 have gone to service, 22 have died in the house, and 18 were in the house at



Lady-day, 1837. Of the remaining number many have been sent to their parishes: some have eloped, and some have been expelled for ill-behavior, but of several even of these favorable accounts have been *since* received; some of them are known to be married, and to be living creditably, while many others are earning an *honest livelihood*, who not long since were among the pests of society.

“The Magdalene hospital was founded 10th August, 1758” (eleven years after the Lock), “and up to 5th January, 1837, had received 6,284 females” (not quite an average of 90 annually). “Of this number 4,258 have been reconciled to their friends, placed in service, or other respectable and industrious situations; 104 have been lunatic, troubled with fits or incurable disorders, 105 have died, 1089 discharged at their own request, 638 discharged for improper behavior, 2 absconded in the year 1826, and 88 were in the house 5th January, 1837. The following fact attaches peculiar interest and importance to this institution: ‘A considerable number of the women, when discharged from the house, are under twenty years of age, and it is an invariable rule not to dismiss any woman (unless at her own desire or for misconduct) without some means being provided by which she may obtain a livelihood in an honest manner.’

“The London Female penitentiary was instituted in 1807. Since that time, out of 5,579 applicants, 2,258 have been admitted into the house; leaving 3,321” (greatly more than half) “that could not be received. Of which 1,292 have been placed out to service, reconciled and restored to



their friends, or otherwise provided for; 268 have left the house at their own request, 383 discharged from various causes, 58 sent to their parishes, 47 emigrated to Van Diemen's Land, 27 have died, and 102 remained in the house on the 1st of April, 1837.

"The Guardian Society was established in 1812, and since that period 1,560 wretched outcasts have partaken of the advantages of this institution; 363 have been placed in service or satisfactorily provided for, 420 restored to their friends, 52 sent to their respective parishes, 663 have been discharged or withdrawn, 14 have died, and 48 are now under the care of the institution.

"The Maritime Penitent Female Refuge was the next institution of this class formed in the metropolis. 'The children, orphans, or connexions of seamen are regarded as primary objects of the attention of this institution, but no poor wanderer of any other grade is excluded from its benefits. It has also a peculiarity which distinguishes it from every other society; it not only seeks to raise the fallen and to reform the guilty, but it stretches out the hand of mercy to the destitute and homeless female, when no prospect but that of magdalenism, from absolute abandonment and starvation, is presented before her.' The last report states, that during the year just ended, 140 females were admitted, besides 50 who were in the asylum at the last anniversary; 57 of these have been dismissed as improper objects, or for bad conduct, or have left at their own request; 34 have been restored to their relatives or friends in various parts of the country, and 46 have been placed in comfortable and respectable situations;



and one has died : leaving the present number of inmates in the Refuge 52."

The following comparative view of the beneficial results of these establishments, in different places, is given by Mr. Tait:—

" Although the principles upon which these institutions are established, and the regulations by which they are governed, are very nearly the same ; yet the contrast between the success attendant upon their exertions is very striking, and somewhat inexplicable. For example, the Magdalene hospital in London, from its commencement in August, 1758, to January, 1808, admitted 3,865 females, of whom 2,532 were reconciled to friends or placed in service, being about  $63\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. of the number received into the asylum. The London Female penitentiary, which was instituted in 1807, has afforded a refuge (at the last anniversary meeting, 1839) to 2,429 persons, of whom 1,442 had been sent to service or friends, which is about  $59\frac{2}{5}$  of those admitted. Of 80 admitted in seven years into the Bristol Penitentiary, 5 died true penitents, 17 were placed in service, 8 were restored to their friends, and 24 remained. Of 143 in the Bagot Street penitentiary, Dublin, 42 were provided with services or restored to friends ; 45 remain. The Liverpool penitentiary has reclaimed on an average twelve each year ; many of them are now placed in confidential situations, and some are well married and members of Christian churches. Since the opening of the Edinburgh Magdalene in 1797, up to the time of publication of last report in 1837, 814 unfortunate females have been received into the institution, of whom only 293, or about 36 per cent., have been sent to



their friends and situations. It may be stated generally, in regard to the Bon-Pasteur in Paris, that its success is still less satisfactory than that of Edinburgh. As the report and regulations of the Glasgow Magdalene are not expected to be printed before the publication of this essay, the author is not in possession of any data by which the success of its operations can be determined." *Magdalenism*, pp. 334, 335.

With regard to the Glasgow Magdalene asylum here referred to (an institution which owed its origin chiefly to the benevolent zeal of the late excellent and lamented Dr. M'Gill, my friend John Wright, Esq., who from the beginning took a most active interest in its concerns, as the secretary to the institution, does not—in answer to my inquiries—speak in strong terms of the amount of its success; the instances of true conversion to God having been comparatively "few and far between;" and the permanence of external reformation in other cases, in consequence of the migratory character of the parties—who pass from situation to situation and are soon lost sight of—being necessarily a matter of uncertainty. Others, however, have thought more favorably. Dr. M'Gill, in a sermon preached five years after its commencement, while admitting, as a matter of course, a large amount of disappointment, speaks of "the instances of success as being then so many and so great, as to give pleasure to every man who regards the temporal well-being of his fellow-creatures; how much more to him who estimates, with Christian faith and Christian feeling, the value of saving a soul from death!" That institution, *as exclusively a Magdalene asylum, or a penitentiary for harlots,*



has now ceased to exist. In consequence of the beneficial effects found by experience to result from the House of Refuge for male juvenile delinquents, a similar institution for the repression of female juvenile delinquency was resolved upon in 1840. Subscriptions were opened—a committee having been appointed at a public meeting of the inhabitants; that committee, consulting and co-operating with the committee of the Magdalene, by whom the proposal for the extension of the institution had been very cordially received—proceeded to the erection of additional buildings; and this new House of Refuge received the sanction of Parliament under the “Act for repressing juvenile delinquency in the city of Glasgow,” to which the royal assent was given in June, 1841.

The first paragraph in the report of the committee of the enlarged institution, states in general terms the results of the previous working of it under its more restricted form, for above a quarter of a century: “It is now upward of twenty-five years since the Magdalene asylum was opened. In the course of that time, about 800 individuals have been received. Many of these have certainly belied the professions of penitence made by them at their admission, and disappointed the expectations of the directors:—but while there has been just cause of regret from this, there have been also many delightful instances in which the directors had obvious reason to see their wishes crowned with the most encouraging success.” With the sentiment which closes the same report all who now hear me, will, I trust, heartily concur: “It is said in the infallible word of God, that ‘there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.’”



Let us, then, in the prosecution of our duties, hope that some poor wanderer from the paths of virtue may, in this asylum, be brought to the knowledge of eternal life, embrace the way of salvation, and become an everlasting monument that Christ came 'to seek and to save that which was lost.' Then would all our outlay be more than repaid, and all our exertions in this benevolent scheme be more than remunerated." True, however, as this is, the reflection is a very melancholy one—one which can not fail to draw the sigh of heaviness from every rightly-feeling bosom, that the proportion even of those who have taken refuge in such asylums—and still more of those who have been really benefited by them—is so very small, when compared with the numbers who, during the same periods, have lived and died in their sins. The *ratio*, on this point, which some statisticians have given in regard to London, I shrink from mentioning; because it proceeds upon *data*, both as to the number of harlots in that metropolis, and as to the proportion of them who die annually, which, as formerly stated, have been clearly shown to be fallacious. It is upon the assumption that there are 80,000 harlots in London, of whom 8,000 die annually (of the extravagance of which assumptions I can not now resume the proof), that Dr. Ryan proceeds, when he says, that "while 11,000 individuals have been benefited by these asylums (in London) *four millions* have, within the same portion of time, been sacrificed by magdalenism." I am constrained, therefore, to take this statement with a deduction corresponding to that requiring to be made from the assumptions on which it rests. It is a subject on which, as on other branches of



the same system, there is no need for exaggeration:—the lowest estimate is quite sufficiently appalling. Mr. Tait states in regard to Edinburgh, referring to the same period of 79 years, from the time of the opening of the first establishment in London for the reformation of harlots—that “while 814 have found a refuge in the Magdalene, 15,800 females have perished in their iniquity.”

I shall not enter into any details respecting the constitution and management of female penitentiaries. Their leading objects, as all must be aware, are—to afford to those who desire it protection from exposure to temptation, and to encourage them in every intimated wish to return to the paths of rectitude; to impart religious instruction, and, in order to this, when required, the elements of reading; to train to habits of industry; to infuse principles of honesty, integrity, decency, sobriety, and virtue, and, as far as possible, give to the operation of such principles the force of habit; to restore, in all possible cases, where good is likely to be the result, to parents, and relations, and friends; and to place out in respectable situations those who afford a promise of doing well. Sadly true indeed, is the statement immediately following the paragraph already cited from the Report of the Glasgow Female House of Refuge: “Few can imagine the state of extreme wretchedness and ignorance, in which the applicants for admission into this institution are at first to be found. To a character of course ruined in the eyes of the world, there is conjoined, not unfrequently, an inability to read, and a total destitution of religious knowledge. Degraded in their own eyes, they feel themselves to be the outcasts of society, and,



even were they willing to work, no one will receive them. What a blessing, then, must such an institution as this be to these poor outcasts, without a friend and without a home, domiciled only in the haunts of profligacy! Across their minds some painful recollections of a character once untarnished, and of joys now departed, occasionally force themselves; and *here* they have an opportunity of proving whether such feelings shall be matured into final improvement, or subside at last into confirmed degradation."

The new institution is for the repression and reformation of juvenile female delinquency in general—it having been thought practicable, by an extension of the constitution of the Magdalene asylum, to combine its special object with the more general one. The institution now affords its benefits to the three following classes: "1st, females of more mature age, but under twenty-five years of age; 2d, young females, who may be committed to the jail and bridewell, and who express a desire to be received into the asylum; 3d, young females who, from extreme want and destitution, may be in danger of being led astray; but, as to the admission of such, the committee of management for the time are to be at liberty to exercise their own discretion in all cases." It will be observed, that, while there is thus an extension of the previous constitution in one way, there is an abridgment of it in another. In the first place, there is an exclusion of all above *twenty-five years of age*;—and secondly, although the terms of the act are purposely general, speaking only of "such young persons as the board shall think fit and as shall request to be received



into the house, and shall consent to become inmates thereof, or, being already inmates of the same, shall consent to remain therein for a specified time," yet, from the character of the certificates required of such consent, &c., it seems to be designed, not for the reception of harlots *as harlots*, but for the reception rather of delinquents of other descriptions, whose delinquency, however, may be considered as very generally *associated with magdalenism*. I have no doubt that all the views which could be taken of the matter were present to the minds of the united committees, at the time when it was resolved to merge the Magdalene in the House of Refuge. I can not help, however, throwing out my doubts, whether, in such a city as Glasgow, it be altogether as it ought to be, that there should be no such thing as a penitentiary for harlots *as such*—a place of refuge and reformation for them, regarded simply in this character, seeing there may be some, possibly not a few, who fall into this snare, and thus *lose caste* and are in imminent danger, who have not, as yet at least, manifested any propensity to such other species of delinquency, as are contemplated in both the male and female houses of refuge:—and farther, whether it be right that into no asylum can any woman now be received above the age of five-and-twenty. This latter exclusion arises from the houses of refuge being expressly for the repression of *juvenile* delinquency. But surely, true as it is that the ordinary range for entrance on and continuance in a life of magdalenism, is from the age of fifteen to that of twenty-five—it would be far from desirable or right, to act on the principle that above the latter period *all is hopeless*. At that age,



and beyond it, there may be not a few cases, in which the habits of vice have not been matured; and even in cases where they have, there ought to be taken into the reckoning of probabilities, as sometimes a strong counteraction of the force of habit itself—a *growing experience of the misery* of such a course. It was when the prodigal son was reduced, by his career of reckless debauchery, to felt and hopeless wretchedness, that he “came to himself,” and turned his thoughts to his father’s house. I throw out such hints, however, in the form only of doubts, for the consideration of my fellow-citizens. It would be wrong in me, were I to omit the opportunity of expressing the high satisfaction which, in common with those fellow-citizens, I experience in the extension of the plan to all descriptions of juvenile delinquency; and at the same time the special pleasure I feel in that part of the constitution of the House of Refuge for young females, which engages, in all ways that are consistent with feminine propriety and delicacy, the benevolent, and, in such a case, peculiarly appropriate aid of the ladies of our city; at whose suggestion, it should be mentioned to their honor—(the suggestion, in terms of the Report, “of the committee of ladies who, for some years past, have taken a most laudable interest in the young females committed to the jail or bridewell of the city,”)—the extended plan came to be seriously contemplated.

And I may embrace this opportunity of saying, that, as female agency appears to possess a special appropriateness to institutions of which females are the inmates, and the best interests of females the end, it is exceedingly desirable that in the bosoms



of our Christian ladies the aversion to come into contact with the miserable creatures of their own sex who are the immediate subject of these lectures,—if it can not, and perhaps ought not to be entirely cancelled,—should yet be controlled and regulated by correct principle. If such aversion be, in any case, a failing, it must be acknowledged a failing that “leans to virtue’s side.” It would be most harsh and unjust, to place it in the category of prudery, and at once and unqualifiedly to condemn it. Still, however, it is of great moment to prevent its going to an extreme ; to convince our truly Christian country-women,—those who know the gospel of Christ and feel its holy and benevolent power,—that there is no inconsistency between the most shrinkingly delicate sensitiveness on the point of female purity and honor, and their taking a compassionate interest in the case of those guilty and wretched beings who have violated the claims of both ;—that the spirit of the gospel is the spirit of pity ;—that one of the excellences and recommendations of the gospel is its sufficiency, both in pardoning grace and in reclaiming and purifying influence, for the very worst cases of guilt and depravity ;—that “to save a soul from death, and hide the multitude of sins” is an aim, in such cases, within their reach, and full of all that should draw forth their benevolent ambition ; and that both their acquaintance with the peculiarities of female nature, and the freedom with which they can hold their communings with those of their own sex, render what we are recommending a peculiarly suitable field for their tender sympathies and their beneficent exertions.

Still, however, there is something wanting. It



has become a proverb, that “to *prevent* is better than to *cure*.” The systems of which I have been speaking have too little in them of the *preventive*. It is surprising, that plans on the principle of the adage just cited should not have been sooner thought of; or, if thought of, should not have been sooner carried out into vigorous practical efficiency. I have the greatest satisfaction in now proceeding to state, that in the year 1835, a society was formed in London, under the designation of “The London Society for the Protection of Young Females, and Prevention of Juvenile Prostitution.” The leading objects of this most important institution are—1st, “to suppress those houses which encourage juvenile magdalenism: 2d, to punish persons acting as procurers or procuresses; 3d, to afford protection to the unhappy sufferers.” To this statement of its object there is added: “That this Society shall co-operate with other institutions, which shall have for their object the amelioration of human suffering, in the protection and rescuing from irremediable ruin those unfortunate victims who may have fallen a prey to the machinations of licentiousness, or been betrayed by the traders in prostitution.” One of the means by which the society prosecutes its ends,—or rather, I may say, one object at which it aims, in order to ulterior objects, is, “to procure an alteration in the existing laws, so that the evidence necessary to convict may be more readily and easily obtained, and to provide a summary and severe method of punishment. This object once obtained,” says the committee, “the labors of the society will be comparatively easy.” This society, I rejoice to say, is under high patronage, and zealous and effective manage-



ment; and the encouragement it has hitherto received gives every assurance of its stability and extending usefulness. Its funds, from *fifty* pounds in the first year of its existence, have risen to between *fourteen* and *fifteen hundred* in the sixth. During the year ending May, 1841, it was successful in the suppression of *twenty* brothels, and from its commencement to the same date, of *eighty*. In the year 1839, the committee opened a distinct asylum of their own; in which they confine their attention to females who are *under the ages at which they are admissible to other similar institutions*—that is under the age of *fifteen*; and by a happy system of reciprocity, those applying to them who are *above* that age are recommended to other refuges, while those *below* it that apply to the others are recommended to them. “When the committee opened their asylum in the year 1839, fifteen females were sheltered within its walls during the first year; in the second year twenty, and through the greater portion of the year closing with this anniversary, twenty-eight have received the benefit of the asylum. At the present moment thirty young females under the age of fifteen, several of them between nine and twelve years of age, are protected, religiously instructed, and taught all that is necessary to make them virtuous and useful servants in after life. At the last annual meeting there were remaining in the house, twenty; admitted from a great number of applications since that time, thirty; making a total of fifty. Ten have been restored to their friends, after being in the house not less than twelve months; nine sent to respectable servitude, one left improperly, leaving thirty in the asylum at the present time; making



a total of females received into the asylum of 226 since the establishment of the society." In consequence of the impossibility of receiving and accommodating the number of *juvenile unfortunates* (for to children from *eight* or *nine* to *fifteen* years of age, who are the victims of the wiles of demons in human form—at least to many of them—one knows not how to apply a severer designation)—who seek admission or for whom it is sought—the society, in the end of 1840, for reasons alas ! too satisfactory, "resolved upon opening a subscription, either to erect a building, or to adapt one already erected to the purposes of an asylum, capable of accommodating not less than 150 young females, to be denominated 'the Juvenile Female penitentiary.'" May the benevolent design be speedily accomplished ; and may it, under the blessing of Heaven, realize and exceed all the committee's philanthropic desires,—in saving from ruin these infant victims of the lust and cupidity of human brutes of a maturer age ; thus at once benefiting the poor young creatures themselves, and benefiting the community by the prevention of extending pollution and crime !

I have further the satisfaction of mentioning that, in conformity with the purpose of that society to spread the operation of its system in other large cities and towns in the united kingdom, its intelligent and zealous travelling agent, Mr. Greig, has been recently in Scotland ; and that, in consequence of his visit, societies have been formed, both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, based upon the same principles with that in London. The society formed in our Scottish metropolis has published its objects in the following definite terms : 1. "To obtain the



suppression, by all lawful means, of houses of bad fame :” 2. “ To obtain the enforcement of the existing law of the land, and, as soon as possible, an improvement of it, in respect to juvenile magdalenism ; and the more effectual exposure and punishment of seducers, procurers and procuresses :” 3. “ To relieve and protect the unhappy victims of magdalenism, particularly when of tender years ; by aiding in restoring them to their friends, and to the paths of industry and virtue :” 4. “ To establish with these views, a *Female Refuge* in Edinburgh, as soon as the necessary funds for that purpose can be procured.” Of this society, Sir James Forrest, Bart., is president ; its extraordinary and ordinary directors form a very numerous and eminently respectable list ; and when I mention that among the office-bearers of the institution, the secretary—on whose efficiency so much depends—is the author of the work of whose pages I have, in these lectures, made so free a use—*William Tait, Esq., Surgeon*, we have a good guarantee for both knowledge, zeal, and activity, in the prosecution of its interests.

At a meeting of magistrates, clergymen, and others, held in the town-hall of our own city, on the 16th of February last, the Hon. Sir James Campbell, lord-provost, in the chair—it was resolved, that a society be forthwith established for Glasgow and the neighborhood, to be called “ The Glasgow Auxiliary to the London Society for the Protection of Young Females.” It was, at the same meeting farther resolved, “ that a petition similar to one then read be adopted, signed by the lord-provost as chairman of the meeting, and forwarded to both houses of parliament, and that



the members for the city be earnestly requested to give all the assistance in their power to the committee of the parent society, in their efforts to obtain an alteration in the laws regarding trading in magdalenism:" And still further, "that the lord-provost be requested, as chairman of the meeting, to convey to the promoters of the new police bill for Glasgow (now before parliament), the earnest desire of the meeting, that a clause or clauses should be inserted into such bill, giving to the magistrates greater power to detect and punish the keepers of brothels, and others guilty of promoting the vice of magdalenism." The objects of this association, as being an *auxiliary* to the society in London, are of course substantially the same with those of the parent institution. They are thus stated: After the resolution, "That the society be designated the Glasgow Association for the Protection of Young Females, and reclaiming them from Magdalenism:"—

1. "To induce young females, who have become harlots, or who are in danger of being led into this profligate course of life, to take advantage of the means now existing, or which may be provided, for their protection and reformation.
2. To call public attention to the frightful and increasing extent of this much-neglected enormity, the fruitful source of crime and wretchedness—by obtaining information—particularly statistical information—and by inducing ministers of the gospel to call attention to the subject, in such forms as they may deem most beneficial.
3. To expose and punish all parties trading in, or promoting, the sin of magdalenism." It is further specified "that,



in prosecution of these ends, the association will use their utmost efforts to obtain petitions to the legislature, for the enactment of such laws as shall more effectually reach and punish the guilty parties:—and that the association co-operate with the directors of the Female House of Refuge, with the parent institution in London, and with other institutions seeking to promote female virtue.”

I trust the public will be induced to take a ready and a zealous interest in the objects of this society, and efficiently to countenance and assist it in their promotion. You will have observed, that one of the leading objects of such institutions is *prevention*; the prevention, by every accessible means, of the early temptation and ruin of the female character—on the high or the low average of which, in a community, the general virtue, and the consequent general well-being, to such an extent depend; the prevention, for example, of the arts of that diabolical system, by which unwary young females are so often entrapped into vice and ruin, and even mere children decoyed, and sold into the hands of libertine brutality. This is to be done, by getting present laws examined and understood in their true extent, and to that extent more stringently enforced; and by obtaining such alterations in the existing statutes as will accommodate them more to the present state of society, and render them both more capable of easy application, and more thoroughly efficient. In such cases as have just been referred to—namely, of the seduction of young females, it is at present enacted, that “if the unhappy victim *has been drugged*, or is *under twelve years of age*, the offence shall be held *capital*; and



along with the *principal* the *person procuring* is involved as an abettor and accessory. But there is no law for the punishment of the seducers, when their prey has passed this tender age, even by an hour." The design, then, is—(for I can not express it more succinctly and appropriately, than in the terms of the address of the Edinburgh Society—from which too I have just taken the statement of the existing statute)—“to endeavor to wipe away that reproach to our laws; to reach the purveyor, and repress her trade; to track, expose, and punish the profligate who bribes her services; and, not least, to rescue, protect, and restore to her friends, at the moment when she will most gratefully and eagerly embrace the means, the helpless young creature who has just been enveloped in the spider’s toils.” In the experience of the London society, as partially laid before you in the last lecture, it has already been seen, to what an extent even existing laws may reach to the apprehension and punishment of these pests of their species, and to the suppression of those receptacles of pollution where so many bodies and souls are destroyed. It is certainly most desirable, that the law should be made to reach more effectually every accessible point of this system of moral desolation and death. We have laws against gaming-houses. On what principle are *these* laws founded? In themselves, they wear the aspect of an encroachment on the liberties of the subject. Has not every man a right to use his own house for what purposes he pleases, and for which others voluntarily please to frequent it? The answer is, that where there are laws against injustice, swindling, and robbery, no man is entitled to



break these laws, either in his own house or in the house of another, or to receive and harbor those who do. The mischief such houses do to society, is enough to justify their suppression ;—the entrapping, cheating, and fleecing of the unwary and inexperienced ; the plunder thus amassed by adepts in villany ; as well as the evil passions engendered, and the quarrels and the duels arising out of them. And if we have laws for the putting down of gambling-houses, why should we not have laws, equally or even more stringent and stern, for the putting down of brothels—of houses for magdalenism ? Is the *mischief* less in the one, than in the other ? are the *treachery* and the *unrighteousness* less ? are the *losses sustained* less ? are the *crimes perpetrated* less—less either in moral enormity, or in their effects to the community ?—are the *victims sacrificed* less deserving of compassion—more able to protect themselves, to secure their own interest, and to effect their escape ?—is the *wrong done to them* more easily retrieved ?—is the *corrupting influence of their character*, when ruined, less injurious, less deadly ? Without at all attempting to mitigate the horrors of the gaming-table, we hesitate not to say, that there can be but one just answer to all such questions. The horrors of the brothel have the bad pre-eminence. There can be but one reason for speaking less condemnatorily of the one than of the other—is it a creditable one ?—that the propensity to whoredom is more general than the propensity to gambling. Most assuredly, if there be one object of legal surveillance and punitive restraint more legitimate, on all right principles, than another—*this* is it. The powers of magistrates ought surely to



be so far extended and strengthened, as to enable them to put down those houses of infamy, where the youth of both sexes are contaminated with the worst principles of evil; and which are fountains of moral pollution to the public character, and foul nests of disease and crime. And can any sufficient reason be assigned, why those whose character and vocation as harlots are notorious should not be prevented from carrying on that vocation in our streets? Are the known character, and the purpose for which they come abroad at particular seasons, not sufficient ground for such prevention? I am here of course to be understood as referring to the known inmates of houses of ill fame. To extend the power to apprehension on mere *suspicion*, would be a hazardous and inadmissible encroachment on the liberty of the subject, and lead to all manner of oppressive abuses. And why should not those monsters to whom I made pointed reference in last lecture—the purveyors for sensuality, the hired decoyers of innocence, the deliberate traders in virgin purity, be met by some determined measures of prevention? I say of *prevention*:—for in their case, be it remembered, prevention is *the only thing worth attempting*. Are you, in such a case, to wait for the overt act, for the positive perpetration of the infamous deed—and *then* visit it with punitive vengeance? O let it be recollected, that *this* description of robbery is not like others. Not only is it the robbery of that, compared with which the “purse” is “trash,”—but it is robbery of what *can not be recovered*. By the efforts of an active police, you may trace to their secret concealment the robbed or the stolen property;—but what police can restore the



virgin honor of the plundered and ruined victim of the vile seducer? Surely, to lie in wait for defenceless and unsuspecting innocence—and especially when that innocence is in the ignorance and helplessness of childhood—is worse, in some respects, than to lie in wait for blood. If there be a crime besides murder that deserves being visited with *death*, I should be disposed to pronounce *that* the crime.

Among the many causes enumerated in last lecture, as contributing to the vast aggregate of magdalenism, *poverty*, you may remember, was one. "Give me not poverty," said Agur, "lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." And, while this condition of extreme depression has tempted many to theft, it seems to be ascertained also, beyond a doubt, that it has, in not a few instances, been the constraining cause of selling the body to dishonor. Into the means of prevention here, it is impossible to enter. Were I to do so, I am well aware of the contending theories of political economy, whose eager advocates or opponents would instantly be on the alert. All that I can now say is, that the subject should be thoroughly investigated; that the true state of the poor should be distinctly ascertained, with the temptations as well as miseries to which that state exposes them;—and that *some* more efficient means, be they what they may, should be brought into operation, for alleviating the miseries, and breaking the force of the temptations;—from which, it can not be doubted, a large amount of immorality and crime is engendered. The principle on which those means should be selected or framed is obvious;—that they be such as most thoroughly to fulfil the



end,—namely, the maintenance, to the extent needed, of the really destitute and dependant,—with the least amount of liability to abuse on the part of those who come not under this description ; so that there may not be, on the one hand, the disadvantage to the deserving poor of nominal support, while, from the pitiful smallness of the pittance doled out to them, it is nominal only, and little better than a mockery,—nor, on the other, such an alienation of the funds designed for them to persons of a different character, as to foster the spirit of idle and lazy dependance, and help the dissolute to the means of profligacy. But it will not be expected that I should here attempt to decide between the contending claims of the different theories for the prevention and relief of pauperism ; *spontaneous charity alone, legal provision alone, or some plan which might combine the virtues of both*, with the least possible of the vices of either.

In last lecture, I mentioned the *want of education*, and especially of *religious instruction*, as contributing essentially to the evil deplored. Forming his estimate from tables kept at the lock hospital,—one of which shows that of 1,591 patients, admitted within a certain period, there were 777—nearly a half—whose fathers were dead,—and another, that from the middle classes of society (the higher being of course out of the question) the proportion of inmates is, comparatively to the lower, very small,—Dr. Hannay says : “ The infrequency of the children of the middling classes falling into this sin, speaks volumes for the excellence of the educational and moral discipline to which they are subjected, as far at least as pre-



venting this evil ; and suggests, that, to the maintenance, improvement, and extension of this discipline we can not, therefore, pay too much attention.”\* Of the correspondence of the proportions in these tables with great general averages, I entertain no doubt. It were well, then, to bring into operation, to the utmost extent possible, this counteracting influence ; by endeavoring more widely and efficiently than ever, to diffuse education, and particularly Christian education, before the period of life, at which, to the female character, the principal danger commences. Any association that seeks the prevention of the evil, would do well to look earnestly after this. I would urge the teachers of our invaluable sabbath schools, to increase as much as possible the number of their *adult classes*,—classes, in which children are retained for more advanced instruction, after they have passed the limit of childhood. I would entreat both parochial ministers and the pastors of dissenting congregations, to augment to the utmost those *district day schools*, in the poorer localities of the city, where the ability to read may be imparted to so many who would otherwise remain without it, and where the knowledge may be acquired, and the restraining influence begin to be felt, of those principles of religion, which are the best safeguards of all virtue. I would entreat also the owners and superintendants of large factories, to which so special a reference was made in last lecture, to look well to the *education of the younger workers*. Were this conscientiously and liberally done, these establishments might, in many cases, instead of nurseries of pollution, be rendered subservient to the

\* Private communication.



advancement of knowledge and of personal and social virtue ; inasmuch as many young persons would receive there an education suited to their circumstances, as well as the elements of religious instruction, who would never have enjoyed these benefits at home. If the proprietors of those works were rightly alive to their own interests,—as universal experience shows,—they would not neglect this department of both moral and legal obligation ; instead of evading the law, they would go beyond it. The reviewer of Fregier's work in the Quarterly, after speaking of the corrupting influences of the society of such establishments upon their inmates, says—perhaps with a sufficiently indiscriminate severity,—“ It is seldom, that the master of the establishment and his deputies pay any attention to all this ; engrossed as they are in their one great aim, the execution of a certain quantity of work in a certain space of time, and blind to the fact, self-evident as it is, that MORALITY IS THE BEST FOUNDATION OF ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.” Would to God that all owners and masters were impressed as they ought to be with the truth of this self-evident maxim, and would but apply it actively and faithfully in the management of their little communities ! What real substantial benefit might they confer on thousands of the rising generation, and through them on the community at large,—not only without injury, but with ultimate advantage, to themselves !

I may mention, in addition to these means of promoting the end in view, some system of *tract distribution* : the circulation of larger and smaller publications, having more especial reference to the subject under discussion. And these should be of



various descriptions,—more general, and more particular:—those of a general character, designed and fitted to inform, to interest, and to rouse the public mind, by setting forth the nature and extent of the evil, and the necessity of every possible means being put into operation for its removal;—the more particular, addressed appropriately to various classes—to the victims of the vice themselves—to young men,—to young women,—to servants,—to heads of families,—to proprietors and superintendants of factories;—and perhaps, rising still higher, to the legislators of our country, the representatives of the people, and the peers of the realm; and this, with the view of contributing to give efficacy to another means, before alluded to, the petitioning of the legislature for a revision of the laws relative to this subject, in order to their amelioration and enlargement. But I can not enter farther into detail. With any institution that now exists, or that may be formed on similar principles, though perhaps on a still more comprehensive scale,—I must leave the reduction to practice, by all the variety of accessible and legitimate means which their discretion shall suggest, of the general principles and views which, in these lectures, I have been endeavoring, however feebly, yet in dead earnest, to expound and inculcate.

I have done. I urge upon you the duty of zealous co-operation in this good work, by the claims of every relation you sustain. I plead with my *fellow-men* on the principles of their *common humanity*, which should prompt them, whenever, with the old Roman, they say “Homo sum,” “I am a man,” to subjoin his practical conclusion—“*humani nihil a me alienum puto*,”—“whatever concerns



man concerns me." And as *men* too, allow me to remind you, that you are the natural guardians of the feebler sex. They are committed by Heaven to your protection. Alas! that the very weakness which should interest every heart and nerve every arm in their defence and in the maintenance of their honor and their rights, should, in so many instances, be basely taken advantage of for their wrong and ruin. I call upon you, *as men*, to stand forward on their behalf; to come with the shield of your protection between them and danger; to prevent their degradation, and vindicate their honor; to screen their purity from the putrid breath of pollution; to maintain and elevate their virtue, that along with it, and by means of it, you may maintain and elevate that of the community to which they belong, and of which, take them in the aggregate (I speak my most sincere conviction when I say so), they are not the *weaker* merely, but by many degrees the *better* portion. And this leads me naturally to add—I plead with you, as my *fellow-townsmen*, by the interest you feel in the character of our city;—whose emblematic tree bore of old the motto, "Let Glasgow flourish *by the preaching of the word*." They did foolishly who abridged it; for if the abridgement was intended to render the wish for the city's prosperity more general and comprehensive, they forgot—what those who first affixed the motto knew—that the prevalence of true religion tends as effectually to *temporal* as to spiritual prosperity. I plead with you, as my *fellow-countrymen*, by all the claims of an enlightened *patriotism*; for it has been true from the beginning, and will continue true to the end, that "righteousness exalteth a nation, and sin is



the reproach of any people." I plead with *fellow-parents*, for the sake of the safety of the rising youth of their families, exposed, in entering on life, to all the blighting and deadly influences of a corrupt and tempting world. I plead with *fellow-Christians*, on the ground of their common Christianity; which is the revelation of divine benevolence,—of mediatorial grace to the chief of sinners,—and which, through the lips of the Son of God himself, says to them—"Be ye, therefore, merciful, even as your Father who is in heaven is merciful!"

I have only, in conclusion, to thank my audience for the patient attention with which these Lectures have been listened to; and to assure them, that if they shall prove instrumental, in however small a degree, under the divine blessing, of giving a fresh impulse to the public mind, on a subject so intimately connected with the personal and the social, the temporal and eternal interests of mankind, I shall feel it an ample recompense for whatever time and study have been expended on their preparation.

THE END.

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