

## **A lecture to young men on chastity / [Sylvester Graham].**

### **Contributors**

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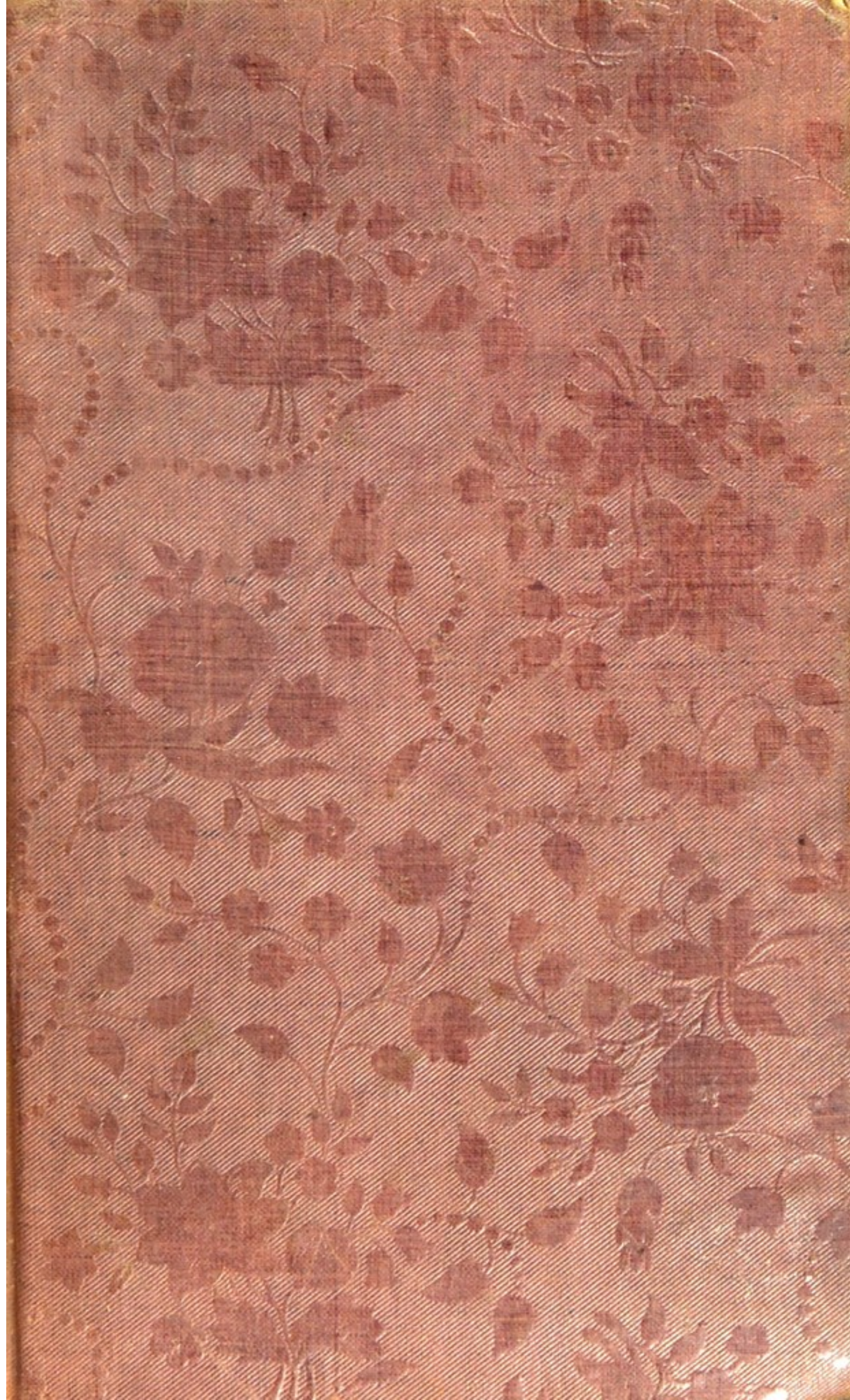
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## TESTIMONIALS.

THE following remarks, from the Annals of Education for 1834, are from the pen of WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE; whose long and zealous devotion to the cause of education, and whose extensive travels and researches, both in Europe and America, and special attention to the subject of which he here speaks, pre-eminently qualify him to judge accurately in the matter:

“We are rejoiced to see a work published in our country, on a topic in physiology which the ‘artificial modesty’ to which we have formerly alluded, has covered up, until a solitary, but fatal vice is spreading desolation through our *schools* and *families*, unnoticed or unknown. The experience of teachers, the case-books of physicians, and the painful exposures which accident, or the dreadful diseases which follow in its train, have occasionally produced, have at length forced it upon public attention; and we hope it will not again be forgotten. The work before us is the result of extensive observation and study;—its usefulness has been tested by its influence as a lecture; and its views of this evil are in accordance with the experience of the few teachers whom we have known possessed of the moral courage to encounter it. We would offer it to those who have earnestly desired a work on this subject, as one adapted to their purposes. We would recommend its perusal to every *parent* and *teacher*. We would warn them that those who have been most confident of the safety of their charge, have often been most deceived; and that the youthful bashfulness which



## TESTIMONIALS.

seems to shrink from the bare mention of the subject, is *sometimes* the blush of shame for concealed crime. We feel bound to add, what abundant and decisive evidence has shown, that ignorance on this subject is no protection from the vice ;—nay, that it is often the original cause or encouragement of it ; that it gives tenfold power to the evil example and influence which are so rarely escaped ; and that a cure can be effected only by the most careful instruction and long continued discipline, both physical and moral, directed by sad experience, as is presented in this work.”

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The following brief but highly valuable testimony, is from the distinguished superintendent of the Massachusetts Lunatic Hospital at Worcester :

‘DEAR SIR:—The subject of your Lecture to Young Men, has been much neglected, although of great importance.

This Lecture, while it sounds the alarm to the young, will not fail to awaken the attention of parents, if once perused. It is couched in language as delicate as the nature of the subject will admit, and may be read with propriety and benefit by all.

The evil of which it treats, if I mistake not, is more extensively sapping the foundation of *physical vigor* and *moral purity*, in the rising generation, than is generally apprehended even by those who are awake to the danger, and who have witnessed the deplorable influence of it upon its victims.

Yours, with respect,

S. B. WOODWARD

WORCESTER, JULY 15, 1835.”



## TESTIMONIALS.

The following is from Dr. ALCOTT, the editor of the *Annals of Education*, and the *Library of Health*, and author of the *Young Wife*, the *Young Mother*, the *Young Man's Guide*, the *House I Live In*, and several other valuable works :

“DEAR SIR :—The subject of your Lecture to Young Men is one of immense importance, and demands the profound attention of every friend of man. It is vain longer to shuffle it off, when those whose opportunities best qualify them to give an opinion, do not hesitate to say that solitary vice is rapidly gaining ground among us. It is a subject which must be met.

In this view, I rejoice to find that an increasing demand for your little work has justified the publication of a second edition. I rejoice, especially, to see such sound principles in physiology inculcated and warmly enforced. With the corrections and emendations which you will now be able to make, I have no hesitation in saying that it ought to be circulated throughout our country. It would thus not only save many a young person from the murderous fangs of quackery, but—what is much better—it would prevent the necessity of his applying either to quacks or physicians, for relief from a situation in which he ought never to be placed.

Accept, dear sir, my best wishes for your success in the department of human effort to which, by your pen and your tongue, you have devoted yourself, and believe me,

Yours, truly,

WM. A. ALCOTT.

BOSTON, JAN. 7, 1837.”



## TESTIMONIALS.

The following is an extract from a letter written by the chaplain of one of our New England State Prisons to a brother clergyman in a neighboring state :

"MY DEAR SIR:—For the letter and copy of Graham's Lecture to Young Men which you were so good as to send me, please to accept my sincere thanks. A better service you could scarcely have done me. I have obeyed you. I have read the book *three* times, and derived more benefit from the last, than from either of the other readings. I like this book. Why is it not in the market? Why is it not in the hands of every young man, especially in cities, to counteract the influence of indecent pictures and corrupting books? A young man here in prison from one of the most respectable families in one of the principal cities of New England, gives me a painful account of the ease and frequency with which books of most corrupting character are circulated among the youth of both sexes in high and low life in that city.

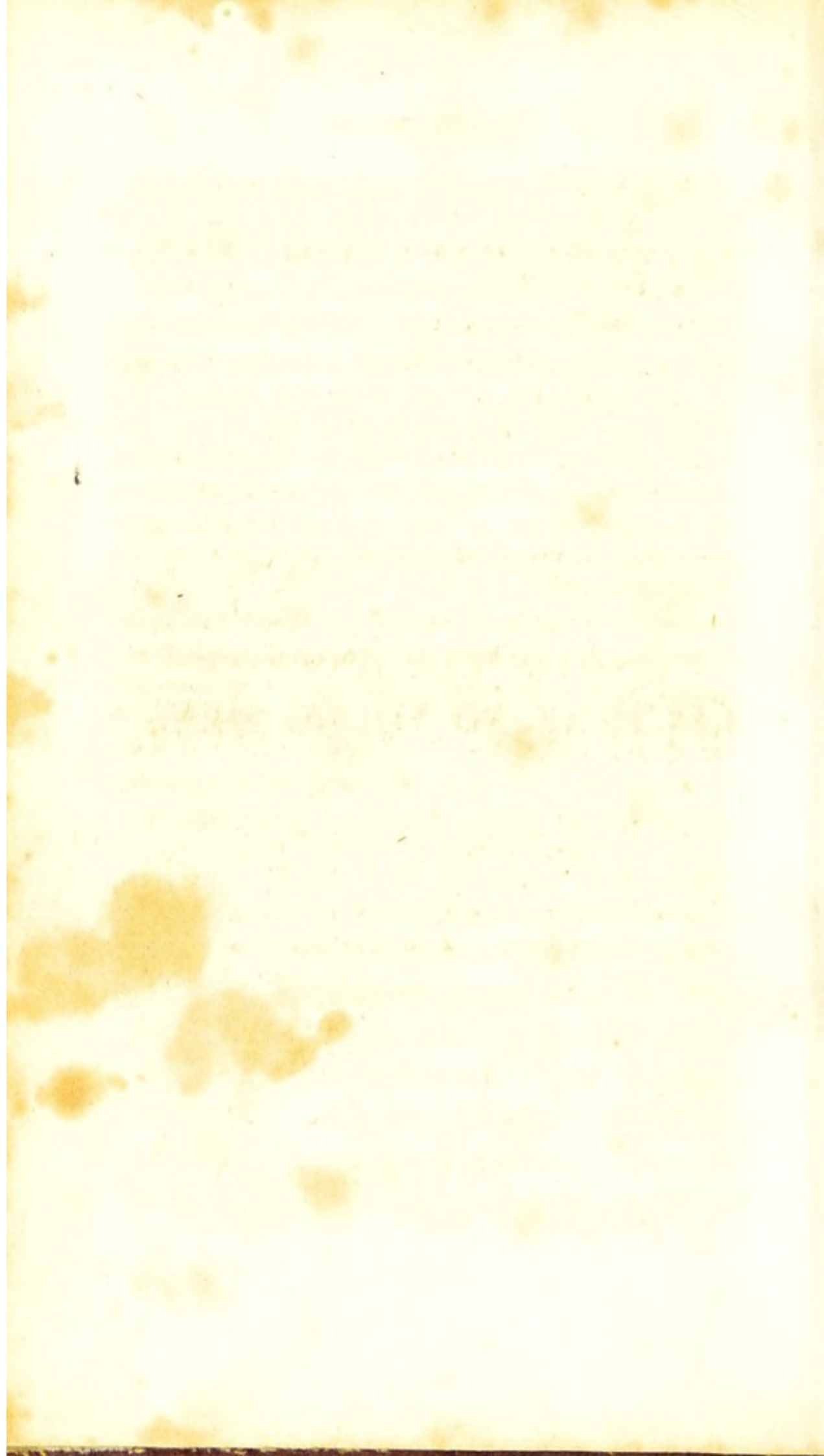
One excellence in Graham's Lecture, as it strikes me, is, that it is so purely philosophical. Even an atheist might see force in his statements. A man must deny many of the best established principles of science, before he can deny most of the conclusions to which the lecturer comes.

MAY 7, 1836."



LECTURE TO YOUNG MEN.







A  
LECTURE TO YOUNG MEN,  
ON  
CHASTITY.

INTENDED ALSO FOR THE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF  
PARENTS AND GUARDIANS.

BY SYLVESTER GRAHAM.

*Fourth Edition.*

BOSTON:  
GEORGE W. LIGHT, 1 CORNHILL.  
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## PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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I AM fully aware of the delicacy and difficulty attending the discussion of the subject of the following Lecture ; and have seriously and solemnly considered all the objections which can be made against its publication. But I am also aware of the immense importance, that young men should be correctly and properly instructed on this subject. He who in any manner endeavors to excite the sensual appetites, and arouse the unchaste passions of youth, is one of the most heinous offenders against the welfare of mankind ; and, so far as effects are considered, it is not enough that he who meddles with this matter, *means well*. Irreparable mischief may be done, with the best *intentions*. There is no point of morality

of more importance ; and none that is intrinsically connected with so much difficulty. Through a fear of contaminating the minds of youth, it has long been considered the wisest measure to keep them in ignorance ; and too generally, in order to sustain this measure, the natural inquisitiveness of the young mind has been met by misrepresentation and falsehood, on the part of those who would preserve their purity ; while, on the other hand, the basest of human cupidity has eagerly catered to the restless and prying curiosity, which has thus been exceedingly augmented. So that, while parents have been resting securely in the idea of the ignorance and purity of their children, these have been clandestinely drinking in the most corrupt and depraving knowledge from mercenary and polluted hands.

I am fully convinced that mankind have erred in judgment and in practice, on this point. Truth, properly inculcated, can never be injurious. The only questions are, *When* and *How* ? As to the *when*, I am decidedly of the opinion, that it should be



as early as the young mind can be made to understand the subject accurately ; and in regard to the manner or the *how*, I am satisfied that it should at first be as purely scientific as possible.\* Anatomy and Physiology must become common branches of education, and fundamental principles in all our systems of instruction and government, and all our domestic and social customs, before society reaches its highest good. And this kind of knowledge can never be corrupting in its effects nor tendencies. The more per-

\* The Rev. E. M. P. Wells, who has distinguished himself, perhaps, more than any other gentleman in New England, by his successful management of boys of every description, assures me that he finds no difficulty in bringing this subject before his pupils, and in instructing them concerning their sexual organs and appetites, with perfect freedom. "Occasionally," says he, "an impure minded boy, when he first hears me speak on the subject, will evince, by his looks and manners, that his mind has been corrupted. But in a few days all this disappears, and he learns, like the other members of the school, to listen to my instructions of this kind, just as he listens to my instructions in regard to any other organs and instincts of the body."—See also remarks from *Annals of Education*, page 1, and Mr. Wells's Letter, Note G.

fectly scientific the young mind becomes, in anatomy and physiology, the more strongly is it secured against the undue influences of lewd associations ; and it learns to think, even of the sexual organs, with as little lasciviousness as it does of the stomach and lungs. But all this requires great wisdom and prudence.

When I commenced my public career, as a Lecturer on the Science of Human Life, it did not, in any degree, enter into my plan, to treat on this delicate subject : but the continual entreaties, and importunities, and heart-touching—and I might truly say heart-rending—appeals which I received from young men, constrained me to dare to do that which I was fully convinced ought to be done ; and the result has entirely justified my decision and conduct. An incalculable amount of good has already been accomplished by it. Hundreds who have listened to the following Lecture, have thereby been saved from the most calamitous evils : and great numbers, among whom are many physicians and clergymen, have urged me to publish it. On this point,



I have long hesitated ;—not, however, because I doubted the intrinsic propriety of publishing it, but because I doubted whether the world had sufficient virtue to receive it, without attempting to crucify me for the benefaction. But the more I have considered the subject, and the more extensively I have become acquainted with the existence of the evils which it is the object of the Lecture to remedy and prevent, the stronger has become my moral courage to “dare do all that would become a man.” The unanimous expression of the opinion, in the American Lyceum at New York, in May last, that such a work was wanted, more than any other, and the urgent appeal which has more recently been made to me, from a highly respected source, have contributed to bring my mind to the full conclusion to publish this volume—with the most entire conviction that it will be the means of immeasurable good to my fellow creatures, and that it cannot possibly be the means of evil to any one.

There are already several works on this subject, in English print ;—but many of them

have been put forth by empirics, for very sinister purposes ; and most of them are exceedingly faulty, and dangerous in their tendency ; and, so far as I have seen, every one of them is radically erroneous, in its physiological views, and does not more than half way fathom the depths of this abyss of evil.

Many of the facts and phenomena, stated in the following Lecture, are to be found also in other works on this subject ; yet the reader may be assured, that in almost every particular, I have stated nothing but what has come under my own observation ;—nevertheless I have not shunned to avail myself of all the advantages within my reach ; and feel incomparably more desirous of effecting good by the work, than of gaining the credit of authorship.

It may, perhaps, be said, that this work is better calculated for adults than for young boys. This is true : and is according to my intention. I am convinced that the most important thing to be accomplished in relation to this matter, is, in the first place, to open the eyes of adults, and especially of parents,



guardians and teachers, to all that is true and real concerning it. It may then be found expedient and desirable that a work should be produced on the subject, more peculiarly adapted to young minds. I am however inclined to think, that oral instructions from parents, guardians, and others having the care of youth, adapted to the age, intelligence and circumstances of those instructed, will always be found preferable to books, in the first presentations of this subject to the youthful mind.

As it is generally known that I have frequently given Lectures exclusively to females, and particularly to MOTHERS, and as many erroneous impressions, and many misrepresentations have gone abroad concerning those Lectures, it is proper that I should take this opportunity to state, that I have never given them, but at the particular request of the ladies themselves: nor, in any of those Lectures, have I ever made even an allusion to sexual intercourse—nor to any other subject which may not properly be listened to by the most delicate and refined lady. So far as my own feelings are concerned, I should very



greatly prefer to have the husband of each lady present ; for I am confident that every virtuous husband and father in the world would highly approve of all I say ; and it would be far less embarrassing and painful to me, to address an audience of husbands and wives, than of females only. The exclusion, therefore, of all males from those Lectures, is not a measure of my own ; but of the ladies who attend them. And certainly, when ladies can justly place a proper degree of confidence in the Lecturer, there can be no well grounded objection to their attending Lectures on subjects particularly appropriate to females, and especially to mothers.

“To the pure,” says St. Paul, “all things are pure :” and it may be added with equal truth, that to the impure, all things are impure. It seems that most people are incapable of conceiving the possibility, that others should possess those virtues of which they are destitute themselves ; and hence they always set about finding some extraordinarily bad motive for every extraordinary action in others. But ignorance and prejudice are the principal



elements of this turpitude of human character ; and the best hopes of every enlightened philanthropist rest upon the general extension of correct knowledge, and the sanctifying influences of truth.

Ardently desiring to benefit my fellow creatures, I present this little volume to the public ; with the most perfect confidence that in due time it will be estimated at its true value, and that I shall receive from the world just as much credit as I deserve for it.

PROVIDENCE, MARCH 25, 1834.





## PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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MANY good people have regarded the publication of the following Lecture as a serious evil ; and they have censured me with much severity for publishing it ; while a far greater number of equally good people have spoken of the Lecture in high terms of commendation, and have regarded the publication of it as a great good to the human family.

Why is there such a diversity of opinion among good men, on the same subject ?

Because there is a great want of true and proper knowledge. I therefore pray those good people who condemn my Lecture, to listen to me for a few minutes, while I state some important facts concerning the evils of which the Lecture treats.

In the first place, self-pollution is actually a very great and rapidly increasing evil in our country. It is, indeed, all that I have described in the following Lecture—yes, far more than I dare describe, lest I should do harm ; for there are some things that may not even be named.

In the second place, illicit commerce between the sexes is a very great and rapidly increasing evil in society.

In the third place, sexual excess within the pale of wedlock is really a very considerable and an increasing evil.

In the fourth place, efforts to encourage illicit and promiscuous commerce between the sexes are already very extensive, and are daily becoming more extensive, bold and efficient. It is believed by those who are engaged in this enterprise, that if they can destroy the authority of the Bible, and convince mankind that that book is a forgery, then they will be able to show that marriage is not a divine institution ; and, appealing to the depraved lusts of the human race, they will be able easily to convince the world that it is right



and proper for man to indulge those propensities which NATURE has implanted in him, and to enjoy those pleasures for which NATURE has both capacitated him, and surrounded him with the means and opportunities ; and therefore, that man is unjust to himself, and disobedient to NATURE, to submit to any institutions or restraints which are founded in error, and sustained by ignorance and imposture.

Now if this reasoning is correct, it must and will prevail ; but if it is totally and dangerously false, the sooner its fallacy is exposed, the better.

It is too late in the day to reiterate the assertion, that it is impossible to speak of these things without doing more evil than good. It is not for us to choose whether anything shall be said and printed on this subject or not. Unprincipled book-publishers have found out that works on this subject will sell rapidly, and they have not neglected such an opportunity to get gain. Extensive editions of works, of various character, have already been published and sold. Works denouncing marriage



and the Bible, and encouraging promiscuous commerce between the sexes ; works pretending to teach how pregnancy may be avoided, and thus encouraging illicit commerce ; works pointing out the evils of sexual excesses, for the sole purpose of selling vile patent remedies ; and several other works of a less exceptionable character, but still essentially defective, are already flooding our country, and spreading corruption in their course.

These things being so, I ask, in the name of reason, and philanthropy, and chastity, and holiness, and all the dearest interests of social life, and the highest responsibilities of man—What is to be done? Are they who know the truth to hold their peace, and stand still, and see this destroying flood of error and pollution roll over the earth? Humanity, Virtue, Religion, answer—“No! let him that hath a tongue to speak understandingly and wisely, cry aloud, and proclaim the truth to every human ear!”

But Humanity and Virtue and Religion all forbid that any one should run before he is sent, on this vastly important errand. A zeal



which is not according to knowledge, in this matter, is extremely dangerous, however good the *intention* may be.

The difficulty of treating this subject in the very best manner for the interests of truth and virtue, is almost inconceivably great ; and the responsibility is proportionable.

With a full sense of this difficulty and responsibility, the following Lecture was written and published. It is the only complete treatise on the subject, in any language, that I have seen or heard of, which is not essentially erroneous in its physiological principles.

I did not write this Lecture to oppose infidelity, nor to vindicate the Bible ; but simply to set forth, in a clear and concise manner, the true physiological and pathological principles which relate to the sexual organization, functions, propensities and passions of man, and to illustrate their practical bearing ; and I am confident that I have done this with an accuracy of scientific truth which defies refutation ; and in so doing, without going out of my way for the purpose, I have proved, beyond all controversy, that the Bible

doctrine of marriage and sexual continence and purity, is founded on the physiological principles established in the constitutional nature of man.

I love the good opinion of my fellow creatures, and am deeply pained at their censure ; but more strongly and fervently do I love the real welfare of mankind ; and still more deeply am I pained at the errors and calamities of the human race. Freely then do I consent to forfeit the good opinion of many, and to bear the censures and bitter revilings of more, for the sake of doing a great and lasting and extensive good. The strongest desire I have concerning the following Lecture is, that it may be carefully read by every parent and guardian, and every adult young person, in the human world.

Woman is, by nature, far more chaste than man, in the present state of the world ; but it is *possible* to deprave even woman. This consideration should lead mothers to watch with great care over the physical as well as mental and moral education and habits of their daughters. For every mother ought to



know, that if, by any possible means, her daughters should become so depraved as to practice self-pollution, all that is said in the following Lecture concerning the dreadful effects of that vice on males, is strictly true of females. Terrible evils of this kind have existed in female boarding-schools in other countries ; and human nature is radically the same everywhere. But Heaven forbid that the luxuries of the table, and other depraving customs of artificial life, should ever make such a Sodom of our beloved land ! Forever may the females of our blessed country remain pure in themselves, and exert a purifying and exalting influence on the other sex. And God grant that purity, and health, and peace, and happiness, may soon be enjoyed by every human being.

I cannot better close these remarks, than by quoting the language of that eminently holy man, Jeremy Taylor, on the same subject :

“ Reader, stay, and read not the advices of the following pages, unless thou hast a chaste spirit, or desirest to be chaste, or at least art apt to consider whether you ought or



no. For there are some spirits so wholly imbued with uncleanness, that they turn the most prudent and chaste discourses into filthy apprehensions—like diseased stomachs, changing their very cordials and medicine into bitterness ; and, in a literal sense, turning the grace of God into wantonness. They study cases of conscience in the matter of carnal sins, not to avoid, but to learn ways how to offend God and pollute themselves ; and search their houses with a sunbeam, that they may be instructed in all the corners of filthiness. I have used all the care I could in the following periods, that I might neither be wanting to assist those who need it, nor yet minister any occasion of fancy or vainer thoughts to those that need them not. If any man will snatch the pure taper from my hand, and hold it to the devil, he will only burn his own fingers, but shall not rob me of the reward of my care and good intention, since I have taken heed how to express the following duties, and given him caution how to read them.”

NORTHAMPTON, JAN. 25, 1837.



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE wisest and best men of every age, have manifested a deep interest in the welfare of youth; and have considered their intellectual, moral and physical education, character and condition, of the utmost importance to the individual, social and civil welfare of mankind.

The ancients were particularly attentive to these things. Their most enlightened and philanthropic sages and lawgivers, regarded the proper education of youth as the foundation of national prosperity and happiness. And those who have entertained the most correct views on this subject, have been fully aware, that the intellectual, moral and physical interests of man cannot be separated.

In every condition of the human race, the physical, as well as the moral state of the people, is of the highest consideration ; but more especially in a country like ours, where the aggregate of individual character and individual will, constitutes the foundation and efficiency of all our civil and political institutions.

It is to little purpose that we are nicely accurate in the theoretical abstractions of political rights, while we neglect all the practical interests of political truth : for nothing is more certain, than that, while statesmen are devoting their talents to the subtle discussions of political metaphysics, and exercising their learning and their skill in heated controversies concerning the abstract principles of political philosophy, the prosperity of the state, and the welfare of the people, may suffer decay, from a neglect of practical interests ;—nay, indeed, may fall a sacrifice to this very jealousy in regard to rights.

It is deeply to be regretted, that so much of the talent and energy of our politicians and statesmen is wasted in fruitless controver-



sies, and party intrigues, while so little of their concern is given to the physical and moral education of our youth.

I do not say that political science is not to be cultivated, nor that abstract rights are not to be insisted on :—but I contend that it is incomparably better, to be practically successful, without theoretical wisdom, than to be theoretically wise, without practical success. I contend that it is infinitely better to secure the prosperity of the state through the happiness of the people, than to sacrifice both in the defence of abstract metaphysical rights.

All systems of republican government which do not recognize the necessity of continual effort in qualifying men to sustain such a form of government, must necessarily be unsuccessful ;—for where the will of the majority is the power of law, no written constitution can resist that power, nor give permanence to legislation : and there can be no other valid guarantee for the righteousness of law, and the sacredness of rights, than individual virtue and integrity.



Such is the nature of our government, and such is the relation which our young men hold to the civil, as well as social and moral institutions of our country, that it is hardly possible to make their education, their character, and their condition of too much importance. It is by fixing their attention on these points, and applying their talents in this field of effort, that statesmen can do more to secure the prosperity and permanency of our Republic, and the real welfare and happiness of the people, than by any other means in the compass of human ability. Oh ! for some Lycurgus, to teach us the important relation between the physical and moral education of youth, and the welfare of the state !

“ Know thyself ! ” is a precept of wisdom, which comes with peculiar emphasis to every American youth, from all the solemn and momentous responsibilities which devolve upon him.

The deep and cordial interest I have ever felt for young men, constrains me to take a stand in their behalf, which, I am fully aware, must necessarily expose me to the misrepre-



sentations, and perhaps the calumnies, of the perverse, the debased, and the malignant. But virtuous and high-minded young men will sustain me ; and, knowing the propriety and importance of my cause, I dare commit the defence of my conduct to their virtue and generosity, and to the good sense of mankind at large : feeling confident that, whether I receive the commendation or the obloquy of the world, for this performance, I shall hereby discharge one of the most important duties to society, and do, for the younger portion of my species, one of the most valuable services in the scope of human benefaction.





## LECTURE.

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So numerous, and universal, and continual are the evils which the human race have suffered in this world, that we are accustomed to consider diseases and pain as the necessary afflictions which legitimately grow out of our constitutional nature and appropriate circumstances ; and hence we either bear these afflictions with what resignation we are capable of, as the wise dispensations of a good and merciful Creator, or sullenly and proudly endure them, with what fortitude we possess, as the blind and unavoidable casualties of inexorable fate. In both cases we are almost equally in error, and by our false notions prevent those advantages which we might otherwise gain by our experience.

Be assured, my young friends, the human system is constructed entirely upon principles of benevolence, and perfectly adapted to an end of utility and enjoyment. Disease and suffering are, in no degree, the legitimate and necessary results of the operations of our bodily organs, and by no means necessarily incident to human life. The constitutional nature of man is established upon principles which, when strictly obeyed, will always secure his highest good and happiness ; and every disease, and every suffering which human nature bears, results from the violation of the constitutional laws of our nature.

If mankind always lived precisely as they ought to live, they would—as a general rule—most certainly pass through the several stages of life, from infancy to extreme old age, without sickness and distress, enjoying, through their long protracted years, health, and serenity, and peace, and individual and social happiness, and gradually wear out their vital ener-



gies, and finally lie down and fall asleep in death, without an agony—without a pain.

Young friends, I am not fanciful ; I only assert the constitutional capabilities of your nature. God made you to be happy. He gave you all your powers and faculties for good ; and if you suffer evil, depend upon it, it comes not from the legitimate and undisturbed economy of your original constitution.

Whatever, therefore, increases your knowledge of your constitutional nature, and makes you better acquainted with those laws of life upon which your health and happiness depend, cannot be otherwise than interesting to you.

Constituted as man is, two grand FUNCTIONS of his system are necessary for his existence as an individual and as a species. The first is NUTRITION ; the second is REPRODUCTION.

Nutrition is the general function by which the body is nourished and sustained ; and includes, in its detail, digestion, absorption,

circulation, respiration, secretion, excretion, &c. Reproduction is the function by which an organized being propagates its kind. The first is necessary for man's individual bodily existence ; the second is necessary for the continuation of his species. Man is accordingly furnished with organs fitted for these great functions of life.

As the function of nutrition is necessary for the sustenance, and growth, and continual subsistence of the body, so it must commence when his individual existence commences, and continue constantly while his bodily existence continues ; and therefore the organs constituting the apparatus necessary for this great function, are among the first formed portions of his system, and are complete at the time of his birth.\*

But the function of reproduction is not necessary to man's individual existence, and

\* The teeth are not essential to the function of nutrition, especially in early childhood.



therefore its final cause, or constitutional purpose, does not require its constant exercise ; and accordingly, the organs constituting the apparatus necessary for this function, are not all complete in their development and functional powers, until many years after birth.

In the lower orders of animals, both of these important functions are under the control of instinct ; and therefore the range of their exercise is more strongly defined and limited. They have no artificial means of rendering their food pernicious, and therefore do not impair their organs of nutrition. They are—in a pure state of nature—instinctively periodical in their sexual desires, and therefore do not suffer from an excessive exercise of the function of reproduction. But in man, these important functions—and especially that of reproduction—are, as to their exercise, placed under the control of the rational powers.

I do not, however, mean to say, that therefore man may indulge his sexual appetite

whenever he chooses, and to whatever extent he pleases, without violating any of the constitutional laws of his nature. But I mean to assert that, as the lower orders of animals have no rational and moral powers to govern the exercise of their sexual appetite, so have they—in a pure state of nature—no artificial means of destroying the government of the law of instinct, which simply incites them to fulfil the purposes of their organization ; while man, who has the power and means to destroy the government of the law of instinct, and of inducing a depraved appetite, which prompts him to go beyond the purposes of his organization, and thus violate the laws of his constitution, and injure his system, (always in proportion to the excess,) is also endowed with rational powers to *ascertain* those constitutional laws, and moral powers to *prevent* that excess.

Be it understood, however, that man, in a pure state of nature, would come under the government of instinct in regard to the func-



tions of reproduction, equally with the lower orders of animals ; that is, he would have no disposition to exercise this function to any injurious excess, beyond the purposes of his organization.\* It is by abusing his organs, and depraving his instinctive appetites, through the devices of his rational powers, that the body of man has become a living volcano of unclean propensities and passions. By all that reason, therefore, renders man capable of elevating himself above the brute creation, by so much the deeper does he sink himself in degeneracy below the brutes, when he devotes his reason to the depravity of his nature ; and it is a deeply humiliating consideration, that of all the animals which inhabit this beautiful sphere, where everything, in uncontaminated nature, is so benevolently fitted for enjoyment,

\* By "a pure state of nature," be it remembered, I never mean the savage state of man, for that is not his natural state. But I mean that state in which man lives in accordance with all the physiological laws of his nature.

proud, rational man is the only one who has degraded his nature, and, by his voluntary depravity, rendered this life a pilgrimage of pain, and the world one vast lazar-house for his species, and the earth a mighty sepulchre, for those who prematurely fall the victims of the innumerable diseases which result from the violation of the laws of life. How important, then, is it, that man should understand his nature and relations, that he may know and perform his duties consistently with the constitutional laws of his life.

The functions of nutrition and reproduction depend on the vital properties of the tissues which form the organs of the system—particularly the muscular and nervous tissues, and more especially the nervous.

The nerves belonging to the human body are divided into two classes.

First, the BRAIN and SPINAL MARROW, with their various cords, branches, fibres and



filaments. These nerves appertain to what is called *animal life*, and are the organs of sensation, perception, intellection and volition, and are connected with the muscles of voluntary motion.

Second, the GANGLIONS and PLEXUSES, with their various cords, branches, fibres and filaments. These nerves appertain to what is called *organic life*. They are distributed to the various internal organs, and preside over all the processes of vital chemistry ; or in other words, they are the immediate instruments or conductors of that vital energy by which the living body converts food into chyme, and chyme into chyle, and chyle into blood, and blood into the various solids and fluids of the whole system. The stomach, heart, arteries, veins, lungs, liver, kidneys, and all the other organs concerned in the general function of nutrition, depend principally or entirely on the nerves of organic life, for their functional power. Hence the general function of nutri-

tion is under the dominion of the nerves of organic life, except mastication and deglutition, which, indeed, are not necessarily included.

The function of reproduction depends on both classes of nerves. The power of the male organs of generation, to convert a portion of the arterial blood into semen, and to deposit that semen in its appropriate receptacles, and finally to eject it with peculiar convulsions, depends on the nerves of organic life ; but the power to exercise the organs of generation in the fulfilment of the function of reproduction, depends on the nerves of animal life. Hence the genital organs hold important relations, both to the organs of nutrition, and to the brain and spinal marrow, and to the parts supplied by them with nervous power.

The genital organs are, as it were, woven into the same grand web of organic life with the stomach, heart, lungs, &c., by being largely supplied with the same class of nerves on which the organs of nutrition depend for



their functional power : but the genital organs are also supplied with nerves of animal life, or those which are connected with the brain and spinal marrow. Hence the influences of the brain may act directly on the genital organs ; and of these latter, on the brain. Lascivious thoughts and imaginations will excite and stimulate the genital organs, cause an increased quantity of blood to flow into them, and augment their secretions and peculiar sensibilities ; and, on the other hand, an excited state of the genital organs, either from the stimulations of semen, or from diseased action in the system, will throw its influence upon the brain, and force lascivious thoughts and imaginations upon the mind.

The same reciprocity of influence also exists between the organs of reproduction and nutrition. The stomach, heart, lungs, skin, &c., are immediately and strongly affected by the condition of the genital organs ; and these latter participate, to a greater or less extent,

in the affections of the former ;—and always share fully in those conditions of the former, which result from the general state of the nerves of organic life.

The nerves appertaining to organic life, which preside over the general function of nutrition, are, in their natural and healthy state, entirely destitute of animal sensibility ; and the perfect healthfulness and integrity of this general function, require such a state of these nerves. All extraordinary and undue excitements, however, whether caused by mental, moral or physical stimuli, increase the excitability and unhealthy activity of the nerves of organic life ; and tend to bring on, and establish in them, a state of diseased irritability and sensibility, which is more or less diffused over the whole domain ; and affects all the particular organs and functions. A frequent repetition of these excitements always induces a greater or less degree of debility and diseased irritability in the nerves of organic life ;



—disordering, and deranging the functions, and often causing excessive morbid irritability, and sensibility, and inflammation, and even disorganization or change of structure in the viscera—such as the brain, stomach, lungs, kidneys, heart, &c.

Thus the passions, such as anger, fear, grief, &c., when violent and frequent or continued, irritate and debilitate the nerves of organic life, and induce in them a state of morbid irritability, and thereby disorder all the organic functions of the system, and lead to the most painful and often the most fatal diseases. The nerves of the genital organs partake, in common with those of the other organs, of this general debility and diseased excitability, and become exceedingly susceptible of irritation;—sympathizing powerfully with all the disturbances of the system, and especially of the brain and alimentary canal. Their peculiar sensibilities are augmented to a morbid or preternatural state, of a chronic character;

and thus a diseased prurience, or concupiscence, is permanently established,—forcing the sufferer into excessive desires, and unclean thoughts, almost incessantly. Hence hypochondriacs, and those who are afflicted with nervous melancholy, are generally morbidly lecherous; and hence, also, insanity, resulting from the morbid condition of the nerves of organic life, is generally attended with excessive sexual desire, and the mind becomes filled with unclean images. This is the reason why many people, who were perfectly modest while in health, become exceedingly obscene, in their conduct and talk, when insane; and often, if they are not prevented, give themselves up to self-pollution, and thus exceedingly aggravate and confirm their disorders.\*

\* While I was lecturing in New York, in 1833, an excellent clergyman, who was much esteemed for his piety and purity of character, came to consult me concerning his health, which was very poor. After a careful examination of his case, I honestly told him that his symptoms strongly indicated that his system



All kinds of stimulating and heating substances, high-seasoned food, rich dishes, the free use of flesh, and even the excess of aliment, all, more or less—and some to a very great degree—increase the concupiscent excitability and sensibility of the genital organs, and augment their influence on the functions of organic life, and on the intellectual and moral faculties.

SEXUAL DESIRE, again, in turn, throws its influence over the whole domain of the nerves

had, at some period of his life, been exceedingly injured by self-pollution, or venereal excesses in some way or other. He frankly replied that my opinion was undoubtedly correct;—that he had had the severe misfortune to be afflicted with insanity for several months, and that while in that condition, he was left to practise self-pollution to an extent which, he had been convinced; since the recovery of his reason, had nearly ruined his physical constitution, and greatly impaired his intellectual and moral faculties. The propensity to this pernicious indulgence is so common and so powerful in those who are laboring under insanity resulting from the morbid condition of the nerves of organic life, that no means should be neglected by which the practice can be prevented in such cases.

of organic life, as well as of the cephalo-spinal nerves, or those of animal life ;—particularly affecting the stomach, brain and heart, and, to a greater or less extent, all the other organs of the body ; and when it kindles into a passion, its influence is so extensive and powerful, that it disturbs and disorders all the functions of the system. Digestion is retarded, or wholly interrupted ;—circulation is accelerated, and an increased quantity of blood is injected into the brain, stomach, lungs, and other important organs ; respiration is obstructed and oppressed, and imperfectly performed,—and insensible perspiration is considerably diminished. These irritations and disturbances cannot long be continued, nor frequently repeated, without serious injury to the whole system. A general debility and increased irritability of the nerves of organic life are necessarily produced ; the nervous energy and muscular contractibility of all the organs is diminished, and their functional power is con-



sequently impaired. The brain, partaking of the general irritation, its exceedingly delicate and important organs are debilitated, and the mental powers more immediately connected with these organs, are proportionately injured ; while the sympathy and reciprocity of influence, between the mental and moral faculties and the genital organs become excessive and irresistible.

The convulsive paroxysms attending venereal indulgence, are connected with the most intense excitement, and cause the most powerful agitation to the whole system that is ever subject to. The brain, stomach, heart, lungs, liver, skin, and the other organs, feel it sweeping over them with the tremendous violence of a tornado. The powerfully excited and convulsed heart drives the blood, in fearful congestion, to the principal viscera,—producing oppression, irritation, debility, rupture, inflammation, and sometimes disorganization ;—and this violent paroxysm is generally

succeeded by great exhaustion, relaxation, lassitude, and even prostration.

These excesses, too frequently repeated, cannot fail to produce the most terrible effects. The nervous system, even to its most minute filamentary extremities, is tortured into a shocking state of debility, and excessive irritability, and uncontrollable mobility, and aching sensibility; and the vital contractility of the muscular tissues throughout the whole system becomes exceedingly impaired, and the muscles, generally, become relaxed and flaccid; and consequently all the organs and vessels of the body, even to the smallest capillaries, become extremely debilitated; and their functional powers exceedingly feeble.

Such are the important relations constitutionally established, in the human system, between the organs and functions of NUTRITION and REPRODUCTION and Voluntary Motion and the MENTAL and MORAL FACULTIES: and such are the reciprocal influences



of the organs and functions of nutrition and reproduction upon each other.

We are told by some writers on this important subject, that the genital secretion, or “the semen,” may be called the essential oil of animal liquors—the rectified spirit—the most subtile and spirituous part of the animal frame, which contributes to the support of the nerves ; that the greatest part of this refined fluid is, in a healthy state and conduct of the system, re-absorbed and mixed with the blood, of which it constitutes the most rarefied and volatile part, and imparts to the body peculiar sprightliness, vivacity, muscular strength, and general vigor and energy to the animal machine ; that it causes the beard, hair and nails to grow,—gives depth of tone, and masculine scope and power to the voice,—and manliness and dignity to the countenance and person ; and energy, and ardor, and noble daring to the mind ; and therefore that the emission of

semen enfeebles the body more than the loss of twenty times the same quantity of blood,—more than violent cathartics and emetics :—and hence the frequent and excessive loss of it cannot fail to produce the most extreme debility, and disorder, and wretchedness, of both body and mind.”

That the semen is a very important fluid, and that it, like all other secretions of the body, may, to some extent, be re-absorbed, will not be questioned by any correct physiologist ; and it is also very evident that there is a peculiar relation established between the development of the genital organs and the voice, beard, &c., and the general masculine aspect and bearing of the individual :—but the importance of semen to the system, and the evils resulting from the mere loss of it, have been exceedingly overrated by all who have treated on this subject.

We know that, at or about the age of puberty, when the genital organs are, in all



respects, completely developed, and their functional faculties are perfected, the voice, ordinarily, begins to assume more of the manly tone, and perhaps the beard begins to put forth with increased vigor:—and we know, also, that if the male be castrated in early childhood, the voice always remains small and feminine,—the beard does not grow,—and the development of the features, the conformation of parts, and the general aspect, air and bearing of the individual, are soft, delicate and effeminate. But if the male attains to the thirtieth year of his age, and all his organs are fully developed and established in their functional powers, before castration is performed, the voice undergoes no perceptible change, and the beard continues to grow as before ; nor is there any considerable diminution of muscular strength nor mental power.

Many other facts might also be adduced, to demonstrate that it is not the secretion and *re-absorption* of the semen which causes the

masculine development of the vocal organs,—makes the beard grow,—and gives general robustness, and vigor, and sprightliness, and vivacity to the body; and energy and activity to the mind:—nor is there the least evidence that the *mere loss of the semen*, apart from the concomitant excitement, irritation, functional disturbance, and expenditure of vital power, is the source of any considerable injury to the human system. But it is perfectly certain, on the other hand, that all the evils resulting from the abuse of the genital organs, occur, in their very worst and most incorrigible forms, where there is no secretion and emission of semen.

That the undue determination of blood to the brain, lungs, stomach, and other important organs, during venereal indulgence, producing over-distension of the vessels of these viscera, and resulting in debility, relaxation, &c., is the source of far greater evil to the system, than the mere loss of semen, ought not to be



doubted: nor is there any reason to doubt, that the general tension of the muscular and nervous tissues, the convulsive paroxysms, and universal disturbance of functions, occasioned by venereal indulgence, are still more injurious than visceral congestion. But the grand principle of mischief in this matter, *is the peculiar excitement of the nervous system.*

Physiologists have indulged in a great deal of conjecture and speculation concerning the “animal spirits—nervous fluid—vital electricity,” &c. &c., but as yet, it is all conjecture and speculation. We know that, by some means or other, the influence of the WILL is conveyed through certain nerves, to the organs of voluntary motion—that the sense of touch is conveyed, or reflected, or transmitted from the surface, through certain other nerves, to the brain:—and that vital energy is distributed through certain other nerves, from the general and particular centres of action, to the several organs, for the supply

of their functional powers :—and we know, too, that in the functional exercise of the genital organs, something very analogous to electricity or galvanism, diffuses a peculiar and powerful excitement and sensation throughout the whole nervous system.

Now whether these vital effects are produced by means of nervous fluid or spirit, or something still more subtile and intangible, or by some other means, human research and investigation have not ascertained, and perhaps never will. But we are perfectly certain, that the peculiar *excitement* of venereal indulgence, is more diffusive, universal and powerful, than any other to which the system is ever subject ; and that it more rapidly exhausts the vital properties of the tissues, and impairs the functional powers of the organs ; and consequently that it, in a greater degree than any other cause, deteriorates all the vital processes of nutrition, from beginning to end ; and therefore, more injuriously affects the character and



condition of all the fluids and solids of the body ;—and hence the terrible fact, that venereal excesses occasion the most loathsome, and horrible, and calamitous diseases that human nature is capable of suffering.

It is this peculiar EXCITEMENT, or VITAL STIMULATION, which causes the muscular tension and convulsion, and increased action of the heart, and occasions visceral congestion, and disturbs all the functions of the system, and thus produces general debility, morbid irritability and sympathy, and all the consequent train of evils which result. And this peculiar *excitement* or *vital stimulation* may be produced to an extent sufficient to cause an increased determination of blood to the genital organs, and an increase of their secretions, and of their peculiar sensibilities, sufficient to cause a distraction of functional energy from the digestive, and other organs, and prevent the normal distribution of it from the general and particular centres of action,

and thus disturb and impair all the functions, and debilitate all the organs of the system, and develope a general morbid irritability and sympathy, without amounting to the acme of coition, and causing an emission of semen, and the convulsive paroxysms which attend it.

Hence, therefore, SEXUAL DESIRE, cherished by the mind and dwelt on by the imagination, not only increases the excitability and peculiar sensibility of the genital organs themselves, but always throws an influence, equal to the intensity of the affection, over the whole nervous domain ;—disturbing all the functions depending on the nerves for vital energy, which is thereby increased upon, or distracted from them—and if this excitement is frequently repeated, or long continued, it inevitably induces an increased degree of irritability, and debility, and relaxation generally throughout the nervous and muscular tissues, and especially the nerves of organic life. And hence, those LASCIVIOUS DAY-DREAMS, and



*amorous reveries*, in which young people too generally—and especially the idle, and the voluptuous, and the sedentary, and the nervous—are exceedingly apt to indulge, are often the sources of general debility, effeminacy, disordered functions, and permanent disease, and even premature death, without the actual exercise of the genital organs! Indeed, this unchastity of thought—this *adultery of the mind*—is the beginning of immeasurable evil to the human family:—and while children are regularly, though unintentionally trained to it, by all the mistaken fondness of parents, and all the circumstances of civic life, it is but mockery in the ear of Heaven to deprecate the evil consequences; and folly, little short of fatuity, to attempt to arrest the current of crime that flows from it.

If we will train our offspring into the early and free use of flesh-meat, and accustom them to high-seasoned food, and richly prepared dishes, and learn them to drink tea, and coffee,

and wine, and to indulge in various other stimulants, with which civic life is universally cursed, and effeminate their bodies with feather beds and enervating dress,—in short, if we will sedulously educate them to all the degenerating habits of luxury, indolence, voluptuousness and sensuality, we shall be more indebted to their want of *opportunity to sin*, than to any other cause, for the preservation of their bodily chastity,—if, indeed, we escape the heart-rending anguish of seeing them the early victims of passions, which we have been instrumental in developing to an irresistible power ! For these lascivious, and exceedingly pernicious day-dreams of the young, are but the first buddings of a depraved instinct, which will not be satisfied with the passive reveries of the mind and affections of the body.

The delicate susceptibilities of youth being constantly tortured, and their young blood continually heated, by a stimulating and depraving diet, their animal propensities are



much more rapidly developed than are their rational and moral powers; and a preternatural excitability of the nerves of organic life is inevitably induced; while other habits of luxury and effeminacy serve to increase the general debility of their system, and assist in throwing a common anarchical depravity over the whole domain of instinct. The genital organs partake of the common condition of the nervous system, and very early in life—long before their perfect development and final cause, justify and demand their functional exercise—acquire an increased sensibility, and what may be called a morbid prurience, which continually appeals to the brain, and throws its influence over the operations of the intellectual and moral faculties; controlling the decision of the understanding, and, at times, even forcing the will against the remonstrance of the moral sense.

There are some other auxiliary causes concerned in this evil, of so much importance that

I must not omit to name them here. The early attention to the mental, without a due regard to the physical education of children, causes a disproportionate exercise of the brain, which leads to a general debility of the nervous system, involving the genital organs, and greatly increasing the reciprocity of influence between them and the brain ; and again, superadded to this, the sedentary habits too generally connected with early education, without the counteraction of frequent and vigorous exercise of the body, necessarily produces a capillary congestion, or over-fulness of the minute blood-vessels of the abdomen and loins, and of the parts generally in that region, by which means, likewise, the genital organs become oppressed and irritated, and their peculiar sensibilities are increased, and their influence over the brain and other organs augmented.

Is it not, then, a matter of course—and indeed, a matter of moral necessity—when



this momentous evil of depraved instinct is once originated, and every habit and circumstance and influence contribute to perpetuate and increase it, that young concupiscence should kindle into a passion of despotic power, and compel the unwary youth, either to break through the restraints of civil and moral law, to find indulgence in illicit commerce,—or more clandestinely to yield to the more degrading and destructive vice of self-pollution?

To what avail, then, are moral laws, and civil legislation, and philanthropic efforts, in the cause of chastity, while all the elements combine to give invincible efficiency to the work of ruin? As well might we attempt to prevent the eruption of volcanic mountains, when the internal fires were kindled, and the molten entrails were boiling and heaving like the exasperated ocean! As well might we think to stand before the gushing mouth of a crater, and roll back the burning tide, and

save the world below from desolation !—(See Note A.)

How philosophically adapted to the nature, and condition, and welfare of man, therefore, is the requisition of the gospel, which demands *spiritual chastity* ; and forbids even the look of lust, and the lascivious thought ! But while the benevolent gospel makes this holy requisition for the good of human beings, it does not explicitly teach us, in the detail, all the physical and moral means by which we shall be rendered capable of a full compliance with it. The knowledge of these things, it has, with great propriety, left for the acquisition of our rational powers ; and thereby implicitly imposed upon us the obligation to exercise our intellectual and moral faculties, to the extent of our abilities, on every subject that concerns our nature and condition, and our duties and responsibilities.

Exceedingly depraved as mankind are, in all their instinctive propensities, we are con-



tinually inclined to justify the indulgence of our appetites, on the ground that they *are instinctive*; and that what NATURE has implanted in us, cannot, of itself, be wrong; nor can it be our duty to suppress its exercises. Hence, young men generally, if not actually guilty of illicit amours, contemplate such indulgences without abhorrence; and—such is the state of morals at the present day—too frequently, they feel complacency in being thought successful libertines;—and it is much to be feared, that there are those who wear the *form* of man, who can reflect with satisfaction on the blight and lasting desolation which they have caused to female chastity and happiness.

Though every young man, of any correct moral discipline, must consider a promiscuous and unrestrained commerce between the sexes, as equally destructive to sound morality, and social peace, and civil welfare, yet most young men are apt to think, that if it were not for

the moral, and social, and civil disadvantages, such a state of lawless intercourse were exceedingly desirable. But they who entertain this sentiment, are not aware, that moral and civil laws, so far as they are right and proper, are only the verbal forms of laws which are constitutionally established in our nature. They do not consider, that, however destitute society might be, of all moral and civil restraints, in regard to sexual commerce, yet there are fixed and permanent laws, established in their very constitutions, which they cannot violate without inevitably incurring penalty ;—and that, in the present depraved state of man's instinctive propensities, such a lawless commerce would, with the certainty of necessity, lead to the most calamitous and loathsome diseases and sufferings that human nature is capable of enduring ! Many of the most terrible plagues which have swept over the earth, and threatened to depopulate it,



have been connected with such excesses!—  
(See Note B.)

It is true, that in the perfectly natural, undepraved, and healthy state of human nature, when all the laws of constitution and relation are observed, instinct, so far as the physical welfare of man is concerned, would be a sufficient law to govern sexual commerce:—and so far as physiology and our knowledge of the nature of things may govern our reasonings on this subject, there is every evidence that, in such a state, the sexual commerce of the human species would not be much more frequent than that of other species of animals, of the same class, whose period of pregnancy is the same. But the moment man begins to violate the laws of constitution and relation, either in diet, or in any other respect, that moment he begins to deprave his instinctive propensities, and to develope a power of appetite which, the more it is yielded to, the more it is increased; and leads to the worst

of consequences, both to the individual himself, and to society at large.

Our benevolent Creator has endowed us with peculiar powers, and set no bounds to our intellectual and moral acquisition ; and by all these great bestowments, he calls us to the cultivation of our higher capabilities, and has placed around us elevated motives to lead us onward in an upward course of intellectual and moral greatness, and virtue, and glory.

Constituted as we are, our bodies must be sustained, for the good of our nobler powers ; —and with the performance of the voluntary and necessary functions of our bodies, God has connected enjoyment :—so that, while we perform those functions for the physical good of our bodies, and of our species, with the ulterior and paramount regard to the best condition of our nobler powers, we fulfil the purposes of our bodily functions with pleasure and satisfaction, and secure our permanent welfare and our highest good. But when we



reverse the proper order of things, and make our sensual enjoyment the motive of our actions—the object of our lives—and bring our rational powers into subserviency to such an end, we pervert the intentions of divine benevolence, and bring disorder, and disease, and misery upon ourselves, and on our species. Thus, when we eat and drink for the purpose of sustaining our bodies in the best condition, with the ulterior view of promoting the healthiest and most vigorous state of our intellectual and moral faculties, we have great gustatory enjoyment and satisfaction in the performance of those offices, and promote the permanent welfare of the body and the mind :—for, when this is the paramount object in eating and drinking, we honestly and seriously apply our rational powers to ascertain the constitutional laws of our nature, and the proper quality, and quantity, and condition of our food and drink, for the purpose of securing this important end. But when we make gustatory

enjoyment the ulterior and paramount object of eating and drinking, and one of the principal sources of pleasure in life,—and, according to the proverb, “Live to eat,” and eat for the sake of sensual indulgence—and make our rational powers the panders of our appetites,—we deprave the propensities of instinct, disorder the body, impair the intellectual faculties, darken the moral sense, and blindly pursue a course which inevitably leads to the worst of evils. And in like manner, when we exercise our genital organs in the function of reproduction, for the purpose of fulfilling the end of our peculiar organization, and consistently with the general laws of organic life, we have great enjoyment and healthful results in the function: but when the pleasures of that function become a leading object of our pursuits, and our rational powers are brought into vassalage to the passion, the instinctive propensity itself becomes exceedingly depraved; and unnatural, and continual, and imperious



in its demands ; and terribly pernicious in its effects. The intellectual and moral nature of man becomes subordinate to his animal nature ; and gross sensuality becomes paramount to deliberate reason ; and man is thus debased, degraded, diseased and destroyed !

When incited by passion, man cannot easily perceive the lines of truth which should govern his conduct ; and therefore, if he does not deliberately adopt some general rules of action, which are consistent with the constitutional laws of his nature, he is sure to run into excesses, and draw evil upon himself and others.

Men do not readily see, why illicit commerce between the sexes should be more injurious, in a physical point of view, than the commerce between man and wife ; but from the explanation which has now been presented of the subject, we readily perceive the reason. We see that it is not the mere loss of semen, but the peculiar excitement, and the violence

of the convulsive paroxysms, which produce the mischief; and these are exceedingly increased by the actions of the mind.

Young men, in the pursuit of illicit commerce with the other sex, generally contemplate the act, for a considerable time before its performance,—their imagination is wrought up, and presents lewd and exciting images,—the genital organs become stimulated, and throw their peculiar influence over the whole system; and this, to the full extent of its power, acts on the mental and moral faculties, and is thence again reflected with redoubled energy upon the genital and other organs. The sight, or touch of the female body, and especially the bosom, &c., greatly increases the excitement, and thus the ardor and power of the passion are augmented continually, and more in proportion to the difficulties in the way, until indulgence takes place; when the excitement is intense and overwhelming, and the convulsive paroxysms proportionably vio-



lent and hazardous to life. And where it is promiscuous, the genital organs are almost continually stimulated by the mind. Every female that is a little more comely, or a little more meretricious than others, in her appearance, becomes an object of desire ; the contemplation of her charms, and all her movements, increase the lust, and thus the genital organs are kept under an habitual excitement, which is reflected or diffused over the whole nervous system ; and disturbs, and disorders all the functions of the body, and impairs all the tissues, and leads to that frequency of commerce which produces the most ruinous consequences. But, between the husband and wife, where there is a proper degree of chastity, all these causes either entirely lose, or are exceedingly diminished in their effect. They become accustomed to each other's body, and their parts no longer excite an impure imagination, and their sexual intercourse is the result of the more natural and instinctive

excitements of the organs themselves ;—and when the dietetic and other habits are such as they should be, this intercourse is very seldom.

Moreover, a promiscuous commerce between the sexes would be terribly pernicious to the female and to the offspring, as well as to the male. Debility, abortion, barrenness, and painful diseases of various forms, would be the inevitable result in the female ; and that peculiarly loathsome, virulent and ruinous disease which is generated and perpetuated by such commerce, and which has already been so dreadful a scourge to millions of the human family, would prevail on every hand, and become a common calamity of society. With equal certainty, the offspring would be very generally feeble, puny, and extremely predisposed to disease. A large proportion of them would die in early infancy, and those that survived would be almost sure to possess greatly deteriorated and frail constitutions.



Whatever, therefore, may be thought of marriage as a divine institution, authorized and enjoined by the sacred Scriptures, be assured, my young friends, that marriage—or a permanent and exclusive connection of one man with one woman—is an institution founded in the constitutional nature of things, and inseparably connected with the highest welfare of man, as an individual and as a race ! And so intimately associated are the animal and moral sensibilities and enjoyments of man, that, besides the physical and social evils which result from illicit commerce between the sexes, the chaste and delicate susceptibilities of the moral affections are exceedingly depraved, and the transgressor renders himself incapable of those pure and exalted enjoyments which are found in connubial life, where perfect chastity has been preserved.

This sentiment is beautifully and forcibly expressed by Robert Burns, in his advice to a young friend. Speaking of the moral evils

arising from the illicit commerce between the sexes, he says,

“ I wave the quantum of the sin—  
The hazard of concealing ;  
But oh ! it hardens all within,  
And petrifies the feeling ! ”

“ However it may be accounted for,” says Dr. Paley, “ the criminal commerce of the sexes corrupts and depraves the mind and the moral character more than any other species of vice whatsoever. That ready perception of guilt, that prompt and decisive resolution against it, which constitutes a virtuous character, is seldom found in persons addicted to these indulgences. They prepare an easy admission for every sin that seeks it ; are, in low life, 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 of moral probity.



Add to this, that habits of libertinism incapacitate and indispose the mind for all intellectual, moral and religious pleasures."

A thorough investigation of this subject in our state prisons and other places containing criminal offenders against the laws of society, would, in all probability, disclose the important fact, that a large proportion of the inmates of such places commenced their career of vice in the depraving and hardening practice of illicit sexual commerce. "I am," says the chaplain of one of our state prisons, "obliged daily to look over a collection of two hundred human beings, almost the whole of whom are and have been slaves to lascivious thought, feeling and practice. The accounts which they give of themselves are often peculiarly painful and sickening."

The detail which this gentleman goes on to give of facts in regard to the prisoners, and of the confessions which they have made to him, are indeed too shocking to be admitted into a

work of this kind : but the grand fact here presented certainly deserves the serious consideration of the christian, the philanthropist and the patriot.

Let it ever be remembered, however, that no conformity to civil institutions—no ostensible observance of civil law, can secure a man from the evils which result from the violation of the constitutional laws of his nature. The mere fact that a man is married to one woman, and is perfectly faithful to her, will by no means prevent the evils which flow from venereal excess, if his commerce with her transgresses the bounds of that connubial chastity which is founded on the real wants of the system. Beyond all question, an immeasurable amount of evil results to the human family from sexual excess within the precincts of wedlock. Languor, lassitude, muscular relaxation, general debility and heaviness, depression of spirits, loss of appetite, indigestion, faintness and sinking at the pit of the stomach,



increased susceptibilities of the skin and lungs to all the atmospheric changes, feebleness of circulation, chilliness, headache, melancholy, hypochondria, hysterics, feebleness of all the senses, impaired vision, loss of sight, weakness of the lungs, nervous cough, pulmonary consumption, disorders of the liver and kidneys, urinary difficulties, disorders of the genital organs, spinal diseases, weakness of the brain, loss of memory, epilepsy, insanity, apoplexy ; —abortions, premature births, and extreme feebleness, morbid predispositions, and early death of offspring,—are among the too common evils which are caused by sexual excesses between husband and wife.—(See Note C.)

Nothing can be more erroneous, than the plea which many men set up, that this propensity was *implanted in them by NATURE*, and therefore it is right and proper that they should indulge it, to all extent, consistent with matrimonial rights. They ought to know,



that this propensity is more or less powerful and imperious, according as their dietetic and other habits are more or less correct. I have known married gentlemen, who were so much troubled with habitual concupiscence, that they were inclined to consider themselves peculiarly constituted ; and were sometimes disposed to reason themselves into the belief, that, being thus tempered by NATURE, they would be justifiable in acts of incontinence. But these same gentlemen, by adopting a proper system of diet and general regimen, have not only improved their health exceedingly, in every respect, but so subdued their sexual propensity, as to be able to abstain from connubial commerce, and preserve entire chastity of body, for several months in succession, without the least inconvenience, and without any separation from their companions.—(See Note D.)

Before we set up the plea of *natural authority* for our conduct, we ought to be very certain, that the propensities and appetites to



which we yield, are nothing more than the legitimate and healthy incitements of *undepressed instinct* ; and that our organs are not stimulated and irritated into preternatural excitability and sensibility, and into demands which exceed the wants of nature, by errors in our dietetic and other habits.

No very definite and exact rule can be laid down, which will be equally suited to all men, in the present state of society, in regard to the frequency with which connubial indulgences may take place, without injuring the constitution and predisposing to disease, both in the parents and the offspring. The healthy and the robust, after they are twenty-five or thirty years old, whose habits of exercise are active and vigorous, and whose pursuits of life partake more of physical than of mental effort, can safely indulge more freely than other men ; but even they can very easily transgress the constitutional laws of health and well-being ; and though many may pursue their

indulgences for a number of years, without seeming to be injuriously affected by them, yet, sooner or later, they inevitably reap the reward of their transgressions, and are often cut off suddenly, without any sufficient apparent cause; but more frequently they are visited with wasting infirmity, and protracted and loathsome disease, and early and extreme dotage.

Those who are troubled with weakness of lungs, spitting of blood, or in any other way predisposed to pulmonary complaints—those who are troubled with weakness of eyes, disorders of the stomach and bowels, or are predisposed to insanity, or afflicted with epilepsy,—in short, those who are suffering under diseases of any kind, should be exceedingly careful to avoid excess in sexual indulgence; and in some cases, total abstinence is absolutely necessary. Pulmonary consumption is always more speedily developed and terminated in death, by venereal pleasures. Diseases



of every sort are invariably aggravated by this cause ; and many of them cannot be cured, unless such pleasures are entirely suspended. Epilepsy, for instance, which is often induced by venereal excess, frequently defies all remedial agents and measures, until sexual pleasures are wholly abandoned.

It is, therefore, impossible to lay down a precise rule, which will be equally adapted to all men, in regard to the frequency of their connubial commerce. But as a general rule, it may be said to the healthy and robust, it were better for you not to exceed, in the frequency of your indulgences, the number of months in the year ; and you cannot habitually exceed the number of weeks in the year, without in some degree impairing your constitutional powers, shortening your lives, and increasing your liability to disease and suffering ; if indeed you do not thereby actually induce disease of the worst and most painful kind ; and at the same time transmit to your

offspring an impaired constitution, with strong and unhappy predispositions.—(See Note E.)

Let no one demur at this. Remember, my young friends, the end of your organization! Recollect that the *final cause* of your organs of reproduction—the propagation of your species—requires but seldom the exercise of their function!—and remember that the higher capabilities of man qualify him for more exalted and exalting pleasures than lie within the precincts of sensual enjoyment!—and remember, also, that by all we go beyond the real wants of nature, in the indulgence of our appetites, we debase our intellectual and moral powers, increase the carnal influences over our mental and moral faculties, and circumscribe our field of rational acquisition and ennobling pleasures.

Who, then, would yield to sensuality, and forego the higher dignity of his nature, and be contented to spend his life and all his energies in the low satisfactions of a brute! when earth



and heaven are full of motives for noble and exalting enterprise?—and when time and eternity are the fields which lie before him, for his achievements of virtue, and happiness, and immortality, and unperishing glory?

There is a common error of opinion among young men, which is, perhaps, not wholly confined to the young,—that health requires an emission of semen at stated periods, and that frequent nocturnal emissions in sleep are not incompatible with health. Nay, indeed, “many entertain the notion that to give loose to venereal indulgence, increases the energy and activity of the mind, sharpens the wit, gives brilliancy and power to the imagination, and beautiful and sublime flights to fancy!” —All this is wrong,—entirely, dangerously wrong! Health does not absolutely require that there should ever be an emission of semen from puberty to death, though the individual live an hundred years :—and the frequency of

involuntary, nocturnal emissions, is an indubitable proof, that the parts at least, are suffering under a debility, and morbid irritability, utterly incompatible with the general welfare of the system: and the mental faculties are always debilitated and impaired by such indulgences.—(See Note F.)

If an unmarried man finds himself troubled with concupiscence, let him be more abstemious, and less stimulating and heating in his diet, and take more active exercise in the open air, and use the cold bath under proper circumstances; and there will be no necessity for an emission of his semen:—especially if, with proper chastity of mind, he avoids lewd images and conceptions. And if a married man finds himself inclined to an excess of sexual indulgence, let him adopt the same regimen, and he will soon find that he has no reason to complain of what he calls his natural propensity. All men can be chaste in body and in mind, if they truly desire it, and



if they use the right means to be so.\* But it is a perfect mockery, to talk about our inherent and ungovernable passions, while we take every measure to deprave our instinctive propensities, and to excite our passions, and render them ungovernable and irresistible.

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By far the worst form of venereal indulgence, is self-pollution ; or, what is called “Onanism.” Though, by the by, the term Onanism is altogether misused, in this application ; and I apprehend that all writers, who have used it in this sense, have entirely misconceived the offence of Onan, whose name is here used to designate the act or practice of self-pollution.

The view which has been taken of the conduct of Onan, according to the scripture

\* The experience of hundreds in our country, during the last five or six years, has proved the truth of this statement.

account, Gen. xxxviii., is, that Onan's wasting his seed upon the ground, was "the head and front of his offence," in the sight of the Lord, and that for which the Lord slew him. But this is altogether a mistake. The gist of his crime, which incurred the displeasure and infliction of the Lord, was his refusing to raise up seed to his deceased brother, according to the requirement of the divine law. The act of Onan, therefore, was in no respect of such a character, as to justify the use of his name, to designate the far more obscene, and grossly sensual and unnatural act of self-pollution.

This exceedingly pernicious practice, I say, is incomparably the worst form of venereal indulgence : and for several important reasons.

In the FIRST PLACE, it is wholly unnatural ; and, in every respect, does violence to nature. The mental action, and the power of the imagination on the genital organs, forcing a vital stimulation of the parts, which is re-



flected over the whole nervous system, are exceedingly intense and injurious ; and consequently the reciprocal influences between the brain and the genital organs become extremely powerful, and irresistible, and destructive. The general, prolonged, and rigid tension of the muscular and nervous tissues, is excessively severe and violent. In short, the consentaneous effort, and concentrated energy of all the powers of the human system, to this single forced effect, cause the most ruinous irritation, and violence, and exhaustion, and debility to the system.

In the SECOND PLACE, it is generally commenced very early in life. All who are acquainted with the science of human life, are well aware that all excesses, and injuries of every kind, are far more pernicious and permanent in their effects on the youthful and growing body, than when all the organs and parts are completely developed, and the constitution and general economy fully and

firmly established. This is the great reason why many men who fall into ruinous habits, after they are twenty-five or thirty years of age, will live on, in spite of those habits, by the virtues of a well-established and vigorous constitution, till they arrive at what we commonly call old age ; while the children of the same men, following their fathers' evil example, and forming those ruinous habits when very young, become early victims, and fall prematurely into the grave.

We have seen, in the preceding parts of this discourse,\* that the organs constituting the apparatus necessary for the function of reproduction, are not complete until many years after birth. The period of puberty varies with climate and diet ; and in some instances it is also considerably affected by hereditary peculiarities. As a general rule, the human species are capable of procreating earlier in life in warm climates than in cold :

\* See page 36.



and it is entirely certain, that as a general fact, puberty is hastened on by a free use of animal food, and other more stimulating and heating articles of diet. It is also certain that precocious puberty is sometimes the result of inherited peculiarities :—and who that is competent to form an opinion on this subject, will doubt that lechery is at least as hereditary as insanity, consumption, gout, &c. &c.

But whatever may be the age of puberty—which in our country rarely takes place in males earlier than about the fourteenth or fifteenth year of life—certain it is, that all venereal use of the genital organs, before that time, is shockingly unnatural and pernicious. Yet it is generally previous to this time, and frequently many years before it, that the debasing and ruinous practice of self-pollution is commenced. Indeed, the habit has in some instances been begun as early as the fifth or sixth year : and shocking as it may seem, nurses, and even *parents*, have been the teach-

ers of this abominable vice ! One of the most melancholy and remediless cases I ever knew, commenced in very early childhood, under the care, and by the immediate instruction of a nurse ; and before the boy was old enough to know the dangers of the practice, the habit had become so powerful, that he was wholly unable to resist it ; and when he had reached the age of twenty, with a broken-down constitution, with a body full of disease, and with a mind in ruins, the loathsome habit still tyrannized over him, with the inexorable imperiousness of a fiend of darkness !

Servants, and other laboring people of loose morals, often become the secret preceptors of children in this debasing sin. It is, however, more frequently communicated from one boy to another ; and sometimes a single boy will corrupt many others. But the most fruitful sources of instruction in this vice, are our public schools—and especially boarding schools and colleges. The extent to which this evil



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

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

proper instructions concerning it, is very guilty of a dangerous neglect of parental duty.

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



Those teachers in Europe who have turned their attention to this exceedingly important subject, have found it one of the most serious difficulties which they have to grapple with, in the education of boys. And would the officers of our colleges and seminaries for youth, fully explore this matter, within their own official precincts, they would discover an amount of pollution which would fill them with abhorrence, and reveal to them some important secrets, in relation to the early failure of the health of so many of their pupils and graduates. I have been informed of facts, by persons of extensive research on this subject, and whose professional business made it their duty to investigate it, the mere recital of which is enough to chill with horror the heart of every one that listens to it ; but they are too shockingly obscene to be detailed in such a discourse as this. Suffice it here to say, that the early forming of the habit of self-

pollution is one of the most alarming evils in our land.—(See Note G.) \*

In the THIRD PLACE, it is a secret and solitary vice, which requires the consent of no second person,—and therefore the practice has little to prevent its frequency : and as it necessarily and very soon produces a preternatural prurience in the genital organs, and a reciprocity of influence between these and the brain, which leads to the permanent establishment of those associations of the mind with the unclean sensibility, that, on all occasions of opportunity, suggest the deed, the practice almost inevitably becomes more and more frequent, as the mischievous effects are experienced, until it sometimes reaches the most ruinous excess, and acquires a power which irresistibly urges on the unhappy sufferer, in the voluntary course of self-destruction.—(See Note H.)

\* See also remarks from Annals of Education, and Dr. Woodward's Letter, on pages 1 and 2.



I have had boys come to me, with complaints of ill health, who, on being closely questioned on this point, have confessed that they had indulged in this practice as often as three times in twenty-four hours ; and sometimes thrice in a single night ; and this, in some instances, years before the period of puberty. In fact, a very considerable proportion of the dyspepsia, and other forms of chronic disease, in our country, may be traced back to the early frequency of this vice, as one of their roots.

In the FOURTH PLACE, it impairs the intellectual and moral faculties, and debases the mind, in the greatest degree ; and causes the most deep and lasting regret, which sometimes rises to the most pungent remorse and despair.

It would seem as if God had written an instinctive law of remonstrance, in the innate moral sense, against this filthy vice ; for, however ignorant the boy may be of the moral character of the act, or of the physical and

mental evils which result from it—though he may never have been told that it is wrong—yet every one who is guilty of it, feels an instinctive shame, and deep self-loathing, even in his secret solitude, after the unclean deed is done!—and that youth has made no small progress in the depravity of his moral feelings, who has so silenced the dictates of natural modesty, that he can, without the blush of shame, pollute himself in the presence of another—even his most intimate companion! Hence all who give themselves up to the excesses of this debasing indulgence, carry about with them, continually, a consciousness of their defilement, and cherish a secret suspicion that others look upon them as debased beings. They cannot meet the look of others, and especially of the female sex, with the modest boldness of conscious innocence and purity; but their eyes fall, suddenly abashed, and the glow of mingled shame and confusion comes upon their cheeks, when they meet the



glance of those with whom they are conversing, or in whose company they are. They feel none of that manly confidence, and gallant spirit, and chaste delight, in the presence of virtuous females, which stimulate young men to pursue the course of ennobling refinement, and mature them for the social relations and enjoyments of life; and hence, they are often inclined, either to shun the society of females entirely, or to seek such as is by no means calculated to elevate their views, nor improve their taste nor morals. And if, by the kind offices of friends, they are put forward into good society, they are continually oppressed with a shrinking embarrassment, which makes them feel as if they were out of their own element, and look forward to the time of retirement as the time of their release from an unpleasant situation. A want of self-respect disqualifies them for the easy and elegant courtesies which render young men interesting to the other sex; and often prevents their

forming those honorable relations in life, so desirable to every virtuous heart; and frequently dooms them, either to a gloomy celibacy or an early grave.

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

It cannot be otherwise, than that such a deep and abiding sense of self-debasement, should either drive the unhappy sufferer into the lowest scenes of vice, where his moral sensibilities may become, as it were, seared with the hot iron of iniquity, or produce as profound and permanent a feeling of regret and remorse, which ever and anon sweeps over the soul with a most sickening and withering influence, inducing despondency, and sometimes utter despair and weariness of life! And happy were it for such sufferers, if an



entire reformation and subsequent course of virtue, could always cleanse the memory from the painful recollection of these things: but alas!—not unfrequently, after many years of correct habits have elapsed, and the early transgressor has become a virtuous and worthy and respectable head of a family and member of society,—when by some means or other, his worried and debilitated nerves have taken on a highly morbid irritability, the remembrance of this early vice will return upon him, as if the fountains of hell had broken up, and flooded his soul with all the horrors of the world of wo! And in these times of unutterable anguish and despair, it is often difficult to restrain the miserable sufferer from immediate self-destruction.—(See Note I.)

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HAVING thus taken a general view of the anatomy and physiology involved in the subject before us, and pretty fully considered the

relative effects of the different species of venereal indulgence and excess, we now proceed to a more detailed consideration of the evils resulting from these excesses, and especially from self-pollution.

One of the first effects of the abuse of the genital organs, is the development in them of an unhealthy degree of their peculiar sensibility,—rendering them far more susceptible of excitement, and establishing something like an habitual desire for indulgence. Of course, this state of things cannot be carried very far, without considerably affecting the whole nervous system, and disturbing the functions of the several organs, more or less, according to their relative importance to the immediate welfare of the whole body.

The STOMACH, being more immediately connected with the great centre of the nerves of organic life, and more largely supplied with nerves and blood-vessels than any other organ in the body, may be considered the grand



central organ, whose peculiar endowments, relations and duties are such as to render it of the utmost importance to the general system, and to establish between it and all the other organs, the strongest and most immediate sympathy; so that it, in a peculiar manner, partakes of the irritations, disturbances and affections, of every portion of the whole system; and consequently, while the nervous system, as a whole—and especially the nerves of organic life—suffers by every improper act of venereal indulgence, the stomach, as a particular organ, more directly and powerfully sympathizes with the genital organs, in all their excitements and affections, than any other organ or portion of the body. Hence the function of digestion is the first to suffer from this disturbing cause; and unless some other organ, in consequence of predisposition, or the action of other causes, is so affected by the general and the reflected irritation from the venereal excitement, as to become itself

the seat of local disease, and thus relieve the stomach from a morbid concentration of the irritations, this latter organ will inevitably become seriously disordered, and soon exhibit symptoms of painful disease: and if the abuses are persevered in, it will, in time, become so exceedingly weak and irritable, that it will hardly be able to perform its function at all,—even with all the helps that can be afforded it.

The appetite will become very capricious: and the utmost caution will be necessary in regard to the diet; and even then, the food will often cause great distress in the stomach, and frequently be thrown off with violent eructations. A dull, gnawing pain will be almost constantly felt at the pit of the stomach; and sometimes it will become intensely acute and shooting; while an indescribable sensation of sinking, death-like faintness, attended frequently with a distressing fluttering, or spasmodic affections, will be experienced in the same region, almost without intermission, un-



less it is momentarily relieved by stimulants ; and in that case it will always return, with redoubled force, when the stimulation is over. A general sense of languor, and debility, and exhaustion will be felt, and the unhappy offender will be supposed to be suffering under confirmed dyspepsia ; and in some cases, acute inflammation, and morbid sensibility, of the most excruciating and dangerous character, will suddenly take place.

But the stomach is not alone in these disorders ; the intestinal canal, throughout its whole length, shares in the general and particular evil. Its functions in every respect are impaired. The crude chyme received from the stomach affords, in the general disturbance, but ill-digested chyle. Irritations, debility, costiveness, diarrhœa, cholics, spasmodic disorders, &c., reduce the intestines to a deplorable state ; frequently terminating in hemorrhoids, ulcerations, and purulent discharges from the anus. •

The HEART, arteries, and all the other blood-vessels, including the whole capillary system, partaking directly of the diffused excitement of the genital organs, and sharing in the affections and conditions of the stomach, and suffering from the convulsive efforts, and distentions, and repeated irritations, become exceedingly debilitated and relaxed;—the circulation becomes very feeble and languid, and the pulse small, slow and fluttering, and frequently intermittent;—the capillary action becomes sluggish and imperfect;—the blood is not completely renovated in the lungs;—the calorific function is proportionately impaired;—the vital changes, depending on the healthy state and energy of the capillary vessels, suffer in proportion to the morbid irritability and debility of those organs: and thus all the processes of digestion, absorption, and depuration, are imperfectly performed—nutrition languishes—the fluids become crude and irritating, and the solids diseased; and emaciation, lassitude,



general chilliness, coldness of the extremities, and great debility ensue. In this state, the violent convulsive paroxysms attending the acme of venereal indulgence, often cause spasms in the heart, arresting entirely its function, and sometimes producing aneurisms, or bursting of its walls, and suffering the blood to gush out into the pericardium; and causing sudden death, in the unclean act.

The LUNGS are, to a considerable extent, made up of nerves and blood-vessels, and are peculiarly associated with the heart and stomach. They, therefore, in common with all the other organs involved in the grand network of the nervous tissue, suffer the common excitement and debility of the whole nervous system, from the acts of venereal indulgence, and share most largely with the stomach and heart in all their disturbances and disorders. Hence, they soon become debilitated and impaired in all their tissues, and incompetent to perform their important duties healthfully.

They also become excessively susceptible of the effects of atmospheric changes, and of noxious air ; and become so morbidly sympathetic, that all oppressions and disturbances of the stomach, irritate them to a greater or less degree, causing phthisical or ashmatic affections, and difficulties of breathing, dry, hacking cough, and hoarseness of the voice. And where there is the least predisposition to pulmonary consumption, the development and fatal determination of that disease are rapidly hastened on ; and, in thousands of instances, where no such predisposition exists, the consumption is induced and rendered fatal, by venereal excesses, and especially in the form of self-pollution.

Sometimes the over-excited and convulsed heart throws the blood into the lungs more rapidly than their debilitated, relaxed and distended vessels can dispose of it ; and then follow great difficulties of breathing, distressing apoplectic feeling, perhaps fainting, or rupture



of the vessels, hemorrhage of the lungs, and gushing of blood from the mouth and nostrils. Sometimes acute inflammation, resulting in rapid change of structure, is suddenly induced; and, in other cases, with the pulmonary congestion, a spasm of the heart arrests its action, so that it cannot receive the returning blood from the lungs, and sudden death ensues, by a species of pulmonary apoplexy.

The LIVER and KIDNEYS share equally with the other organs in the common injury: the former, being peculiarly associated with the stomach by nervous distributions, partakes immediately of all its irritations. Disordered function, morbid condition, the formation of calculi in its cavities, hardening or ulceration of its substance, general change of structure, consumption, &c., are among the evils which are caused in it, by venereal abuses. Jaundice, in its worst and most unmanageable form, often results from these derangements of the liver. The kidneys are affected nearly

in the same manner. Sometimes they are so prostrated and diseased that they become excessive in their crude secretions, and fatal diabetes terminates the hapless career of transgressions. Sometimes, when this disorder does not supervene, the crudely assimilated urine forms calculi in the kidneys and bladder, which become the source of many years suffering, and perhaps, finally, of a painful and premature death.

In other cases, the irritating urine tortures the morbidly sensitive neck of the bladder and the urethra into a permanently diseased state; spasmodic affections and strangury often occur; and ulcerations and catarrhal affections of the lining membrane take place, attended with purulent discharges from the penis.

The **EXTERNAL SKIN**, throughout its whole expanse, which is little more than a vasculo-nervous texture of capillary and filamentary extremities, corresponding in structure, and to a considerable extent, in office, and recipro-



cating in sympathy with the internal mucous membrane, suffers astonishingly from the direct excitements of venereal abuses, and fully participates in all the injuries of the mucous membrane, and of the internal organs generally. Exceedingly oppressed, debilitated and relaxed, it fails to accomplish its important duties; insensible perspiration is greatly diminished; impurities are accumulated in the system, clogging its whole economy, preventing nutrition, and tending to local disease, (biles, running sores, suppurating blisters, &c.,) as a means of throwing off the peccant matter of the body. The skin loses its healthy, clear and fresh appearance, and assumes a sickly, pale, shrivelled, turbid and cadaverous aspect;—becoming exceedingly susceptible to the injurious effects of cold, heat, moisture, and other disturbing causes. In some instances, a distressing chilliness is almost continually experienced in the region of the spine; and in other cases, the sufferer is tormented with a

kind of itching, or a feeling as if myriads of ants were crawling over the surface of the body.

Sudden changes of temperature and condition of atmosphere not only more powerfully affect the skin, but through it, the whole system, and especially the stomach and lungs. Rheumatic and inflammatory complaints, and, indeed, disorders of every kind, are therefore either induced or much aggravated by this cutaneous condition.

“Pimples of a livid hue come out upon the forehead and about the nose, and often over the whole face ; and even ulcerous sores, in some cases, break out upon the head, breast, back and thighs ; and these sometimes enlarge into permanent fistulas, of a cancerous character, and continue, perhaps for years, to discharge great quantities of fœtid, loathsome pus, and not unfrequently terminate in death.”

In such a diseased state of the organs, and general derangement of the functions of the



system, all the vital processes of nutrition must necessarily be impaired, and often exceedingly depraved. A general wasting of the body, and deterioration of all its tissues and substances, must almost inevitably result. The vital contractility of the muscular tissue is impaired, and the muscles generally become relaxed and emaciated. “The voluntary motions are feeble and irresolute ; and the gait weak and perhaps tottering ; and the chest bent forward, with a drooping of the head and shoulders ;—and the knees feel unable to sustain the weight of the body ;” and a general and sometimes extreme debility and palsy of the voluntary powers is experienced. The cellular tissue suffers a diminution of its elasticity, and becomes stiff, and often so inflexible as to prevent the full play of the organs. The bones become dry and brittle, and in some cases carious, causing and keeping up offensive and loathsome running sores ; and in early life, distortions of the spine and chest,

and general rickety appearance and deformity of the frame, are sometimes caused by the abuses of the genital organs. The teeth decay and become black and loose, and in some instances drop out of the jaws, while the transgressor is yet in the beginning of life. The lips lose their color, and the gums become pale, flaccid, and often ulcerous. The chyle, blood, saliva, mucous secretions, gastric and pancreatic fluids, bile, urine, tears, and all the other fluids and humors of the body, become crude, acrid and irritating, and serve to increase the disease of the solids, and the general and special derangement of function.

But in this extensive mischief, the NERVOUS SYSTEM, all along, leads the way in suffering, and is the grand medium of injury to all the other tissues and substances of the body. Not only are the nerves generally debilitated, and the nerves of organic life tortured into a diseased irritability and sensibility, but there is also a great deterioration and wasting of the



nervous substance. The common vital properties of the nerves, by which the general functions of the system are carried on—as we have already seen—are always impaired in proportion to the excess of the evil of which we are treating. The special nervous properties suffer in due proportion—varying in different persons, with different peculiarities. The sense of touch becomes obtuse and less discriminating, and in some instances, a numbness of the extremities and limbs, and even of the whole body, is experienced,—approaching to, and in fact sometimes actually reaching that state which is commonly called numb palsy. The sense of taste is equally blunted, and loses that delicate perception of agreeable qualities on which the delightful relish of proper and healthful food depends; and hence the unnatural demand for vicious culinary preparations, and stimulating condiments, and the utter distaste for simple diet. The sense of smell becomes impaired, and loses its nice

discriminating power, and but faintly perceives the rich fragrance which the vegetable kingdom breathes forth for man's enjoyment. The ear grows dull and hard of hearing, and oftentimes a continual and distressing ringing, like the knell of ruined health, and the prognostic of evils yet more fearful, is the only music which occupies it.

But, of all the special senses, the eyes, more generally, are the greatest sufferers from venereal abuses. They become languid and dull, and lose their brightness and liveliness of expression, and assume a glassy and vacant appearance ; and fall back into their sockets, and perhaps become red and inflamed, and weak and excessively sensible, so that wind, light, &c., irritate and distress them. The sight becomes feeble, obscure, cloudy, confused, and often is entirely lost—and utter blindness fills the rest of life with darkness and unavailing regret.



The organs of smelling, seeing, hearing and tasting, and especially the eyes, which are generally much the greatest sufferers, are probably most directly affected through the fifth pair of nerves, and the filaments of the nerves of organic life which belong to and preside over the vital functions of the blood-vessels distributed to these organs. These, taking on a high degree of morbid irritability and sensibility, engorgement, debility and inflammation succeed ; and finally, the olfactory, optic, acoustic and gustatory nerves themselves become impaired, diseased, and in some cases destroyed.

The SPINAL MARROW sometimes becomes the focal point of mischief, from these filthy outrages on nature ; and by its consumption, accelerates the general work of ruin, to a most loathsome termination in death.

The BRAIN is neither last nor least in these terrible sufferings. Associated as it is with the genital organs, it participates largely in all

their direct excitements : the cerebral blood-vessels become distended and relaxed ; and thus the brain, necessarily, becomes debilitated by the frequent venereal irritations ; and as necessarily partakes of the evils resulting from general derangement of functions, and deterioration of properties. Its extreme irritability, and its morbid sympathy with the alimentary canal, heart and lungs, as a mere *animal* organ, cause it not only to suffer excessively from all their irritations, but to reflect those irritations back upon the same organs, and throughout the whole system ; and thus exceedingly increase the general disorder, and hasten on the work of ruin. In this manner, epilepsy is often induced, and rendered a permanent disease of the system ; and this, again, peculiarly increases the sufferings and injuries of the brain, throughout all its important organs and faculties and powers ;—debilitating—wasting—destroying. Paralysis—partial and general—often occurs. Apoplexy is also a



legitimate, and not unfrequent effect of these causes, which increases, with terrible efficacy, the fearfulness of the general anarchy of the system, and sometimes forecloses the whole by sudden death, even in the very act of venereal indulgence; and thrusts the filthy transgressor, with all his abominable pollutions upon him, uncovered, into the presence of God, where perhaps the only utterance which will greet his ear will be—"He that is filthy, let him be filthy still!"

The MENTAL and MORAL FACULTIES of the brain, are fully involved in the general and special injuries; and the mental powers and manifestations are proportionably impaired. The mind becomes exceedingly carnal, and inclined to dwell on sensual subjects, and cherish sensual images; and by degrees, becomes more and more averse to special application and continued effort. All systematic discipline and education become extremely irksome to it. Its energies and elasticity grad-

ually decline ; and by imperceptible degrees, it becomes weak and fickle. Its powers of application, and perception, and reflection continually diminish, and memory slowly decays,—until the unhappy transgressor feels that the buoyancy of his childhood is gone, and that his mind has lost its sprightliness and vigor ;—and when he would give his attention to subjects requiring continued and connected thought, he experiences a feeling of reluctance and irresoluteness, a shrinking from mental effort, which he does not feel able to overcome :—or, if he occasionally succeeds in making the attempt, he soon learns that his intellectual powers are too feeble to endure protracted application and effort ; and too obtuse to be capable of clear and distinct perception and reflection. His mind seems confused, and clouded, and crippled.

Sometimes this general mental decay continues with the continued abuses, till the wretched transgressor sinks into a miserable



fatuity, and finally becomes a confirmed and degraded idiot, whose deeply sunken and vacant glossy eye, and livid, shrivelled countenance, and ulcerous, toothless gums, and foetid breath, and feeble, broken voice, and emaciated and dwarfish and crooked body, and almost hairless head—covered, perhaps, with suppurating blisters and running sores—denote a premature old age—a blighted body—and a ruined soul!—and he drags out the remnant of his loathsome existence, in exclusive devotion to his horridly abominable sensuality.—(See Note J.)—More frequently, however, the mental powers maintain their existence, to inflict, if possible, a deeper and a darker vengeance on the miserable offender. Beginning with occasional dejection of spirits, he goes on in his transgression, till an habitual depression, and then a deeper gloom, and then a cheerless melancholy, gathers in permanent darkness over his soul.

The continual prurience of his genital organs appeals almost incessantly to his brain, and drags his mental energies and operations into the polluted current of his tyrant passion ; and his imagination is constantly filled with lewd and obscene images, so that he scarcely has the power to fix his thoughts, for any length of time, on other subjects. If he attempts to read or study, ever and anon his book will fade away, and a lascivious image will occupy his mental vision, and stir up the unclean fires of morbid lust. If he endeavors to give his thoughts to the most solemn and sacred subjects, still he is haunted with images of lewdness ; and even when he attempts to pray to the omniscient and holy God, these filthy harpies of his imagination will often flit between his soul and Heaven, and shake pollution on him from their horrid wings ! Almost every object that he sees, will, by a diseased association, suggest the debasing vice ; and his eye can scarcely fall, by accident, on



the sexual parts of any female animal, without awakening a train of obscene thoughts, and exciting a foul concupiscence. The moral sensibilities of his soul may sometimes be aroused, and remonstrate with horror against this terrible defilement and degradation of the mind ; but the despotic lust subjugates everything, and forces the mental and the voluntary powers into subserviency to its imperious desires.

Thus the mind, amidst its sufferings, is made to re-act upon the very source of all the mischief ; and thereby augment, to a more irresistible degree of madness, the power of ruin !

With mind and body thus pouring their morbid energies in one resistless tide, along the channel of sexual lust, the miserable transgressor *cannot help but choose to yield* ; and he is borne onward, in voluntary necessity, down the rapids of destruction towards the awful cataract of final and utter ruin ! By every stimu-

lation of his body, and every excitement of his mind, the blood is accumulated in his genital organs, forcing them to increased action and secretion, and thus augmenting their prurience and influence over the mental and voluntary powers. The devoted sensualist yields to the morbid propensity, and again, and again, and again, and perhaps with increasing frequency, repeats the obscene and debasing and destructive indulgence. Nor are the deep depression of his spirits—the general languor, and debility, and disquietude, and anguish of his body—the dizziness and pain of his head—the unspeakable distress at the pit of his stomach—the asthmatic difficulty of breathing—the dry and hacking cough—the burning pains in his loins, and genital organs, and thighs, and ancles—and the failing senses—and the perishing mind, sufficient to arrest his course! Indeed, he often repeats the odious indulgence, as the drunkard flies to his bottle, to find in the destructive excitement, while it lasts, a mo-



mentary alleviation from that insupportable misery which the practice has brought upon him ! Thus, everything seems to combine to make sure his ruin.

The GENITAL ORGANS, themselves, often suffer in the most extreme degree. Their peculiar susceptibilities and sensibilities become morbidly excessive,—an undue quantity of blood is received and retained in them,—the secretions of the parts become unhealthy and excessive, and extremely irritating and debilitating—tending always to produce turgescence, inflammation, and change of structure. Heat and burning of the parts—shocking enlargement of the spermatic cords—swelling—inflammation—intense sensibility—excruciating pain—induration—scirrhus and ulceration of the testicles, are among the terrible evils which result from venereal excess. In other cases, a general withering, and impotence, and decay of the parts, commences and continues on, with the continuing vice, till almost every

vestige of the *insignia*, and all the power of virility, are gone. But before this shocking result of continued outrage has taken place, the extremely debilitated and excessively irritable parts, sympathizing with all the disturbances of the brain and alimentary canal—and, in fact, with those of every part of the system—become excited on every slight occasion, and an involuntary emission of crude and watery, and sometimes bloody semen occurs; and in many instances, “a continual gonorrhœa, or constant dribbling of thin purulent matter from the penis, is experienced.”

SLEEP, from the first abuses of the body, is less sound and sweet and refreshing; and, at length, it becomes restless, and disturbed, and broken; and full of obscene dreams, which are connected with nocturnal and involuntary emissions of semen—sometimes as often as thrice in the same night. Still the infatuated sufferer will pursue his voluntary uncleanness, as if the hand of necessity were on him,



compelling him to offer himself a voluntary sacrifice on the ignominious altar of lewd sensuality. And not unfrequently is the practice continued when the emissions are blood ! —(See Note J.)

The most excessive debility, and distressing languor and anguish, and unutterable melancholy, are necessary consequences of these excesses. The self-afflicted sufferer feels that his life is a painful burden to him. Filled with self-contempt, and disgust, and reproach, he feels sick of himself and everything around him. He has no relish for the ordinary amusements and pleasures of life—no enjoyment of society. He is continually tormented with vague anxiety and fear ;—and is constantly full of disquietude, and anguish, and dread, and frequently falls into tears, and sighs and weeps without the apprehension of any definite cause. Self-destruction becomes the common theme of his thoughts. Remorse and despair at times overwhelm his soul, and

his misery is unspeakable. He would give worlds to be annihilated. His life is intolerable, and he often determines, and still fears, to throw it off. Amidst this dreadful conflict, reason is frequently dethroned, and terrible insanity usurps its place ; and fearful indeed—beyond description fearful—are the ruins thus produced ! But still, amidst this general wreck and desolation of all that *was* a rational and moral being, the foul and fiendish lust remains—the tyrant of the ruined soul—driving, with maniac instinct, the miserable and loathsome body to the continual perpetration of the destructive and horridly abominable vice ! And nothing but constant watching, and pinions, and manacles, can prevent the continuance of this shocking practice, even in utter insanity.

Among the hapless inmates of the lunatic asylum, none is more incorrigible or more incurable than the wretched victim of this odious vice. What of the fragments of his shattered reason he is still capable of gathering up from



the general wreck, he craftily exercises in devising means and securing opportunities to elude the vigilance of his keepers, and to indulge his imperious lust.—(See Note K.)

If, however, this loathsome practice does not, in every instance, result in all these fearful consequences, be assured, my young friends, that it always and inevitably impairs the constitution, abbreviates the period of life, and produces an immense amount of suffering. For, although the practice may be abandoned, or give place to connubial commerce, and by proper measures, the pernicious effects may, in some degree, be overcome, yet through life, the early offender will, to a greater or less extent, experience the penalties of his transgression. He will find himself, at all times, more easily and powerfully affected, by those causes which disturb the vital economy. He will be less able to endure fatigue, and heat, and cold, and sudden changes of temperature and condition and circumstances. His digestive



powers will be more easily disordered and deranged ; and dyspepsia, and pulmonary consumption, and all the chronic diseases incident to human life, will be more readily induced in him. And on all occasions of indisposition, he will be more liable to those depressions of spirits, and turns of melancholy, and perhaps remorse and despair, which are connected with the morbid irritability of the nervous system.

But above all—especially to him who, from the love of virtue and religion, would be pure in heart, and lead a righteous and holy life—the power of depraved sensuality, resulting from this early vice, will constitute a most soul-sickening affliction. A preternatural susceptibility to the excitements of concupiscence, and a diseased association of the cerebral and genital organs, will render it impossible for him, at all times, to avoid that adultery of the heart which consists in the look of lust. He will often feel himself in the predicament of those of whom the apostle Peter says—“ Hav-



ing eyes full of adultery, they cannot cease from sin." Unclean thoughts and lascivious images will frequently be suggested to his mind, and break in upon his meditations ; and sometimes force themselves, like the ghost of the murdered, even into his most consecrated moments and exercises of devotion—filling his soul with shuddering horror, and constraining him to cry out, in the deep anguish and agony of his persecuted spirit—" Oh, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? "

This unhappy condition of his system will render him peculiarly liable to temptations ; and frequently, perhaps, in the course of his earthly career, will his morbid susceptibilities bring him, at an unguarded moment, so completely under the influence of circumstances, that he will be hurried into the performance of those acts which his better feelings abhor, and which will fill him with bitter repentance and remorse—not only for the time, but as

often as he remembers them through life. And in some instances, it may be, his morbid susceptibility to temptation will draw him into circumstances which he would not have deliberately chosen, and lead him, by a kind of moral necessity, to the perpetration of those criminal deeds which he would have contemplated with horror, and which seem so completely to cut off his retreat, without exposure, that he feels himself compelled to advance in crime, till he terminates his career in ruin and infamy—and is regarded by mankind as a wretch too utterly depraved and destitute of virtue, to deserve the common sympathies of humanity !

Alas ! how little are mankind aware that the crimes which exclude their perpetrators from the pale of human charity, and consign them to a life of obloquy or an ignominious death, are frequently but the legitimate fruits of seeds sown in early childhood, even by a mother's and a father's hand ; and quickened



into development, and nurtured to maturity, by the hot-bed influence of civic life ; while at every step in the descending course, the voluntary agent feels himself the subject of circumstances and influences which he cannot control.

But, my young friends, do not for a moment think that I intend to apologize for crime, nor that I wish to extenuate, in the least degree, the sinfulness of man's moral depravity. I only would present these things in such a light, as shall make human beings feel more sensibly their parental and social obligations and responsibilities ; and perceive more clearly that truly enlightened and refined humanity and religion teach us not only to set our faces as a flint against all crime, but also, with equal integrity and zeal, by every means within our power, to endeavor to *save the criminal by preventing crime.*

Dark and terrible as the picture is, which I have now presented to your view, believe

me, my young friends, it is not an exaggerated one:—it is a faithful portraiture of reality! Yet, stern as are the lineaments of Truth, let not her aspect drive the penitent transgressor to despair, nor even for a moment discourage him from those wise and energetic measures and efforts by which he may alleviate his sufferings, and at least in some degree redeem himself from his misfortunes. To him who perseveres in this iniquity, there is no door of mercy open for his escape;—inevitable and utter ruin lies before him!—But, though far gone in his transgressions, and involved already in distressing consequences—to him who will stop short, and *now*—at once and forever—abandon this unseemly vice, and with a pure and penitent spirit, henceforth follow holiness, there is hope. Still, however, truth compels me to declare, that a constitution much impaired by venereal excesses, is in a condition which cannot justify high hopes of *immediate* and *complete* renovation.



Disorders of the system, thus induced, are difficult to be overcome. General and special injuries, morbid susceptibilities and irritabilities, and derangement of function, can be removed only by extremely slow and imperceptible degrees. All attempts to *force* the system into a more healthy action and condition, though they at first may be attended with a specious appearance of success, yet in the end most certainly defeat the very object for which they were applied, and almost invariably increase the difficulties, and accelerate the ruin. Such has been the error of opinion entertained concerning the nature of these disorders, by most of those who have hitherto undertaken to remedy the evils resulting from venereal excesses, that unhappily, their treatment has too generally been more destructive to the constitution and the vital powers, than even the complaints for which they prescribed : and thereby, the disorders growing out of the abuses of the genital organs, have come to be

considered more obstinate and irremediable than many of them really are.

It cannot be of any particular benefit to you, that I should, on this occasion, enter into a minute description of the different modes of treatment which have been pursued by different practitioners and empirics ; (for, unluckily for the sufferers, this is a field in which ignorant and mercenary quacks have figured largely, and, too frequently, with great pecuniary advantage to themselves.) Suffice it to say, that the whole farrago of stimulants, tonics, &c., &c., and the various mineral remedies and patent specifics, always and invariably increase the real mischief ; and while, in some instances, the particular symptoms are removed or changed, the radical principles of the disease are made to penetrate more deeply into the system, and the fundamental powers of the constitution are more exhausted and impaired.



In some cases, it is true, the unhappy sufferer is raised out of his immediate difficulties, and seems to be elevated near to the level of good health ; but it is only to be precipitated again, sooner or later, into deeper difficulties, of a more incorrigible character than those from which he was at first relieved. True, his relapse may be, and perhaps generally is, of such a type, and sometimes so remote from the original cause, that the sufferer may never suspect the real source of his recurrent afflictions. Nor is this all, nor even the worst of the case : too frequently, the deeply penetrating roots of the original disease shoot up their branches, and bear periodical fruits of suffering through life—gradually increasing in the frequency of their times, the exuberance of their fruits, and the duration of their seasons, till these run into each other, and cover the whole of the remaining life with disease and suffering ; and finally transmigrate and spring up, and bud and blossom, and bear fruits of



suffering and early death, in the offspring of the transgressor !

The instances are not unfrequent, in which the offender receives, as he supposes, entire relief from the hands of the calomel, or cantharides, or balm of Gilead doctor, and, in the *feeling* of his strength and health, enters into wedlock, and by the help of high-seasoned food, and wine, and brandy, and perhaps, occasionally, iron, and quinine, and cantharides, &c., sustains himself in the function of virility, for several months, and, it may be, for some years,—begetting puny offspring, which either fall abortive to the grave, or come forth to individual existence, weak and delicate, and full of predisposition to disease, and drag out a miserable period of suffering, covered with sores and ulcers, and deformed with rickets and distortions, and finally perish, infant Lazaruses, on whom are fearfully visited the iniquities of the father ! But they receive not all the penalty ; for the time soon comes



when the unhappy transgressor himself is plunged into the depths of calamity ! And by so much the more as he has used violent and unnatural means to elevate and sustain himself, by so much the deeper and more remedilessly will he sink ! And his unfortunate career too often closes in sottish drunkenness, or pulmonary or spinal consumption, or insanity, or utter despair ! or, what is even worse, he lives on, through many years, a life of protracted and unspeakable wretchedness. —(See Note L.)

My young friends, if any of you have been so unfortunate as to afflict yourselves by the unseemly practice of which I speak, I entreat you, as you value life and all that makes life dear, do not be decoyed into that vortex of ruin, which, under the name of remedy, the multitudinous empirics and impostors of the times have extended wide for your destruction. Remember always, that the only power

on earth by which the disordered or diseased body can possibly recover health, is in nature's own renovating, vital economy: and crippled nature often works extremely slow, and sometimes seems, for a long period, to make no progress towards our restoration. But neither in good nor evil, does nature always manifest immediately the effects produced in her. Through many years, the causes of disease act on us, working out our death, without our knowledge or suspicion, till some circumstance or influence, not very powerful in itself, consummates the destruction, and we die, and charge our death upon that single circumstance or cause: so, on the other hand, our renovating powers may operate for a considerable time in removing, as it were, the rubbish, and laying the foundations of the superstructure of our health, before we can perceive that superstructure to begin to rise. Slow, therefore, as nature's operations are, in any case, yet be assured, none other can be safe.



But are there no means by which we can aid nature in her operations, consistently with the peculiar character of her powers and renovating economy? Undoubtedly there are : but it is an exceedingly nice point to distinguish between those means which benefit, and those which injure us. Some things, applied to the living tissues of our organs, greatly excite them, and increase their action, and make us *feel* as if we were immediately benefited, and rapidly improving in our strength and health ; while, at the same time, the very qualities by which they excite the organs, and increase the general action of the system, and diffuse a sense of strength and vigor through the body, invariably impair the vital properties of the tissues on which they act, deteriorating the functional results, and leaving the system more exhausted and debilitated from their action.

Nevertheless, *these* may be so connected with other things, that the system, in spite of their injurious effects, may, in some instances,

recover health. But it is always a hazardous experiment, and very seldom even *apparently* successful. Still, I say, there are means which may be so applied as very greatly to assist the vital economy in its renovating operations ; and it is my purpose now, to point out some of them, which will be found exceedingly salutary to those who are suffering under the difficulties on which I have been treating.

But let me here again, my young friends, most solemnly adjure you, as you hope for health and happiness, to abstain from all those stimulants, and tonics, and specifics, of every kind, which are so abundantly prescribed in cases such as yours. It is hardly possible for you to imagine the extent of the calamities and sufferings which almost universally result from such a course of treatment ;—nothing can be more flatteringly deceptive ; and few things can be more surely fatal in the end, than the popular remedies of the day.



If you are extremely debilitated, remember that simple debility, alone, is far less to be dreaded than diseased action ; and if you are suffering under diseased action, it is better that that action should be feeble than violent : and remember, therefore, that by all you excite or stimulate the body, in this condition, by so much you increase the action of disease. Thus, a woman with a cancer in her breast, and with a body otherwise in health and vigor, may keep up the general vigor of her body, by means which, at the same time, will increase the action of the disease, that, in the form of a cancer, will soon destroy her life : and, on the other hand, she may reduce the general vigor and *apparent* health of her body, by means which, while they exceedingly debilitate the muscular powers, will, at the same time, enable the system to throw off the diseased action and affection of the breast, and rise again to universal health. But I say again, these natural operations of the vital

economy are extremely slow,—especially in cases where the system has been excessively injured by venereal abuses. Nevertheless, they are incomparably the safest and most sure.

If, therefore, you are very much reduced, and afflicted with involuntary nocturnal emissions, and distressed with pains, and impaired senses, and enfeebled mind, and cheerless melancholy, tending to despair and madness—remember the general and special sympathies and reciprocities which I have pointed out, and particularly those which exist between the genital organs and the alimentary canal and the brain; and remember, too, that in this morbid and exceedingly excitable and irritable condition of your system, things which may seem too trifling to deserve your notice may, nevertheless, be sufficient to keep up the disorders of your body: and therefore it is hardly possible for you to be too cautious, while in this condition, in regard to everything which



concerns your regimen and conduct. Every irritation and undue excitement of the brain and stomach and intestines, are calculated to continue the involuntary emissions ; while the latter, in turn, keep up and increase the morbid irritability of those organs. Improper kinds of food in the stomach and intestines will, in this excessively irritable state of the system, cause nocturnal emissions. Improper quantities of the best aliment in nature will produce the same effect ; and so, also, will the presence of food in the stomach, duodenum, &c., at improper times. An over-fulness, or late supper, will almost invariably cause this evil, in those who are liable to such an affliction ; and while these emissions continue, it is impossible for the system to recover strength and health. Costiveness of the bowels is also sure to keep up the nightly discharges ; and if recourse be had to medicine, for the purpose of keeping the bowels open, it is sure to perpetuate the mischief, by irritating and debilitating still

more the tissues of the alimentary canal, and, through them, the whole system.

The food, therefore, must be of such a character as will pass through the stomach and intestines with the least irritation and oppression; while, at the same time, it affords a sufficient supply of nourishment, and keeps up, in the most natural and healthful manner, a regular and free peristaltic action of the bowels. A person laboring under the difficulties which we are contemplating, must likewise avoid with great care every article of food of a crude and cold nature. Farinaceous food, properly prepared, is incomparably the best aliment for such a sufferer; and good bread, made of coarsely ground, unbolted wheat, or rye meal, and hominy, made of cracked wheat or rye, or Indian corn, are among the very best articles of diet that such a person can use. These, taken with or without a little good unfermented molasses, at proper times, and freely masticated, will digest



easily and pleasantly, and will be sure to keep up a regular and healthy motion of the bowels.

When the night emissions are frequent, and the system is extremely irritable, the patient should confine himself to a very few articles of diet, and eat but little, and be very uniform in all his habits; always very carefully avoiding full and late suppers. Milk will be found too exciting and too oppressive for such persons. No animal food, therefore, should be used, in any quantity, by the patient; and no other liquid than pure soft water should ever be drank by him.

I have had many young men come to me for advice, who were exceedingly reduced and afflicted by venereal errors; and I have invariably found that, after they had been relieved from nocturnal emissions for a considerable time, by strictly observing a correct regimen, and begun to feel themselves improving in spirits and health, a single glass of brandy

and water, or a glass of wine or porter, or a cigar, or a cup of coffee, or a full meal of flesh, would cause emissions in the succeeding night. I say again, therefore, the patient cannot be too careful to observe a strictly correct and undeviating regimen; nor too scrupulously avoid spirits, and wine, and malt liquors, and every other kind of alcoholic drinks—even in the smallest quantity; and opium, and tobacco, and coffee, and tea, and all other narcotics; and pepper, and ginger, and mustard, and horse-radish, and peppermint;—and, in short, every kind of stimulating and heating substances.

But it is said that the patient requires something more warming and stimulating than farinaceous food and water, to increase the tone and action of the organs, and enable them to perform their functions satisfactorily. Granting this, in some sense, to be true—shall we therefore use stimulants, which, while they increase the action, necessarily deteriorate the



functional results, and impair the vital properties of the tissues on which they act, especially when there are natural and healthy and invigorating means of increasing the tone and action of the organs, to the full extent that the nature of the case requires, or can well sustain? No! let the patient, like a rational and intelligent being, promote the tone and action of his organs, and general vigor of his system, by active exercise; and let him exhilarate himself by free and copious draughts of the pure air of heaven. Let him go to the gymnasium, and with moderate beginning, and gradual increase of effort, let him swing upon and climb the poles, and ropes, and ladders, and vault upon the wooden horse, and practice all the other feats of that admirable institution; or let him ride on horseback,\* and walk, and run, and jump, or labor on the farm; and avoid sedentary habits, and all

\* But if riding on horseback causes involuntary emissions, this mode of exercise must be avoided.

anxieties and excitements of the mind ; and most strictly shun all dalliance with females, and all lewd books, and obscene conversation, and lascivious images and thoughts. Let him sleep on a hard bed, and rise early in the morning, and take a shower bath of cold water, or plunge into cold water, or sponge his body all over with it ; and in either case, rub himself off briskly and freely with a coarse towel, and follow that freely with a good stiff flesh-brush ; and then exercise vigorously in the open air or in the gymnasium, for an hour before breakfast. Let him exercise as much as he can through the day ; let him take an early, light supper, and take a good deal of active exercise before going to bed : and, if his nocturnal emissions still continue, let him, just before getting into bed, repeat his shower or sponge bath, and follow it freely with the coarse towel and flesh-brush. Let him perseveringly observe this regimen, without the slightest deviation in a single instance ; and



let him increase his exercise with his increasing strength—avoiding constantly an excess of aliment ; and after a while, his nocturnal emissions and other disorders will disappear, and his strength and general vigor will increase, and he will become cheerful and sprightly, and feel as if new life and new hopes were dawning on him : and when he is fully established in these improvements, he may gradually relax the rigor of his diet, and take a greater variety of simple vegetables and fruits ; but still, he had better never go beyond the vegetable kingdom and pure water, for his aliment. Yet if he *will* indulge in animal food, he ought by all means to limit himself to a small portion of good lean flesh, simply prepared, once a day.

By these means, I say—if by any sort of miraculous power—and by these alone, can the unhappy sufferer hope to be restored to comfortable and permanent health and enjoyment. The progress—I repeat it—will be

slow, but incomparably the safest and surest : and health, restored in this way, will put his body in a condition which will, in the greatest degree, secure it from future prostration and sufferings, and from transmitting the evils of his former errors to an innocent and unoffending progeny.—(See Note M.)

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BEFORE I close this lecture, I must again allude to the danger of boys in our public schools and colleges, and briefly suggest some means by which that danger can be greatly diminished. Among the causes of extensive and excessive self-pollution, at such places and elsewhere, as I have already stated, the most important ones are—

1. Improper diet—the free use of flesh, with more or less of stimulating seasonings and condiments, together with coffee, tea, rich pastry, and compounded and concentrated forms of food ; and too often, chewing and



smoking tobacco, and drinking wine and other intoxicating liquors ;—all of which unduly stimulate and irritate the nervous system, heat the blood, and early develop a preternatural sensibility and prurience of the genital organs.

2. Excesses in quantity of aliment. Were our children kept in the plainest and simplest manner, unless they were restrained as to quantity by their parents or guardians, they would be exceedingly apt to eat more than they really need, and more than the vital economy of their bodies can dispose of without oppression and irritation. But, subsisting as most children do, on a variety of dishes, variously and often viciously prepared—too generally warm, and requiring little mastication, they are sure to eat too rapidly, and swallow, in a very imperfectly masticated condition, far too great a quantity of food. This not only produces permanent injury in the digestive organs, but the whole constitution is much impaired by it, and the sexual appetite



rapidly developed and strengthened. Over-feeding is a powerful cause of early concupiscence and licentiousness, as well as of innumerable other evils ; and it is an almost universal fact in our country, that children are greatly over-fed. Hundreds are annually destroyed by this means.

3. A want of proper exercise to promote the equal distribution of the blood, and develope and invigorate the several organs and parts of the system, and firmly establish the healthy condition and conduct of the constitution. Their sedentary and inactive, and too generally indolent habits, lead to sluggishness of capillary circulation, and an undue detention of blood in the vessels of the abdomen and lower parts of the body, including the genital organs ; by which means the parts become heated and debilitated, and thus again, a preternatural sensibility and excitability are augmented in the organs of generation—increasing their influence on the condition and functions



of the brain and alimentary canal, and indeed of all the organs of the system.

4. The disproportionate exercise of the brain in the cultivation of the mind. Not that the brain, as a general fact, is absolutely exercised too much—but *proportionably* too much. Or, in other words, the body is not exercised in due proportion to the exercise of the brain. Hence there is too much blood detained in the vessels of the brain, and they become over-distended, and relaxed, and debilitated; and the brain is oppressed, overheated, weakened, and rendered too excitable;—and, the whole nervous system partaking of its irritations, the genital organs are involved; and by this means also, a preternatural sensibility, excitability and prurience are increased in these organs—and they are brought into more powerful sympathies and reciprocities with the brain and alimentary canal.

5. Obscene conversation or talk, and lewd books, and lascivious images, and corrupt

companions, complete the catalogue of the principal agents in this work of mischief.

To prevent the immense evils of self-pollution, therefore, in our boys and students, all these cases must be carefully avoided. They should always subsist on a plain, simple, unstimulating, vegetable and water diet; and care should be taken that they do not eat too fast, and are not excessive in quantity. They should never be kept too long a time in a sitting, confined, or inactive posture. They should never sleep on feathers. They should rise early—bathe the head and neck freely, and the whole body once a day—use much friction over the whole surface—and exercise actively and vigorously, from two to four hours daily. Let them take considerable exercise between their third or last meal and bed time. Great care should be taken to prevent their acquaintance with lewd books and pictures, and their familiarity with obscene talk and impure companions.



But as the utmost vigilance may and will often be eluded, it is of the highest importance that proper information concerning the odiousness of the vice of self-pollution, and the terrible consequences of it, should be given to them, as early as they can be made to understand and feel the nature and criminality of the offence ;—or at least, as soon as there is the slightest reason to suspect that they have, in any degree, become acquainted with the abominable practice. And, on this point, parents and others should not have too much confidence in the purity of their sons, and boys under their care.

A fond father once consulted me concerning the health of his son. I hinted my suspicions of this practice. The father started with astonishment, and exclaimed—“ No, sir ! my son is as pure as an infant ! ” But when I saw the boy alone, and questioned him, he confessed that he frequently indulged in the unclean and ruinous vice.

This is by no means a solitary case. I have met with many instances of the kind ; and have had boys brought to me, under fourteen years of age, shockingly affected by this habit ; and who confessed that they commenced the practice several years before.—(See Note N.)

I must therefore repeat, that parents have no conception of the extent of this vice, nor of the perniciousness of its effects. It is scarcely possible for our children to go to school a single day, or spend an hour or two at play with their little companions, without returning to us more or less contaminated, from their intercourse with others. I have no desire to exaggerate this evil, nor to excite unnecessary fears ; but it is time for some one to speak out, and to speak loudly on this subject. Gladly would I have been silent, had there been some other person to discharge this duty :—but who else living has been placed in a situation to see what I have seen, and hear what I have heard ; and been led to trace



back so much of human suffering to this early vice, as the first and principal source of all? To whom else have such heart-stirring appeals been made on this subject?—"Oh, as you hope for mercy, show me, show others, a way of escape from this evil, and you will be happy in the consciousness that you have saved at least one of your fellow creatures from destruction! This is my only chance for escape; do, *do*, for humanity's sake, teach me the way."

Language such as this has come to me from many an unfortunate sufferer; and shall I turn a deaf ear to it? Shall I close my heart against every touch of sympathy, in the cold and selfish policy of avoiding the misrepresentations and obloquies of the ignorant, the prejudiced, the bigoted, the corrupt, and the malicious?—No: painful—deeply painful as the censures and revilings of my fellow creatures are to me, still my sympathies for suffering humanity are paramount, and I will discharge my duty: and if I can be the means of arresting the progress

of one of the most extensive and calamitous evils that afflict the human family, I can well afford to bear even the persecutions of a single generation—knowing that the time will come, when truth shall be triumphant, and when not only my actions, but my motives, will be correctly estimated.

By all that is dear to a father's heart, then—by all that is sacred in the relations between the parent and the child—by all that is connected with the present and future health, happiness and prosperity of his children, I solemnly conjure every father to look seriously to this matter—to watch over his offspring with jealous solicitude, and seize the earliest opportunity to secure the young mind in virtue; and be yet earlier in preventing every means by which the tender and susceptible body is contaminated, and the appetites depraved.

This world has its fashions in all things; and popular feelings are ever ready to be



enlisted in some new enterprise, which wears the aspect of ostensible righteousness, without the cross of individual self-denial. These moral paroxysms rise and subside, like a fever in a diseased body ; and generally result in equal exhaustion and prostration, without accomplishing any permanent good in their progress.

The popular excitement that now extensively exists, and is becoming more extensive, on the subject of Moral Reform, will prove an entire waste of moral energy, if not something worse, unless the excited attention is directed, and the diligent hand is applied to the true means of *preventing* the morbid concupiscence of youth. The hopes of heaven—the fears of hell—and all the terrible calamities of earth, are insufficient to deter from the excesses of sensuality, those who, from their birth, have been regularly educated in the depravity of their appetites and susceptibilities, till there has been accumulated upon them an

excitability and an influence of desire, which constitute a moral necessity, impelling them along the course of voluntary destruction. The only hope of the world, under God, is in the correct training of children and youth.

The plan of early education, in the form of infant and Sunday schools, has also been a fashion of the times ; and popular excitement has run before discretion, in the management of this enterprise—till a re-action is already beginning to take place, under the imposing type of Phrenology ; and we are threatened with all the horrors of an over-exercised brain, and cerebral irritation, and nervous derangement, &c., &c., if we do not abandon our attempts at early education, and turn our children loose, to develope their bodies like calves and colts.—(See Note O.)

In all these projects there is generally sufficient truth to give them, at least, a temporary plausibility ; and sufficient error to render them seriously objectionable. Certain it is,



that irritations of the brain, resulting in the most serious consequences, may easily be caused in childhood ; but they may also, as a general rule, be easily avoided, without abandoning any proper measures for early education. If we early commence a systematic training of children's minds, we must, at the same time, commence a systematic training of their bodies ; or we shall be very likely to injure both, and effect more evil than good, to our offspring and our race.

By properly observing the precautionary measures, however, in regard to diet and general regimen, which I have now recommended, comparatively little need be feared, either from self-pollution, dyspepsia, or from *over-exercising the brain*. Our youth will then go through their studies or apprenticeships, with success, and come out into active and virtuous life, with healthful and vigorous bodies, and energetic minds—qualified for usefulness and enjoyment in the several stations and voca-

tions of society; and our race will be saved from innumerable sufferings and calamities, and greatly improved in all their physical, intellectual and moral faculties.



## NOTES

### TO THE LECTURE TO YOUNG MEN.

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#### NOTE A.

“If we will train our offspring into the early and free use of flesh-meat,” &c.—Page 64.

THE importance of a correct physical education, in order to secure sexual chastity in youth, is incomparably greater than parents generally are aware of. The following statement is but an exemplification of what is too generally true, even in christian families:

About eighteen years ago, I visited a family of considerable distinction for their wealth, refinement and piety. The lady seemed to me to be a very paragon of christian propriety in almost every respect, and especially as a mother. She had three small children, the eldest being about five years old, and the

youngest three months. She was unremitting in her maternal care and efforts, to imbue the young minds of her children with sentiments of virtue and piety. She daily prayed with her children, and taught them to pray as soon as their lisping lips could utter articulate sounds. Her eldest was a daughter. Long before this child could speak with sufficient distinctness to be understood by any but the mother, she was taught to repeat, morning and evening, and on various other occasions, little prayers and hymns, adapted to her age. As she grew older, she was successively introduced into religious Infant and Sunday schools and Bible classes. In short, all that a pious and devoted mother and pious teachers could do, by way of religious instruction, was done, to train her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I was charmed with the character and conduct of the mother, and named her with admiration, whenever I had occasion to speak of maternal duties. She pursued the same course with all her children ; and to protect them from the contaminating influence of other children, she employed private



teachers, who cooperated with her in all her pious plans and measures ; and great confidence was entertained that the happiest results would be experienced from such a system of education.

Two years since, I visited the same family again, and remained with them several weeks. But most sadly was I disappointed in the character of the children. I found them irritable, passionate, contentious, quarrelsome with each other, and exceedingly undutiful and disrespectful towards their parents. They manifested little regard for religion and religious institutions, and seemed to feel exceedingly impatient under parental and religious restraint. The eldest daughter was peculiarly unhappy in her temper and disposition. Scarcely a day passed when she did not get into a violent passion with her mother, or some other member of the family ; and her extreme peevishness and jealousy made her almost continually wretched, in her own breast. But what surprised me most was her excessive lasciviousness. Wantonness manifested itself in all her conduct, when in the company

of males; and I ascertained that when she was alone with a gentleman, she would not only freely allow him to take improper liberties with her, without the least restraint, but would even court his dalliance by her lascivious conduct. Being consulted in regard to her health, I found that she was addicted to the practice of self-pollution, and had greatly injured herself by it. And I was utterly astonished that, when I came to remonstrate with her concerning her lascivious conduct, I found it impossible to awaken any moral sensibility. In vain I appealed to her religious feelings—she declared that she had no remorse, no compunction on the subject.

On further inquiry, I found that this lasciviousness was not confined to the oldest child: all the children were more or less spiced with it, according to their age.

Here, then, would seem to be a case in which the very best efforts of a pious mother had entirely failed of their object; but a further examination will show a radical defect in the education of these children, which had completely nullified every good measure.



This mother, with all her maternal affection, and piety, and faithfulness, wholly disregarded the relations between the bodies and the souls of her children—between their dietetic habits and their moral character. She truly “made the table a snare to them ;” and they literally “fared sumptuously every day.” Indeed, she prided herself on setting the best table in town. Highly seasoned flesh-meat, rich pastry, and every other kind of rich and savory food, and condiments in abundance, together with strong coffee and tea, and perhaps occasionally a glass of wine, were set before these children for their ordinary fare. The result was just what was reasonably to be expected ; and sorrow and tears were the reward of the afflicted mother. Alas ! how many parents thus unwittingly afflict themselves, and become active agents in the destruction of their children.

The following deeply interesting portion of history, abridged from the Harpers' Family Library, strikingly contrasts with the foregoing account, and beautifully illustrates the effect

of a simple and correct regimen on the physical and moral character of youth :

Nearly fifty years ago, a mutiny took place on board the British ship *Bounty*. The captain, with a number of his men, was set adrift in a small boat, and the mutineers proceeded with the ship to Otaheite, where they remained a short time, and then a part of them, having selected them wives from the native females, and taken several native males with their wives, with them on board the *Bounty*, they put off to sea in search of a more secure retreat, and finally settled upon Pitcairn's Island, in the Pacific. Here jealousies arose between the white and native males, which resulted in the death of all the males of both colors, except one of the mutineers, who afterwards took the name of John Adams. The mutineers were not cut off, however, till they had become the fathers of nineteen children. These children were carefully trained up by John Adams, in habits of industry, virtue and piety. From those who visited the island after these offspring had become of marriageable age, and several of them had



become parents, we learn that the women all understood the art of midwifery. Their births generally took place during the night time, and the duration of labor was seldom longer than five hours, and had not yet in any case proved fatal. There was no instance of twins, nor of a single miscarriage, except by accident. Infants were generally bathed three times a day in cold water, and were sometimes not weaned for three or four years; and when that did take place, they were fed upon food made of ripe plantains and boiled taro root, rubbed into a paste. The surgeon of one of the ships that visited that island, remarked that nothing was more extraordinary in the history of the island, than the uniform good health of the children. The teething, says he, is easily got over; they have no bowel complaints, and are exempt from those contagious diseases which affect children in large communities. Before marriage, the young females assisted old Adams and their brothers in the cultivation of the land, by which means they had much invigorating exercise in the open air. Their dress was simple—of their



own manufacture from the paper mulberry tree—and so fitted as to admit of a free circulation of air over the whole surface of the body. The men and boys, except on Sunday, when they appear in English dresses, generally wear only the *mara*, or waist-cloth, which, passing over the hips and between the legs, is knotted behind. The climate is, in fact, too hot for cumbersome clothing. The women, when working, use only a petticoat with a jacket. Their beds were mattresses composed of palm leaves, and covered with native cloth, made of the paper mulberry tree. Yams constitute their principal food, either boiled, baked, or mixed with cocoa-nut, made into cakes, and eaten with molasses extracted from the tee root. Taro root is no bad substitute for bread; and bananas, plantains and appoi are wholesome and nutritious fruits. They but seldom kill a pig, living mostly on fruit and vegetables. With this simple diet, early rising, and taking a great deal of exercise, they are subject to few diseases; and Capt. Beechy says they are certainly a finer and more athletic race than is usually found among the families of mankind.



The young men born on the island were finely formed, tall, robust, athletic, healthy and handsome—their countenances open and pleasing, indicating much benevolence and goodness of heart; but the young women particularly were objects of attraction, being tall, robust and beautifully formed—their faces beaming with smiles, and indicating unruffled good humor. Their simple food, and early habits of exercise, gave them a muscular power and activity not often surpassed. Their agility and strength were so great, that the stoutest and most expert English sailors were no match for them in wrestling and boxing. It is recorded on the island that George Young and Edward Quintal have each carried at one time a kedge anchor, two sledge hammers, and an armorer's anvil, weighing together upwards of six hundred pounds; and that Quintal once carried a boat twenty-eight feet in length.

The females were almost as muscular as the males, and taller than the generality of the sex. A young girl, says Capt. Pison, accompanied us to the boat, carrying on her should-



ers, as a present, a large basket of yams, over such roads, and down such precipices, as were scarcely passable by any creatures except goats, and over which we could scarcely scramble with the help of our hands; yet with this load on her shoulders, she skipped from rock to rock like a young roe.

The manners and demeanor of these young people exhibited a degree of modesty and bashfulness that would have done honor to the most virtuous and enlightened people on earth. Adams assured his visitors that not one instance of debauchery or immoral conduct had occurred among these young people, since their settlement on the island; nor did he ever hear or believe that any one instance had occurred, of a young woman's having suffered indecent liberties to be taken with her. Their simple habits of living, and their native modesty, assisted by the precepts of religion and morality, instilled into their young minds by Adams, had hitherto preserved these interesting people from every kind of debauchery.

The innocence and simplicity of these interesting young creatures are strongly exem-



plified in the following description :—“ By our bed-side had already been placed some ripe fruits, and our hats were crowned with chaplets of the fresh blossoms of the nono, or flower tree, which the women had gathered in the freshness of the morning dew. On looking round the apartment, though it contained several beds, we found no partition, curtain or screens : they had not yet been considered necessary. So far indeed from concealment being thought of, when we were about to get up, the women, anxious to show their attention, assembled to wish us good morning, and to inquire in what way they could best contribute to our comfort, and to present us with some little gift which the produce of the island afforded.”

As a proof how very much simple diet and constant exercise tend to the healthful state of the body, the skin of these people, though in such robust health, compared with that of the Europeans, always felt cold, and their pulse was always considerably lower. The doctor examined several of them. In the forenoon, he found George Young's only sixty : three

others in the afternoon, after dinner, were sixty-eight, seventy-two, seventy-six; while those of the officers, who stood the heat of the climate best, were above eighty.

Their teeth are described as beautifully white, like the finest ivory, and perfectly regular, without a single exception; and of such great strength, that they would tear off the husks of cocoa-nuts with them, with the utmost ease and safety.

Capt. Pipon thinks that from such a race of people, consisting of fine young men, and handsome, well-formed women, there may be expected to arise hereafter, in this little colony, a race of people possessing, in a high degree, the physical qualifications of great strength united with symmetry of form and regularity of features.

In illustration of the same important truth, I will add a single statement more, which must be highly interesting to every considerate and conscientious parent and philanthropist.

G. P., Esq., a highly respectable member of the bar, having attended a course of my



lectures, together with the preceding Lecture to young men, about six or eight months afterwards, gave me the following very interesting statement :

“ I have two little sons, the one about four years old, the other about two. We very early began to accustom them to the use of animal food, and they soon became exceedingly fond of it, and seemed to care little about anything else, if they could get as much flesh as they desired. Not considering it objectionable aliment for children, their mother and myself were disposed to indulge them pretty freely. The health of the elder boy began to be quite delicate, and I was continually filled with anxiety for his life : and indeed, both of them were subject to very frequent turns of indisposition. It has always been our custom to put our children to bed two or three hours before we retired, and when we retired, to take them up and let them urinate, to prevent their wetting their bed. And it was a matter of remark and surprise with us, that when we took them up for this purpose, we *invariably* found them affected with pria-

pism. Another fact was equally surprising to us:—our younger child was very fond of being held in lap, and fondled, and played with by his parents and others with whom he was well acquainted. When in his mother's lap, the little fellow manifested an ardor in hugging and kissing her, which had all the appearance of real wantonness. Indeed, this was often carried so far as actually to embarrass her, when others were present. The same was almost invariably true when he was carressing other females; but when he was in my lap, and hugging or carressing me, or any other gentleman, there were no such indications.

“Now, sir, the most interesting part of my story is this:—Soon after I heard your Lectures, I put my boys on a simple vegetable diet, and have kept them strictly upon it ever since. The result is, that the health of my elder son has much improved, and they both of them now uninterruptedly enjoy the most uniform, excellent health; and when we take them up nights to urinate, we never find any of the appearances just described. Our



younger son is still fond of being in his mother's lap and caressing her, but his priapism on such occasions has entirely disappeared ; and we are now perfectly convinced, not only that their former wantonness was caused by their free use of flesh-meat, but that their general health was very injuriously affected by the same cause."

Many cases of this kind have since come to my knowledge.

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#### NOTE B.

"Many of the most terrible plagues," &c.—Page 67.

DURING the awful ravages of the celebrated Plague of Athens, while thousands were perishing daily, and the very streets were choked with the bodies of the dead, as if the irresistible energy of destruction were let loose to desolate the city, the citizens became so shockingly hardened and so brutally sensual, that

they were wholly engrossed in the idea of present indulgence, and amidst the dying and the dead, yielded themselves to the most unbounded licentiousness, and were hourly precipitated from these filthy embraces to the grave.

“When the plague was doing its terrible work of death in Messina, in 1743, even those who recovered, gave themselves up to such atrocious lewdness that—horrid to be told!—they violated the bodies of young females who had died of the plague.

“While the plague was raging at Genoa, five marriages took place in one day, in a Lazaretto; four of the bridegrooms and their brides, being dressed in clothes stripped from the bodies of those who had died of the plague.”

Such is the horrid depth to which human nature can be sunk, by excessive sensuality, resulting from the extreme depravity of those instincts which, in the original constitution of man, were implanted by a wise and benevolent Creator, for the well being of the individual and the race.



## NOTE C.

“The too common evils which are caused by sexual excesses between husband and wife.”—Page 79.

THE evils arising from excesses between man and wife, are very far greater than is apprehended by even those who suffer them. It is no uncommon thing for a young couple to enter into wedlock in good health, and in due time to be blessed with one and perhaps two or three healthy and vigorous children; and afterwards they will have, in succession, two, three, four or five feeble and puny offspring, which will either be still-born, or survive their birth but a few months, or at longest, but two or three years; and very probably during this time there will be several early abortions; and all the while the unfortunate wife will be afflicted with great debility and extensive functional derangement, and almost constantly suffer those numerous and distressing pains and ailments which result from sexual excesses. Very frequently, also, the husband becomes severely afflicted with

distressing consequences. Besides those named in the text, (p. 79) debility, inflammation, swelling and excruciating pain of the spermatic cords, and also of the testicles, resulting, perhaps, in the necessity for castration, and sometimes in death, are often the fruits of connubial intemperance.—(See Note D.)

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#### NOTE D.

“This propensity is more or less powerful and imperious, according as their dietetic and other habits are more or less correct.”—Page 80.

THERE are two errors of opinion on this particular point, entertained even by professional men, which are founded in very superficial and limited investigation.

The first is, that Phrenology being true, no general rule can be laid down in regard to frequency of commerce, because the cerebellum, or the organ of amateness, is so much more largely developed in some men than in



others, and consequently the propensity and the power are much greater in some than in others. But allowing all this to be true, it does not militate in the least against the physiological doctrine I have advanced in the text. Because no degree of venereal *propensity* and *power*, arising from the size and activity of the organ of amateness, can counteract the physiological and pathological effects of too frequent venereal excitement. An enlightened phrenologist would hardly assert that, because a man is largely developed in those organs which strongly incline him to the passion of anger, therefore he can indulge in violent paroxysms of anger, with less physiological disturbance than other men, of different phrenological development.

Physiological science teaches us, that if Phrenology be true in regard to this matter, then instead of encouraging those who have large organs of amateness, to indulge more frequently in venereal passion, we ought rather, if possible, to ascertain and rigorously pursue those plans of physical, mental and moral education, by which the organization, the pro-



pensities and the habits of man, shall be brought into strict accordance with the constitutional purposes of his sexual faculties. For it is entirely certain that no degree of development and energy of the organ of amateness will prevent the pernicious effects of too frequent sexual indulgence.

The following case is by no means a solitary one. Six or eight months since, Mr. S., a respectable mechanic, came to me for advice concerning his health. He was a large well-formed man, with a very large cerebellum. "I married," said he, "seven years ago, at the age of twenty-six. At the time of my marriage, as before, I was very vigorous and athletic. My habits were active, and my employment in the open air. My sexual propensity and power were exceedingly great, and my indulgence, as I now learn, was excessively intemperate. During the first four years of my connubial life, my health remained tolerably good, but was gradually impaired. At the age of thirty-one, I began to be affected with pain in the spermatic cords, extending to the thighs and also over the loins; pains in



the neck of the bladder and in the kidneys, attended with excessive discharges of urine ; and severe contractions alternating with great relaxation of the spermatic cords. I soon became excessively nervous, and suffered indescribably. I put myself under medical prescription, but without benefit. My symptoms continually became worse and worse ; and I was in a short time so emaciated and so feeble, that I was obliged to keep my bed. I then put myself upon a diet of coarse wheaten crackers and water, and in the course of six weeks was able to leave home and to journey. I found that animal food aggravated all my symptoms, and therefore I continued, during my absence from home, to live strictly on vegetable food, and in six months I gained sixty-four pounds in weight.\*

“ My two first children are living and healthy, and appear to possess a good constitution. Since these, we have had five puny children, all of which are dead. Of these

\* Abstinence from sexual indulgence was a very important, if not the principal cause of this great increase of weight and general improvement of health.



five, four were twins. One pair of the twins were still-born, and the other pair died soon after birth. My wife for the last four or five years has been continually feeble and sickly, and suffered a great deal."

The second error of opinion to which I have alluded, in the commencement of this note, is, that an exclusively vegetable and water diet serves in effect to emasculate man, or to take away his procreating power. This whimsical notion was very confidently advanced by Buffon, and has since been frequently repeated by professional men. But it is truly surprising that any man of ordinary intelligence and observation, should fall into so great an error in the very face of the most notorious and unquestionable facts. Every person who is at all acquainted with the history of mankind, well knows, that in all ages and sections of the world, those portions of the human race which have subsisted most exclusively on a pure vegetable diet, have been the most prolific, while the contrary is true of those tribes which have subsisted most exclusively on flesh-meat. The Patagonians,



with a climate and almost every other condition and circumstance exceedingly favorable to human life, and health, and prolificness, are very few in number, and have evidently been suffering a gradual deterioration of body and diminution of numbers ever since this continent was first discovered, and there is no assignable cause for this but their exclusively flesh diet.

The truth of the matter is simply this—a pure and well regulated vegetable diet, serves to take away or prevent all morbid or preternatural sexual lust, and to bring and keep the instinct more in a truly natural state, and in strict accordance with the final cause of man's sexual organization, and thus enable him to be chaste in body and in spirit ; but at the same time, such a diet sustains the propagating power to a much greater age than a flesh diet or even a mixed one can.



## NOTE E.

“It were better for you not to exceed, in the frequency of your indulgences,” &c.—Page 84.

THIS paragraph concerning the frequency of connubial commerce has, I find, given more offence than all the rest of the Lecture. But it is marvellous that rational creatures will act so irrationally. Every one ought to know, that I do not set myself up as an arbitrary dictator or lawgiver in this matter. I do not speak as I do, because I wish to have it so ; but because, as a physiologist and as a philanthropist, I cannot honestly speak otherwise. From the most careful and thorough investigation of the matter, I am fully convinced that it is the truth ; and the only question remaining to be settled is this—Shall I speak the truth for the good of mankind, and thereby most certainly incur their displeasure ; or shall I withhold it from purely selfish considerations, and thereby consent to the injuries and sufferings which my fellow creatures are ignorantly bringing upon themselves and their progeny, through depraved sensuality ?



When about to publish the first edition of the foregoing Lecture, I fully anticipated the effect that the paragraph in question would have on the public, and correctly appreciated the hostility it would excite. Yet, in the face of all this, and against the most powerful reluctances of my nature, a purely conscientious principle of duty constrained me to speak the truth, and leave the consequences in regard to myself, with God and with the truly chaste and virtuous of mankind. And now, in presenting other editions to the public, the same principle and the same considerations induce me to continue the same line of conduct.

The following extract from Jeremy Taylor's "HOLY LIVING," will show that this subject has occupied the attention of that eminently pious and holy man, and that he maintained the same views that I have advanced in regard to connubial chastity :

"Chastity is that duty which was mystically intended by God in the law of circumcision. It is the circumcision of the heart, the cutting off all superfluity of naughtiness, and



a suppression of all irregular desires in the matter of a sensual or carnal pleasure. I call all desires irregular and sinful that are not sanctified—1. By the holy institution, or by being within the protection of marriage; 2. By being within the order of nature; 3. By being within the moderation of christian modesty. Against the first are fornication, adultery, and all voluntary pollutions of either sex. Against the second are all unnatural lusts and incestuous mixtures. Against the third is all immoderate use of permitted beds.

“Chastity is that grace which forbids and restrains all these, keeping the body and soul pure in that state in which it is placed by God, whether of the single or of the married life. Chastity is either abstinence or continence;—abstinence in the unmarried, and continence of the married permissions.

“Concerning married persons, these particulars are useful to be observed:

“In their permissions and license, they must be sure to observe the order of nature and the ends of God. He is an ill husband, that uses his wife as a man treats a harlot,



having no other end but pleasure. Concerning which our best rule is, that, although in this, as in eating and drinking, there is an appetite to be satisfied, which cannot be done without pleasing that desire, yet, since that desire and satisfaction were intended by nature for other ends, they should never be separated from those ends, but always be joined with one or all of these ends—with a desire of children, or to avoid fornication and lascivious feelings, and thoughts, and temptations, but never with a purpose, either in act or desire, to separate the sensuality from those ends which hallow it. It is a duty of matrimonial chastity, to be restrained and temperate in the use of lawful pleasures, concerning which, although no universal rule can antecedently be given to all persons, any more than to all bodies one portion of meat and drink; yet married persons are to estimate the degree of their license according to the following proportions:—1. That it be moderate, so as to consist with health; 2. That it be so ordered as not to be too expensive of time; 3. That when duty is demanded, it be always paid, (so



far as is in our power and election,) according to the foregoing measures ; 4. That it be with a temperate affection, without violent, transporting desires, or too sensual applications ; always remembering that marriage is a provision for the supply of the natural necessities of the body, not for the artificial and procured appetites of the mind. It is a sad truth that many married persons, thinking that the flood-gates of liberty are set wide open, without measure or restraint, (so they all sail in that channel,) have felt the final rewards of intemperance and lust, by their unlawful usings of lawful permissions. Only let each of them be temperate, and both of them be modest.”

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#### NOTE F.

“The frequency of involuntary nocturnal emissions,” &c.—Page 86.

MANY writers on this subject, and some of them very eminent as professional and scientific men, have advanced the idea, that invol-



untary emissions in sleep are nature's means of relieving herself from an exciting and perhaps irritating secretion ; and therefore, that such emissions are not only compatible with, but decidedly favorable to health. But this opinion is entirely erroneous in principle and in fact, and pernicious in effect. Strictly speaking, the secreted semen is never the absolute exciting cause of involuntary emissions ; and such emissions are never nature's normal or healthy means of relieving herself from this secretion. All who presume to teach on this subject, ought to know that females as frequently experience involuntary venereal paroxysms in sleep as males do ; and they certainly have no such secretion to excite them. It has been truly observed, that man is the only animal that is ever subject to involuntary emissions of this kind. But this fact, instead of being correctly used, has been egregiously perverted. Instead of reasoning from it accurately, that man, in a truly natural and healthy state, would never experience such emissions, some have preposterously inferred from it, that man is peculiarly privi-



leged in regard to venereal pleasures ; and that therefore he is peculiarly constituted in regard to this means of relief, when nature is oppressed by too protracted an abstinence. Thus, beings endowed with rational faculties, through the depravity of their animal instincts, and the excesses of their sensuality, so distort the evidences of nature, and blind their understandings, that they render themselves the most irrational creatures on earth, and bring upon themselves calamities and sufferings which no other animals experience.

The plain truth of the matter is this :—An individual in what is ordinarily called good general health may, sometimes, on account of some disturbing cause in the alimentary canal, some particular position in which he lies, or some other cause, experience an involuntary venereal paroxysm in his sleep, without any very serious injury to health, and without justifying the conclusion that any of his organs are in an actual state of disease. Yet even in these cases, the individual ought always to consider the fact of so abnormal or irregular a character, and so pernicious a tendency, as to



require that he should, if possible, ascertain and avoid a recurrence of the cause, and a repetition of the effect. But as a general fact, when the involuntary venereal paroxysms are frequent, it is entirely certain that the sexual organs are in a state of debility and preternatural irritability, inseparable from that general condition of the nervous system which is wholly inconsistent with the physiological welfare of the body. It *always* clearly evinces that there is more or less of an unhealthy debility and irritability in the sexual organs, and a preternatural sympathy between them and the alimentary canal and the brain. So that irritations in either of these parts serve to induce that train of physiological and mental exercises which result in the involuntary venereal paroxysm. More generally, however, disturbing causes in the alimentary organs are the sources of these paroxysms. At any rate, they are always an abnormal or irregular and injurious result, and afford no evidence that nature required an emission of semen ; nor the least evidence that any semen was secreted when the individual retired to rest. In all



cases, then, such involuntary emissions should be considered as an evil ; and due care should be taken to avoid them, by correct habits in every respect.

I have, much against my inclination, entered thus fully into this discussion, because I find the contrary opinion, though obviously erroneous, is asserted in numerous professional and other works, which are beginning to find their way into society, and to attract the attention of the young.

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### NOTE G.

“The early forming of the habit of self-pollution is one of the most alarming evils in our land.”—Page 96..

As many good people have thought that my statement in the text, in regard to the extent of this evil practice among the youth of our country, is an unwarrantable and slanderous exaggeration, I am glad to be able to present them, in this edition, the following testimony of Rev. Mr. Wells, and also that



of Mr. Woodbridge and Dr. Woodward, on the first and second pages of this volume. From these testimonies, it will be seen that those who are best informed on the subject, do not think I have exaggerated, if indeed I have gone as far as the truth would justify.

SCHOOL FOR MORAL DISCIPLINE,  
Boston, Jan. 16, 1837.

DEAR SIR:—As I have never read the LECTURE TO YOUNG MEN, I cannot express an opinion concerning it. But on the subject on which you ask my opinion, I have not, as your note supposes, “any feelings of reluctance to overcome,” in order to express my opinion or offer instruction.

First—You ask my “opinion as to the prevalence of the practice,” &c. From an intimate acquaintance with about seven hundred boys for the past nine years—from the recollections of a pretty extensive acquaintance in boyhood, and from information derived from gentlemen of the highest distinction and most eminent success in the great subject, not of *learning* only, but of *education*, in my



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



Second—"Preventing and restraining." I cannot enter upon this topic, as it would carry me beyond what I could give time for, or you wish to be troubled with. I will only say, that so far as I have known the modes of treatment, in Europe and in America, both by instructors and physicians, I should think it in some respects injurious, and in others, ill calculated for success. The cure of the habit must be by moral means, and not by physical force. The passion, though a strong, is a very delicate one; and severity, punishment, and exciting shame and guilt, makes the case worse in some instances, and it injures in all. The treatment should be kind, earnest, sympathizing, ingenuous, serious, gentle and familiar; not severe, cold or gloomy

Third—"Who are calculated to instruct to advantage?" There must be feeling and sympathy in the instructor; and if these are not well balanced by a sense of the great evil to be cured, by great (not false) delicacy, benevolence, judgment, and an earnest spirit, he will be in danger of erring. Parents are the proper, the best (if they would be) teachers. Alas! that they should, through false



delicacy, commit their sons to strangers to *cure* what they could have *prevented*. Why should they be ashamed to teach their dear children, morally and philosophically, that beautiful organization which their Heavenly Father has established as the manner by which they are to receive those interesting objects of affection—children, by which to kindle in their hearts the purest of the human affections? But the false, the foolish, the sinful delicacy of our really *indelicate* age, keeps back the parent from instructing the child in these important mysteries, till, as his nature develops, he finds a powerful passion working within him, of which he is ignorant; and if perchance, from a natural emotion, he manifests, in any casual way, the existence of this passion, he is met with a frown, a coldness and severity, which ever after make him keep his emotions to himself; and thus they become most powerful when least seen, like hidden fires, till at last he is instructed in these passions by those who teach but to destroy.

I am, very respectfully, your friend,

E. M. P. WELLS.



## NOTE H.

“It is a secret and a solitary vice,” &c.—Page 96.

THERE is reason to believe that the ruinous practice of self-pollution prevails in our state prisons, penitentiaries, houses of correction, houses of reformation, &c., to a very serious extent, causing a considerable amount of disease and suffering, and demanding the earnest attention of all who have the care of these institutions.

A gentleman who formerly had the care of the House of Reformation for boys in one of our large cities, and who became highly distinguished for his successful management of the institution, informs me that he found almost every boy committed to his care, to be in the practice of this vice.

The chaplain of one of our state prisons writes thus, in a letter to a brother clergyman, on the subject before us:—“Self-pollution, I have reason to believe, is universal among prisoners. One of them, who has the means of forming a pretty correct judgment in the



matter, told me he had no doubt that the prisoners were as regular in that practice as they were in taking their suppers. Some of them greatly injure their health by the indulgence. Not long since, as I was passing the cell of one of the prisoners, just at twilight, he spoke to me with a low and tremulous voice and downcast look. 'I sha n't live long,' said he; 'do n't you see how poor I am growing? my flesh has almost all gone off my bones.' I observed that what he said was true. When I first knew him, he had a full and ruddy cheek;—now it was pale and sunken. I suspected the cause, and made inquiries accordingly. He confessed that he had become a slave to that vice, and feared it was doing him harm; but did not dare to speak to the doctor about it, and did not know that he could avoid it;—'for,' said he, 'I seem to have no power over myself. I awake from my sleep, and find myself in the act. Three times a night, for weeks in succession, I have yielded to it; and frequently without being voluntary in the thing.' He evinced clearly



the reciprocal influence between the brain and genital organs.

“There are several others in prison whom I know to be given up to a similar excess ; and without exception, they all have that cadaverous look, bloodless lips, impaired memory, bodily weakness and pain, and those internal complaints, of which Mr. G. speaks in his Lecture.

“I consider the polluted imagination, and sensual feelings of the convicts, to be among the greatest obstacles to the prevalence of religious truth among them. Revenge may die in the bosom—anger may pass away—cupidity may take its flight—and the thirst for intoxicating liquors no longer be felt by men in prison ; but the reciprocal influence which sensual feelings and lascivious thoughts have upon each other, and the influence which both have upon the man, often grow stronger and stronger, even in the silence and solitude of the cell.”

## NOTE I.

“The remembrance of this early vice will return upon him, as if the fountains of hell had broken up.”—  
Page 101.

C. N. commenced the practice of self-pollution very young ; and before he was aware of its ruinous effects, he had nearly destroyed his constitution. As soon as his eyes were opened, however, to see his error, and the danger of his situation, he abandoned the mischievous practice with horror and remorse. By long perseverance in strictly virtuous habits, he regained a very good degree of health and enjoyment ; but he was never able so completely to overcome the effects of his former error, as to give to his system that constitutional vigor, and power of endurance and resistance, which belong to those who have never greatly violated the laws of their nature. Soon after he came of age, he was established in a prosperous and lucrative business ; and at a suitable time, he became the husband of a very amiable and excellent wife, who, in about two years after their marriage, presented



him with a lovely son. He was truly an amiable, intelligent, prosperous and happy man—dearly beloved in his family, and highly esteemed by all who knew him. In the flood-tide of his prosperity, he forgot the duties which he owed to his own body. A prodigious pressure of successful business so engrossed and excited his mind, that his regular meals were not properly attended to ; and he encroached so much upon his hours of rest, that he was very frequently up, and his mind intensely employed, till eleven, twelve and one o'clock at night ; and then he retired to bed with his mind in such a state of excitement, that he found it impossible to sleep for one or two hours after he retired. In this manner he held on, and held out, till the extreme pressure of his business was over, and the season terminated in the highest prosperity. Everything had gone exactly as he wished, and he had been the gainer of several thousand dollars. But amidst all this prosperity, he had excessively over-worked his nervous system, and now, when he was no longer excited by the extraordinary stimulus



of his business, he suddenly sunk down into a state of extreme nervous exhaustion, and consequent mental depression. A high degree of morbid irritability and sympathy supervened, and a dark and cheerless gloom came over his mind. Medical assistance was called, and the attempt was made to raise him by the free use of high-seasoned flesh-meat, porter, wine, &c., all of which served only to aggravate his sufferings, and plunge him deeper into darkness and despair. In this state of things I saw him. His misery exceeded all description. It was impossible to divert his mind from his affliction for a single moment. He continually exclaimed, in the most heart-rending tones—"I am lost! I am lost! I have destroyed myself!—I have committed the unpardonable sin; and nothing but perdition awaits me." When I tried to break the spell of his mind, and to arouse him to other thoughts, he replied, in the deepest dejection and despair—"It is of no use! it is too late—too late!—I am a ruined man!—my soul is sealed to eternal perdition!—I have destroyed myself; and why should I live any longer, to



heap up my already overflowing measure of wrath, and anguish, and horror? I cannot—I will not live!” With much difficulty, I succeeded in drawing out from him a disclosure of what he considered the cause of all his misery. He said that in his youth he had indulged in the awful sin of self-pollution, till it had ruined his constitution; and that he was perfectly certain that, in so doing, he had committed the unpardonable sin. I strove in vain to convince him that his mind was extremely affected by the condition of his nervous system. “It is of no use,” he replied, “I know that my damnation is sure! God will never forgive such abominable sins. There is no redemption—no hope for me; and I will live no longer in this state of despair and anguish.” We were obliged to watch him every moment, to keep him from destroying his own life. And by abstracting from his diet his wine, porter, flesh, and every other heating and stimulating substance, and putting him strictly upon a very plain, unstimulating, farinaceous diet, together with the tepid bath in the evening, just before going to

bed, and the cold shower bath in the morning, and free exercise in the open air, he was gradually restored to health of body and mind, and to the full enjoyment of himself, his family and his friends ; and remained, as he had been before, a useful and much esteemed member of society, and a worthy member of a religious community.

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#### NOTE J.

“As if the hand of necessity were on him,” &c.—  
Page 127.

THE following case, which it is to be hoped is a very rare one, affords a melancholy illustration of the text, and presents an occasion for remarks on the measures adopted to break up the evil habit.

S. W. became initiated into the practice of self-pollution when very young ; and before his friends suspected it, or himself was aware of the pernicious consequences, his health was destroyed and his constitution greatly



impaired. When his symptoms became so plain and unequivocal, however, that they could no longer be mistaken, the cause of his sufferings was detected, and the ruinous character of his indulgence was faithfully and solemnly described to him. He was filled with horror and anguish at the disclosure, and promised never more to repeat the destructive practice. But this promise was as “a rope of sand” before the power of his habit. He continued his unclean indulgence in spite of all the convictions of his own mind, and remonstrances of his conscience, and sufferings of his body. His friends expostulated, and entreated, and threatened—but all was in vain. He still went on in his transgression, and with tears and bitter anguish, declared that he had not the power to refrain from the loathsome act, though he knew that every repetition of it was increasing his sufferings and hastening him to the grave. It was then proposed that he should consent to be manacled. He received the proposal with joy, and submitted to the confinement of his hands for several months. By this means, and by a



salutary regimen of diet, exercise and moral treatment, he was restored to tolerable health. His friends now thinking his evil habit so completely broken up, and his health so far established, that it would be safe to set him at liberty, removed the manacles from his hands, and left him to control himself. But no sooner was he left alone, with the consciousness of his ability to renew his lewd indulgence, than he felt, as it were, compelled to yield to the temptation. He returned to the destructive practice—again destroyed his health, and filled his body with the most distressing and loathsome disease, and his soul with anguish, and remorse, and despair ;—and finally fell a victim to his transgression.\*

In cases of actual insanity, and perhaps in some other instances, it may be advisable, because indispensably necessary, to have recourse to manacles and other means of taking away, for a season, the moral freedom of the unhappy transgressor, in regard to this practice. But as a general rule, every measure

\* See also the case of the prisoner in Note H.



should be avoided by which his confidence in his power to govern himself may, in any degree, be diminished: and, on the other hand, in all cases, everything should be done to inspire and increase that confidence as much as possible. This vice is of such a nature that where self-control is wanting, there is little ground to hope for permanent reformation. With proper management, however, self-control can in most cases be established, and the offender reclaimed.

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#### NOTE K.

“Among the hapless inmates of the Lunatic Asylum,” &c.—Page 129.

THE following interesting article, taken from the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal of March 25, 1835, is from the pen of Dr. Woodward, the distinguished superintendent of the Massachusetts Lunatic Hospital at Worcester.

“No cause is more influential in producing insanity, and, in a special manner, perpetuating the disease, than self-pollution. The records of the institutions give an appalling catalogue of cases attributed to this cause; and yet such records do not show nearly all the cases which are justly ascribable to it. For it is so obscure, and so secret in its operations, that the friends in almost all cases are wholly ignorant of it. It is in a few cases only, where the practice of the vice becomes shamefully notorious, that the friends are willing to allow its agency in the production of any disease, particularly insanity; and yet no cause operates more directly upon the mind and the feeling. The mental energies are prostrated by the habit in innumerable cases, long before the delusions of insanity appear. Indeed, there are many cases in which insanity does not intervene between the incipient stages of that mental and physical imbecility which comes early upon the victim of self-pollution, and the most deplorable and hopeless idiocy, in which it frequently results.



“This is perhaps peculiar to this cause of idiocy. I know of no other which does not produce the ravings and illusions of insanity, or the gloomy musings, agitations, and alarms of melancholy, before the mind is lost in idiotism. But the victim of self-pollution passes from one degree of imbecility to another, till all the powers of the system, mental, physical and moral, are blotted out forever.

“This is not, however, always the case. In some individuals, there is all the raving of the most furious mania, or the deep and cruel torture of hapless melancholy, before the mind is obliterated, and the energies of the system forever prostrated.

“There are other circumstances attending the insanity from self-pollution, which render this the most distressing form of mental disease. I allude to the difficulty of breaking up the habit while laboring under this malady. When insanity is once produced by it, it is nearly hopeless, because the cause of disease is redoubled, and generally perpetuated. The libidinous desires are greatly increased, and the influence of self-restraint cannot be brought



sufficiently into action to prevent the constant, daily, and I might say almost hourly recurrence of the practice. Thus the cause is perpetuated, and in spite of every effort, the disease increases, the powers of body and mind fail together, and are lost in the most deplorable, hopeless, disgusting fatuity. And yet the practice is not abandoned. All the remaining energies of animal life seem to be concentrated in these organs, and all the remaining power of gratification is in the exercise of this, no longer secret, but open and loathsome habit.

“Those cases of insanity arising from other known causes, in which self-pollution is a symptom, are rendered more hopeless by this circumstance. It is a counteracting influence to all the means of cure employed, either moral or medicinal; and coinciding, as it does, with whatever other causes may have had an agency in producing disease, renders the case almost hopeless. Of the number of the insane that have come under the observation of the writer, (and that number is not small,) few, very few have recovered, who have been



in the habit of this evil practice ; and still fewer, I might say almost none, have recovered, in which insanity or idiocy has been produced by self-pollution. Most of the cases from this cause commence early in life ;—even confirmed and hopeless idiocy has been the melancholy consequence, before the victim had reached his twentieth year.

“ Of eighty males, insane, that have come under the observation of the writer, and who have been particularly examined, and watched with reference to ascertaining the proportion that practised self-pollution, something more than a quarter were found to practice it ; and, in about ten per cent, a large proportion of which are idiotic, the disease is supposed to have arisen from this cause.

“ The absolute abandonment of the practice of self-pollution, after the habit has become established, is not always easily effected, even in those whose minds are unaffected by insanity. The unfortunate subject of this detestable vice, whose mental energy is unimpaired, and whose moral feelings are susceptible

of impression, can, however, be persuaded to abandon it, if the danger is set before him in its true light; but with the insane we can have no such hopes, and no such prospects of cure. They will rarely form resolutions on the subject, and still more rarely adhere to them. Reason, the balance-wheel of the mind, being denied them, they are obnoxious to the influence of all the propensities in a high degree."

From the Report of the Massachusetts Lunatic Hospital, dated February, 1836, it appears that, among the supposed causes of insanity in the inmates of that institution, intemperance has produced the largest number of cases, and masturbation or self-pollution the next largest—one third of the whole number in the hospital being put down to this last named cause.



## NOTE L.

“He lives on through many years, a life of protracted and unspeakable wretchedness.—Page 139.

G. L. commenced the practice of self-pollution in early boyhood, and soon became confirmed in the destructive habit—indulging in the unseemly vice with great frequency, and without the least suspicion that he was injuring himself by it. His health, however, soon began to be impaired, and his friends saw it slowly decaying without knowing or suspecting the cause. His appetite became exceedingly capricious—being at times extremely voracious, and at other times extremely small and fastidious. His strength gradually failed, and his spirits became painfully depressed and gloomy. At the age of seventeen his constitution was a complete wreck, and he was reduced to the most miserable condition. Still he continued the unclean practice which was the cause of all his sufferings, and which was rapidly hastening him to his grave. About this time he was seen by a



gentleman who at once perceived, from his appearance, that he was destroying himself by his filthy and unnatural indulgence. The gentleman embraced the first opportunity to point out to him the cause of all his wretchedness. It was the first time the unfortunate youth had ever heard a word on the subject, and the information filled him with alarm and horror. He at once abandoned the *voluntary* practice ; but the debility and morbid irritability of his whole system—and especially of his genital organs—were such, that he continued for a long time to be subject to frequent involuntary emissions. Many different physicians were consulted, and their advice was followed by him in the hope of recovering his health. But not one of them ever asked him a question concerning his habits, nor intimated a suspicion that his difficulties were caused by self-pollution. By the continued use of tonics and stimulants, and a generous diet, and travelling, his health was apparently much improved ; though it was far from being good, even when at the best. Soon after he came of age, it was thought advisable for him to



marry. For two or three years after his marriage, he was sustained by what is called a rich and generous diet, and by the constant use of tonics and stimulants, so that, although he considered himself in very delicate health, yet, on the whole, he thought he was doing as well as could be expected. He became the father of two puny children, on whom was visited the iniquities of the parent, and who soon descended to the grave, the victims of his early transgressions. And now the vital powers of his system being extremely exhausted by the "*generous*" course which he had been pursuing for a number of years, he began to sink with rapidity; and the more he endeavored to sustain himself by his generous diet and tonic medicines, the more rapidly he sunk; and he soon found himself reduced to the most deplorable and miserable condition. He was compelled to abandon all business and to travel for his health. This afforded him considerable relief—but no sooner did he return to his business and his usual habits of living, than he began to relapse, and was in a short time as low and miserable as



before. In his distress he flew from one physician to another; but with all his change of physicians he found little change of prescription;—all treated him as laboring under a debility which required a generous diet, and tonic and stimulating medicine. And thus this unfortunate individual dragged out nearly thirty years of the most extreme suffering and wretchedness—finding no relief except the slight and temporary alleviation which he received from travelling; and which only lasted while he continued to journey. Being present when the foregoing Lecture was delivered to the young men of one of our cities, he called on me the next day and narrated to me his melancholy story. “Oh, sir!” said he with deep and touching pathos, “I have suffered—but words cannot tell it! There is no language for the miseries which I have endured—and they only who have experienced them can have any just conception of them. My bodily anguish and torment have been great beyond measure—yet they have been as nothing to the deeper and darker miseries of my mind! Oh, could I have been instructed in my youth,



as every boy ought to be, I should have been saved from all this suffering ! There is no conceivable sum of money which, if I possessed it, I would not freely—gladly give, to go back to my boyhood with the information I have received from your Lecture, and be permitted to live my life over again ; but it is too late : I have destroyed myself in my ignorance, and there is no redemption for me this side the grave.”

I endeavored to persuade him to change his regimen, and try the effect of a simple diet, with proper exercise, &c. But it was in vain : he had become so accustomed to his stimulating diet and medicine, that a single day's abstinence caused such a depression of his physiological and mental powers, that his misery was insupportable, and he had not resolution to bear it. He continued on in his old course, and in a few months from that time, he descended to the grave.

A number of cases closely resembling the foregoing have come to my knowledge since I have been a public lecturer. One gentleman,

residing in a far distant city, consulted me by letter concerning his health. "I am," said he, "the husband of a beautiful and fondly devoted young wife, and the father of two sweet babes, and possess an abundance of this world's goods ; but in the midst of all these means of enjoyment and happiness, I am the most wretched of men. I am no longer able to be a husband or a father ; the powers of manhood have left me ; my whole system is completely prostrated, and my mind is sunk into the most cheerless melancholy. For five years I have endured this unspeakable misery, and sought in vain for relief from physicians far and near. I beseech you, do not deceive me, but in the honesty of your soul, tell me frankly, is there any door of hope for me ? Must I, ere I have reached the meridian of life, wither into the grave ; or is it possible, by any earthly means, for me to recover even a tolerable degree of health ?"

In my reply to him, I candidly told him what his symptoms indicated, and inquired if he had not been early and excessively addicted to the practice of self-pollution. In



his second letter he said—" You have opened my eyes, and poured an astounding flood of light into my soul. You have disclosed to me the cause of all my suffering. All that you infer from my former letter is true. But why was there none to tell me this before? and why was I so blind as not myself to perceive it? Now I plainly discern the relation of all my sufferings to my own errors; and I see, when perhaps it is too late to be wise, that I have brought all my miseries upon myself."

Another gentleman, the details of whose early history were much the same as those already given of G. L., was advised by his physician to marry. He became the husband of a beautiful and lovely woman; and they loved each other with devoted fondness. For a very short time, his powers were sustained by generous food, wine, iron, cantharides, &c., but this course soon exhausted his system, and he was precipitated into a state of the most deplorable prostration, so that the powers of manhood wholly forsook him, and he was no longer able to be a husband. And whenever



he yielded to affection, so great was his debility and morbid irritability, that he was sure to experience an involuntary emission of semen. Being unable to procure any relief from this miserable condition, he was filled with the most gloomy despondency, and finally sunk into utter despair. In this state of mind he returned one day from his business to his home. He was received as usual with smiles and caresses. But no sooner did he feel the excitement of his nervous system, hastening his languid pulse, than he experienced again his calamity and his shame. Filled with the phrenzy of despair, he suddenly started from her side, rushed into another room, caught his pistol, and blew out his brains.

I might make out a volume of similar cases, (with the exception of the horrid catastrophe:)—they are already numerous in our country, and are daily becoming more so:—but I will only add a single instance more.

R. T., of the same city with G. L., and whose history closely resembled his, came to me about the same time for advice. He ap-



peared more like a walking corpse than a living body. I seriously doubted whether any earthly means could help him; but I gave him the best advice I could, little thinking that he would follow it. It was such a regimen as I have laid down in the preceding Lecture. Some fifteen months afterward, I was in the same city, walking in the street, and R. T. came up to me in good health. He warmly expressed his thanks for the benefit he had received, and said he had recovered his health by closely adhering to the advice I had given him. "For several months," said he, "after I adopted your regimen, I was not sensible of becoming any better, but was apparently more unwell; and all my friends and a multitude of others continually asserted that I was killing myself, and said everything to dissuade me from my course; but I persevered against every discouragement and every opposition, and before the year had come round, my improvement was so manifest that all my opposers were silenced; and now, after many years of extreme suffering, I am a well man again."



The question is often asked—Is it best for a young man, of suitable age and circumstances, to marry, when he is in a state of great debility and morbid nervous irritability, resulting from self-pollution? To this I reply, as a general rule, that, if a young man has so injured his body by any mode of venereal excess, as to be subject to involuntary emissions of semen on occasions of considerable excitement, or irritation of the parts from riding on horseback, or from other means, and also, to be subject to frequent nocturnal emissions, it is far safer and better to defer matrimony, and to avoid all dalliance and familiarity with females, till he has, by a rigorous adherence to the regimen laid down on the pages from 144 to 151, improved his health to such a degree, that he is wholly relieved from his involuntary discharges by day and by night. Let him constantly push his exercise in the open air, so far as he can comfortably bear it. If he finds riding on horseback irritates the parts too much, let him avoid that kind of exercise. Where it can be done, regular labor on a farm is the best mode of exercise



for such a person. To use the language of young people, if he is in love and courting, or engaged to be married, let him find some good excuse to go away from home, or, by some other means which are honorable and kind towards his "sweet heart," absent himself entirely from her, till he recovers from his difficulties, and is in a proper condition to marry.

By providing himself with a quantity of unbolted wheat meal sea-bread, made very thin, he may with great advantage go a voyage to sea as a sailor.

This may seem hard advice to many, but it is incomparably harder to endure a life of misery, in consequence of rushing into matrimony in an improper state of body. I have seen the distressing consequences of such precipitancy in too many instances, not to be aware of the danger of the experiment. And even when health is so far restored as to warrant marriage, the young husband must be exceedingly temperate in his connubial indulgence, or he will soon find himself prostrated again ;—and wo to him, if when he finds himself sinking, he endeavors to sustain himself



by tonics and stimulants. He may, it is true, by such means, keep up longer ; but he will inevitably, in the end, sink the deeper for it.

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### NOTE M.

“By these means, if by any short of miraculous power,” &c.—Page 152.

A TRULY virtuous and excellent lady of the city of New York, actuated by feelings of kindness and philanthropy, took the infant child of a deceased friend and nourished it at her own breast. The child was puny and diseased. It soon appeared that the child was afflicted with the consequences of the father's licentiousness. Its little body seemed completely charged with venereal virus, and in a short time, the lady who took the child to nurse began to be affected with its disease. Her friends earnestly endeavored to persuade her to desist from nursing it ; but having the highest confidence in the purity of her own system, she could not believe that she could



be affected by the child's disease, to any serious extent; she therefore persisted in nursing it, till her whole system became powerfully affected, and the venereal virus began to manifest itself in offensive sores, which broke out upon her breasts and every part of her body. The lady was now convinced that no degree of purity or health on her part, could enable her to resist the power of such a virulent poison, so long as she continued to nurse the child. She therefore felt herself compelled to banish the little sufferer from her breast, and to give immediate attention to the expulsion of the unclean disease from her body. This, she was informed by the medical gentleman whom she consulted, could only be done by the free use of mercury. Being very unwilling to submit to such a course, she requested a friend to consult me by letter, concerning her case. I received the letter while engaged in delivering a course of lectures at Hanover, N. H., and handed it to Dr. Mussey, and requested him to answer it. He advised the lady to take no medicine, but to adopt and strictly adhere to such a

regimen as I have laid down in the preceding Lecture for those who are suffering under the extreme effects of self-pollution. The lady faithfully obeyed the prescription, and in a few weeks was restored to the most perfect health. I confess I was equally surprised and delighted to hear of this result.

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#### NOTE N.

“And, on this point, parents and others should not have too much confidence in the purity of their sons, and boys under their care.—Page 158.

IN 1834 I presented a copy of the first edition of the foregoing Lecture to a gentleman of great moral excellence and ardent piety, and suggested the importance of his giving his attention to the subject with reference to his paternal duty to his young son, then about thirteen years of age. The father was shocked at the idea of naming such a subject to his son, and exclaimed, with much emphasis—“The thought of such a thing never entered the



mind of my child ! He has grown up thus far in innocence and purity, and I would not for the world have his pure mind contaminated by any instructions on such a subject. Depend upon it," continued he with great earnestness, "there is more danger in meddling with this subject than in leaving it alone. More youth are led into depravity by such means than are saved from it." I endeavored to reason with him on the subject, but found it in vain, and left him to his opinion. He took my book and carefully locked it up, and never said a word to his son on the subject—so entirely confident was he in the purity of his son's mind, and of the gross impropriety of naming such a subject to him.

This father's confidence in the purity of his child, was as well founded as perhaps any other father's ever was. His son had been the object of the utmost paternal solicitude, and vigilance, and prayer, from his birth. Daily had the father taken him to the closet of private devotion. Daily had he instructed him in morality and religion. Never had the child been allowed to run in the streets and associate



with other children. His society had always been selected with care. When he became old enough to go to school, he was not permitted to attend a public school, but a pious female was employed to teach him and a few other children of select and pious families; and for several years after he was old enough to be under the instruction of a master, he was kept under the tuition of this female, lest by passing into a master's school he should be contaminated by the boys he would meet there. And finally, when he was placed under the tuition of male teachers, it was always in the most select schools, such as the private schools of clergymen, &c., and so that the father's eye was every day upon him, and the father's admonitions every day administered. How then could such a father suspect that such a son was anything but innocence and purity? He did not suspect it, and suffered his son to remain without a word of instruction or admonition on the subject of sexual purity.

But this son soon began to be subject to frequent symptoms of disordered health; and



in the summer of 1837 these symptoms became seriously alarming. The father's fears were now greatly excited, and he could no longer resist the painful suspicions that his son was suffering from an improper indulgence of the sexual appetite. But he had not courage to name the subject to him. He therefore sent his son two hundred miles to consult me concerning his health. Almost at a glance I perceived that he was suffering from a shocking abuse of himself. After satisfying myself as to the real cause of his difficulties, I put a copy of the second edition of the foregoing Lecture into his hands. He read it through with great interest ; and on returning it to me observed, that a copy of that work ought to be put into the hands of every youth. "It would have been of immense benefit to me," continued he, "if I could have seen it five years ago." He then, at my request, very frankly made the following statement:—"You know," said he, "that my father has been very careful of my education. He never would allow me to associate with children in the street ; he kept me long at a



select, woman's school, and has ever since been extremely particular in regard to my teachers and the schools which I have attended; yet with all this vigilance and precaution on the part of my father, I was contaminated very young. It was while I was at the woman's school, and when only seven years old, that I was initiated into the practice of self-pollution. Other boys set me the example and led me into the practice, and made me believe that it was manly to follow it, and that by doing so, I should sooner become a man. With such notions and feelings I continued the practice till it became a confirmed habit of sensual gratification;—increasing in frequency as I grew older, till, by the time I was thirteen years old, I repeated the indulgence as often as three and sometimes four times in twenty-four hours. I was subject to frequent and severe turns of indisposition, but had no suspicions that my secret indulgences were in any measure concerned in producing them. Wherever I went to school I found the practice universal. I have never known a boy in any school which I have attended,



that was not addicted to this practice ; and from what I have seen and learned from others, I have no doubt that the practice is nearly universal in all schools. And I am very confident that almost universally, those who are thus injuring themselves are wholly ignorant of the pernicious effects of their indulgence. It is highly important that this matter should be better understood, and that parents and teachers should know the dangers to which their children and pupils are exposed, and warn them of those dangers before they are destroyed."

This young man, at the age of seventeen years, came to me with all the symptoms of incipient pulmonary consumption, and I confess that I was without strong apprehensions that he had already gone too far for recovery. By total abandonment of his secret indulgence, however, and a proper attention to his habits in other respects, his health has greatly improved. Yet he will never wholly recover from the effects of this ruinous practice.

This case, with very little variation in its details, presents a history of what is true in thousands of instances in our country, where there is not the slightest suspicion on the part of the parents of any such thing ;—nay, where the parents are confident of the innocence and purity of their sons, and “ would not for the world,” have that innocence removed and that purity sullied, by any instructions concerning sexual organization and appetites.

Such is the folly of a depraved and deluded world ; and no one is so offensive to it, as he who seeks to sanctify it from its pollutions. When unclean spirits find themselves in danger of being cast out, their cry is ever—“ Let us alone ! let us alone ! ”



## NOTE O.

“We are threatened with all the horrors of an over-exercised brain, &c.—Page 162.

SINCE Phrenology has become a popular hobby to a far greater extent than a profound science, and smatterers in it are multiplied throughout our country more rapidly than the vermin of Egypt, we are not only taught to believe, that every intellectual and moral faculty, and animal propensity and instinct, have their seat in the brain, but also that many if not most of the diseases, which flesh is heir to, originate in cerebral irritation. Thus we are not only assured that insanity always springs from this source, and is owing to the morbid condition of some or all of the cerebral organs, but that dyspepsia also springs from the same source, and has its primary seat, or *punctum saliens*, in the brain. Shoemakers, and tailors, and others, it is said, whose sedentary employment would strongly predispose them to dyspepsia, if that complaint were induced by causes acting primarily on the



alimentary organs, are rarely if ever affected with that disease, except in cases of great and protracted mental excitement, and consequent cerebral irritation : and therefore it matters not what a man's dietetic habits are ; let him eat, drink and be merry—he has nothing to fear from dyspepsia, if he can only contrive to keep his brain free from undue mental exercise and irritation. But this, like most other reasoning from fanciful data and partial observation, is wholly at variance with truth and fact. No one who is properly informed on the subject, can doubt that cerebral irritation from undue mental action, *can* be, and often is the primary cause of insanity, dyspepsia, and many other forms of disease ; but to say that either dyspepsia or insanity always, or even most frequently, originates in cerebral irritation from mental action, is to state what is evidently not true. I have found, from a very extensive examination of the subject, that shoemakers and tailors are very generally affected, to a greater or less extent, with dyspeptic symptoms ; and I have very rarely been able to trace those symptoms back to



cerebral irritation from mental action as their primary cause : but in almost all cases, they have been evidently attributable to dietetic errors, (including the use of tobacco and intoxicating liquors,) to sedentary habits, and to venereal abuses, either of the social or solitary kind. And the following synopsis of a late Report of the Massachusetts Lunatic Hospital, at Worcester, affords the strongest evidence to the same point in regard to insanity.

Of 250 patients received into the institution, 57 were common laborers—52 farmers—18 manufacturers—18 shoemakers—16 seamen—13 teachers—10 carpenters—8 merchants—6 machinists—5 blacksmiths—4 tailors—3 printers—3 paper makers—3 clothiers—2 millers—2 calico printers—2 bakers—2 cabinet makers—1 clergyman—1 lawyer—1 doctor—and 23 others of no particular calling.

If cerebral irritation from mental action were the principal cause of insanity, then we might justly expect to find a far greater proportion of clergymen, lawyers, doctors and



merchants in the asylum ; and a much smaller proportion of common laborers and farmers, who, according to the above statement, comprise nearly half of the whole number.

The truth is, moreover, that a large proportion of those cases which are attributed to domestic affliction, fear of poverty, &c., &c., are actually induced by those dietetic and other causes, which, acting primarily on the alimentary canal and other organs concerned in the general functions of nutrition and reproduction, develop a morbid irritability in the nerves of organic life, which finally involves the condition and functions of the brain.

But this whole subject is very little understood ; and superficial reasoners jump to conclusions with great precipitancy—seemingly without any sense of responsibility for the opinions which they advance, and with little regard for the effects which those opinions shall have on the permanent interests of mankind, so that they can, by any means, command for a season a portion of public attention, and secure their measure of notoriety.



## TECHNICAL TERMS EXPLAINED.

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- Abdomen*, the belly, or part of the body containing the stomach and intestines.
- Absorb*, to suck up: and in some instances, the substances absorbed undergo important vital changes in the process of absorption, as the chyle.
- Acme*, the highest pitch or degree; as the acme of a fever.
- Acoustic nerve*, the nerve of hearing.
- Acute inflammation*, comes on suddenly, and is attended with violent symptoms.
- Alimentary canal*, includes the stomach and intestines.
- Anarchical*, with great disorder and violence—disregarding all law.
- Anatomy*, comprehends the bones, muscles, and all the parts of the human body, and contemplates them in their proper situations.
- Anus*, the posterior orifice by which the fæces pass from the body.
- Apparatus*, a number of organs associated together for a general effect. Thus the stomach, intestines, pancreas, &c., constitute the digestive apparatus.
- Arterial*, belonging to the arteries, which convey the blood from the heart to all parts of the body.
- Calculi*, hard, stone-like substances formed in the liver, kidneys, bladder, &c.
- Calorific*, having power to produce heat—the warmth of the body.



*Capillary*, very small, hair-sized.

*Capillary congestion*, over-fulness of the minute blood-vessels.

*Carious*, gangrene of the teeth or bones ; decay, rotting.

*Catarrhal affection*, a disease in which a thick fœtid mucus or pus is secreted and discharged by the mucous membrane.

*Cellular tissue*, one of the fundamental tissues of the body, and essentially gelatinous, or jelly. It pervades all parts, and constitutes the general frame-work of the body, entering into the bones, membranes, &c. Its most important property, in the living body, is elasticity.

*Cephalo-spinal*, belonging to the brain and spinal marrow.

*Cerebral*, belonging to the brain.

*Change of structure*, a diseased change of the nervous, muscular, and other substances of the body, in which they become softened or hardened, and lose their natural and proper character, and peculiar properties.

*Chronic*, long standing, slowly advancing, and often by imperceptible degrees.

*Chyle*, the white milky fluid formed from the chyme, and which forms the blood.

*Chyme*, the digested food in the stomach and intestines.

*Coition*, the act of sexual commerce.

*Concupiscence*, lascivious desire.

*Congestion*, over-fulness of the vessels.

*Deglutition*, swallowing.

*Depuration*, the act of cleansing, or throwing off impurities.

*Determination*, flowing or tending to the centre, or surface, or any point of irritation.



*Deteriorate*, to make worse, to impair.

*Diabetes*, a diseased and excessive secretion of the kidneys, in which, sometimes, all the nourishment of the body passes off in the form of crude urine, and death ensues.

*Domain*, the extent or territory over which any power exerts its controlling influence.

*Duodenum*, twelve inches of the intestinal tube, leading immediately from the stomach.

*Engorgement*, extreme over-fulness, producing oppression, irritation, debility, &c.

*Epigastric*, round about the stomach.

*Fatuity*, foolishness, loss of mind.

*Filamentary*, very minute, thread-like.

*Final cause*, the cause or purpose for which a thing is made or done.

*Flaccid*, lax, loose, flabby, soft.

*Function*, the office or duty which an organ performs.

*Functional power*, the power by which the function is performed.

*Functional result*, that which is effected, or produced by the performance of the function.

*Ganglion*, a bulbous enlargement, or knot of nervous substance.

*Gastric*, belonging to the stomach.

*Genital organs*, the sexual or organs of generation, the private parts.

*Gustatory*, the power of taste, one of the five senses—situated in the mouth.

*Hypochondriacal*, gloomy, melancholy, partially deranged.

*Hemorrhage*, flowing of blood, as from the nose, lungs, &c.



*Hemorrhoids*, piles,

*Induration*, hardening.

*Insignia of virility*, the testicles and penis.

*Instinct*, the innate appetite, propensity or desire, which is a physiological power of the living body, and excites to the performance of the functions.

*Instinctive propensities*, the natural, original propensities, which are constitutionally founded in the real wants of the vital economy, or the general economy of the species.

*Lacteals*, small vessels that elaborate the chyle and convey it to the blood-vessels.

*Lecherous*, lascivious, concupiscent, habitual sexual desire

*Loins*, the small of the back over the hips.

*Malaria*, pestilential or poisonous gases, or air.

*Morbid*, diseased, unhealthy.

*Morbid irritability, sensibility, prurience, &c.*, these affections in a diseased state.

*Mucous membrane*, the membrane lining the nose, mouth, throat, windpipe, meatpipe, stomach, intestines, urethra, &c.

*Normal*, right, proper, according to the healthy constitutional laws and operations of the system.

*Olfactory nerve*, nerve of smell, belonging to the nose.

*Optic nerve*, nerve of sight, belonging to the eye.

*Organ* is formed by the peculiar arrangement of the tissues of the body, so that it is constructed and endowed for a particular function. The stomach, lungs, liver, &c., are organs.

*Organic life* is that order of vitality which comes under general laws common to all organized bodies, vegetable and animal; and in the animal kindom, it is con-



nected with the ganglionic system of nerves. See Lecture, page 41.

*Pancreatic*, from the pancreas, a small gland back of the stomach.

*Pathology*, the science or doctrine of disease.

*Pathological*, relating to disease.

*Pericardium*, a membranous sack which surrounds the heart.

*Peristaltic*, the worm-like action of the stomach and intestines, by which their contents are carried along the canal.

*Physiology* comprehends all the living organs of the body, in the possession of their vital properties, and in the performance of their vital functions.

*Physiological*, belonging to the vital powers and functions of the organs, &c.

*Plexus*, a number of nervous cords woven together.

*Preternatural*, above what is natural, or ordinary and healthy.

*Priapism*, stiffness of penis.

*Prurience*, a sexual itching, or lascivious sensibility of the organs of generation.

*Puberty*, the time at which the individual becomes capable of generating.

*Purulent*, pus-like or corrupt matter.

*Saliva*, the fluid of the mouth, secreted by the salivary glands.

*Scirrhus*, a severe hardening of the glands, approaching to cancer.

*Secretion*, the separation or elaboration of the urine, bile, tears and other fluids from the blood.

*Self-pollution*, the private vice of defiling one's self with the hand or by other means.

*Spermatic cord*, the cord upon which the testicle is suspended.

*Strangury*, the inability to void the urine.

*Tissue*, a particular arrangement of solid fibre in the organs.

*Turgescence*, swollen, full.

*Urethra*, the channel through which the urine passes out from the neck of the bladder.

*Vasculo-nervous*, composed of nerves and blood-vessels.

*Venereal*, sexual, relating to sexual enjoyment.

*Venereal paroxysms*, the intense excitement, emotions and convulsions of sexual indulgence.

*Virility*, manhood, having the organs and powers of a man.

*Viscera*, the internal organs, such as the stomach, lungs, liver, &c.

*Visceral congestion*, an over-fulness of the blood-vessels of the internal organs.

*Vital properties*, such as the elasticity of the cellular tissue, the contractility of the muscular tissue, and the nervous and sensorial power of the nervous tissue. These properties constitute the functional powers of the organs.



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