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# MENTAL HYGIENE:

OR,

## AN EXAMINATION

OF

# THE INTELLECT AND PASSIONS,

DESIGNED TO ILLUSTRATE

## THEIR INFLUENCE ON HEALTH AND THE DURATION OF LIFE.

BY WILLIAM SWEETSER, M.D.,

LATE PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PHYSIC, AND FELLOW OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

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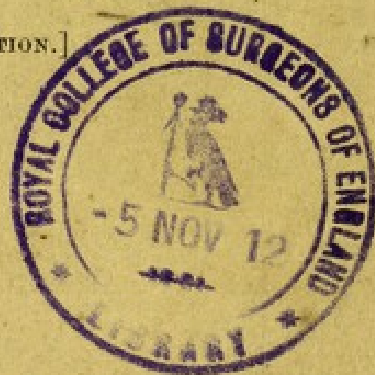


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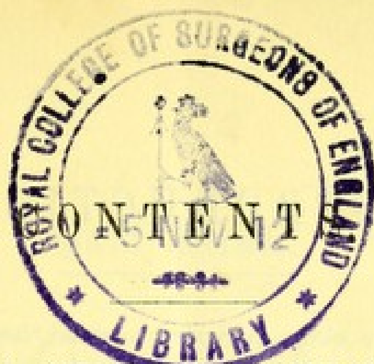
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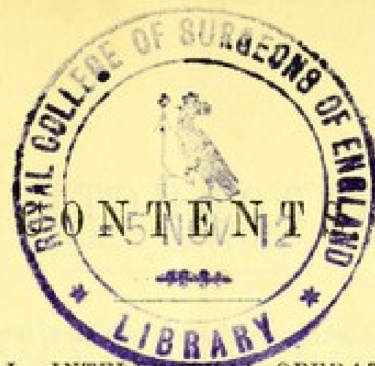
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# INTRODUCTION.

Whatever may be our speculative views in regard to mind, however distinct in its nature we may deem it to be from matter, yet that it is essentially involved with our organization, and that between the two a reciprocal influence is constantly and necessarily maintained, is too apparent for denial. Of the mental constitution and its laws we have not the faintest knowledge, except as they reveal themselves through the medium of certain material conformations. Wherever these are discovered, we are convinced that mind is, or has been, conjoined with them. Without such arrangements of matter its astonishing phenomena have never been declared to us.

The mutual relationship and constant interchange of influence subsisting between our mental and corporeal natures can hardly have escaped even the most careless observation. The functions of either being disturbed, more or less derangement will almost necessarily be reflected to those of the other. What frame so hardy as to escape the agitations and afflictions of the mind? and what mind so firm as to remain unharmed amid the infirmities and sufferings of the body?

The leading design of the present volume, as its title implies, is to elucidate the influence of intellect and passion upon the health and endurance of the human organization. This influence, we believe, has been but imperfectly understood and appreciated in its character and importance by mankind at large. Few, we believe, have formed any adequate estimate of the sum of bodily ills which have their source in the mind. Those of the medical profession even, concentrating their attention upon the physical, are too prone to neglect the mental causes of disease; and thus may patients be subjected to the harshest medicines of the pharmacopœia, the true origin of whose malady is some inward and rooted sorrow, which a moral balm alone can reach.

The work we are introducing will be divided into two Parts. Under the first we shall consider the intellectual operations in respect to their influence on the general functions of the body. But, as the effects which they induce in the animal economy are less strongly marked, and less hazardous to its welfare, than those belonging to the passions, comparatively little space will be devoted to this division. Indeed, when pure, or as much so as is consistent with their nature—for scarce can we conceive of any mental function entirely isolated from every shade of affection—the intellectual operations can by no means be viewed as an ordinary occasion of disease, or as tending directly to abbreviate the term of existence. The infirmities so apt to be witnessed in those whose pursuits are of a more strictly intellectual character, are much oftener imputable to the agency of the passions aroused by, and blended with, the mental efforts, or else to the sedentary and other prejudicial habits of life with which they are so frequently united, than to the mere abstract labours of thought.

The Second Part will embrace a view of the moral feelings or passions in the relation which they also sustain to our physical nature. Of these we shall, in the first place, offer a concise definition with such a general classification as will be deemed necessary to the leading design of the work. Next, we shall summarily notice their effects upon the different functions of the animal economy: Then describe a few of the most important of the passions belonging to each of the three great classes, namely, pleasurable, painful, and mixed, into which they are to be separated; thus taking occasion to examine more closely their physical phenomena and individual influence on the well-being of the human mechanism. And, lastly, we shall attempt to expose the evil consequences resulting from an ill-regulated imagination to the firmness of the nervous system, and the integrity of the general health. The imagination here acting through the instrumentality of the passions morbidly excited by its licentious operation, such a consideration of it will not be inapposite to the design of the present treatise.

As the volume now being presented is not addressed to any particular class of readers, technical expressions will be carefully avoided, and its matter be rendered as plain and comprehensible as the nature of the subject will admit. And as truth, so far, at least, as the author can penetrate his own feelings, is its grand aim, all mystical speculation and ungrounded theories, whether of a metaphysical or moral nature, will be scrupulously excluded from its pages.

Such, then, is a summary exposition of the plan and purpose of the work before us; and flattering himself that the principles it advances may be rendered subservient both to our physical and moral welfare, the author now resigns it to the judgment of his friends and the public, asking only the same indulgence which has been so kindly extended to him in previous instances where he has ventured to promulgate the humble results of his studies and observations.

New York, 1843.

# Part First.

# INTELLECTUAL OPERATIONS.

Before Darwin

## CHAPTER I.

A FEW CONSIDERATIONS ON THE INTELLECTUAL NATURE OF MAN, COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE ANIMALS NEXT BELOW HIM IN THE SCALE OF LIFE.

MAN is distinguished from all other known animals, not only by his peculiar conformation of body, by his erect and dignified attitude, but by a far higher measure of intellectual endowment, and a consequently greater extension of his relations with external things. Remarkable, however, as is this superiority of our species, yet is it questionable if human pride has not exaggerated it, has not assumed a broader distinction between us and the lower animals than Nature herself will acknowledge. Thus, some have denied to brutes all glimpses of the higher faculties, ascribing all their acts to the direct impulse of a resistless instinct. But such error must arise, I think, from some misconception of the right meaning of the term instinct—from not making the requisite distinction between this and others of the mental powers.

The simple animal instincts imply, in the mind of the physiologist, peculiar inward feelings, originating urgent wants, or desires, which call forth certain muscular actions, whose end is, by satisfying the want, to relieve the sensation which excited it; the series of actions awakened being always understood to take place independent of education, or imitation, and without any foresight of the end to be attained by them. Or to put the definition in another form. Instincts consist in particular physical conditions, and consequent sensations, impelling to some definite train of muscular movements, which contribute or are essential to the preservation of the individual, or the continuance of the species. Many, therefore, must grow out of the immediate necessities of the system.

Numerous examples might be adduced in illustration of the foregoing definition of instincts, but the appetites of hunger and thirst must suffice. These instinctive wants, or desires, arise out of, or are excited by, physical conditions of the stomach, or system at large, which demand the supply of food and drink, and thus serve as monitors to solicit the co-operative acts necessary to furnish such supply. Hence animals, so soon as born, and independent, of course, of education or imitation, go through, and as perfectly as ever afterward, all those complicated muscular movements requisite to meet the demands of nutrition. Instinctive feelings, when simple and uncontrolled, almost always elicit instinctive actions.

In living nature, as all naturalists have recognised, there exists a gradually ascending chain from the humblest plant to the zoophyte,—or transition link to the animal scale,—and from this up to man, its acknowledged head; and structure and function ever advance in a corresponding relation, the perfection of the former necessarily indicating that of the latter. Thus, on reaching the naturalist's second great division of the animal kingdom, or that to which belong a brain and spinal marrow, we begin to discover, in addition to the simple instinct which probably alone governs the lower or brainless animals, some glimmerings of other mental powers, and which grow more and more distinct in proportion as the organization, particularly of the brain, approaches nearer and nearer to that of our own. Hence, in the class of animals whose brain and general nervous system most closely resemble man's, do we detect the rudiments of nearly all the human mental faculties, and consequently an approximation, imperfect, to be sure, nevertheless an approximation, to a rational nature. The above assertions are fully borne out by comparative anatomy and physiology, and such, therefore, as are familiar with these sciences will not hesitate to admit their truth.

The simia satyrus,—orang-outang,—both as respects his structure and mental powers, seems more nearly allied to humanity than any other animal to which our acquaintance has hitherto extended. But then, dwelling as this species does, chiefly in the interior of the island of Borneo, which has been but little penetrated by civilized man, and the few individuals of it brought into Europe or the United States having been young, and falling victims to an ungenial climate, and unsuitable food, probably before attaining to their full physical or mental maturity, our knowledge of the highest development of its capacities must consequently be but imperfect. Still, even under such adverse circumstances as we have been able to contemplate these animals, have they astonished us by their display of the habits and feelings of our own nature. But the accounts given by travellers of the orang-outang in its native condition, and its close imitations of the actions of man, even making due allowance for exaggeration, excite yet greater surprise.

How near, therefore, this remarkable animal, in a propitious climate, and under a judicious system of instruction, might be assimilated to

the inferior races of mankind, we have no data which will warrant an opinion. Placed beside the cultivated European, the distinction, both in his structure and mental endowments, seems broad indeed; but it becomes materially lessened on a comparison of him, which is the only just one, with the lowest of our own species, as the New Hollander, or Bosjesman Hottentot.

The more careful is our investigation into this wonderful chain of life, the more perfect shall we discover it to be. All analogy, even of the material world, instructs us that the plan of Nature is to work *gradually* upward; that she admits into her scheme no abrupt chasms, but advances by easy, and almost imperceptible steps, from the humblest to the most exalted of her creations. The earth,—if we may put faith in what geologists tell us,—with all its countless occupants, would seem to have been reared up, by a regular progression, from its primeval chaotic mass to its now existing state. Thus, to take the geological account of it given by the distinguished Cuvier:—The globe we inhabit is composed of various layers or strata of rocks, and it is rationally assumed that those on which all the others rest, are the most ancient, and, of course, represent the first or internal stratum. Now on this primitive stratum, as is proved by their abundant organic remains, animals existed, but only of the most inferior orders—the first rude attempts, as it were, at animal formations. Then upon this we have another layer, the surface of the primary, with all its inhabitants, having, of course, been overwhelmed by some dread convulsion. Here again, in the lapse of time, other living beings succeeded, but, as we learn from their numerous relics, of a somewhat more advanced organization. And in this manner has revolution after revolution been going on, each succeeded by new worlds of life, until we arrive at the present surface, or the alluvial deposits,—not the result of any grand convulsion,—in which the remains of animals now existing, and of the most perfect construction, are alone to be discovered. Thus has Nature been working up, step by step, from her earliest and rudest organic structures, improving gradually upon herself, upon her original type, to the present occupants of the earth.

Man, now, the most finished of all organized beings, belongs, as analogy might lead us to anticipate, only to this latest face of the globe, no fossil remains of him having been found in any of the older strata. He is the last then, and, as yet, most perfect work of creative power in the progressive ascent from the humblest living forms. Millions of ages, for aught we know, may have been spent in the gradual steps by which the present complicated modes of life have been reached. And is here the consummation? Have these mighty revolutions of foregone times now ceased? Is the world finished? Has Nature attained the summit of her scale? Is man to continue the masterpiece of his Maker? Or, in the course of ages, may not yet another convulsion arise, desolating the present surface of the earth, and, on the new one which succeeds, Nature make a still further advance in animal life, and produce a race of beings as much excelling man as he does any prior creation? And with a little license to the fancy, may we not imagine the learned naturalists on this new crust puzzling their wits over the fossil bones of our own proud race, and marvelling to what humble order of beings they could have belonged? But my readers must pardon this digression. I was led into it to show that Nature, wherever we can discover her order, rises by an easy progression in her scale of life.

Is there, then, no transition link uniting man with the beings below him? Is there a breach at this point, while everywhere else the chain is complete? Or may it not rather be that the step from the highest race of the ape to the most humble of our own, is really easier than human pride is willing to acknowledge? But leaving such embarrassing questions if we compare man, as we meet him in society, with even the most sagacious brute, the distinction will be found broad enough to satisfy the strictest advocate for the pre-eminence of human nature.

Regarding man, then, in his cultivated state, how, it may be asked, does his mind differ from that of the animals next below him with which we are acquainted? The general answer is plain. In the far higher degree of its intellectual capacities, and in the possession of moral sentiments, of which latter the inferior animal displays but faint vestiges.

Man alone seems endowed, at least to any obvious extent, with the faculty of reflection; that is, of bending the thoughts inward upon themselves, and by a sort of mental chemistry creating new combinations, and of consequence new thoughts, out of the ideas obtained through the medium of the senses. And from this compound operation of the mind does he derive another and boundless source of knowledge, new motives to action, and an incalculable increase in his relation with external things.

The relations of the brute animal to the objects among which he is placed, have reference chiefly, if not solely, to the gratification of his appetites, or the satisfaction of his bodily wants, and his preservation from injury or destruction. His sensual desires pacified, and unthreatened by danger, he commonly falls asleep, or at least remains at rest. But such is not the case with man, certainly with civilized man. With his appetites satisfied, with ample provision for every physical necessity, and exempt from even the remotest apprehension of harm, still, actuated by a class of wants above those of his mere animal nature, does he remain awake—observing the objects and phenomena about him, reflecting, perchance, on his own mysterious constitution, and its intricate relations; or, unsatisfied with the present, is stretching his view far into the dim, uncertain future, and judging, or trying to judge, of its fast coming events. Nor yet can his expanding mind be bounded by the world in which he dwells, but grasps at the universe and eternity, and space and time are too limited to contain it.

This curiosity, this insatiable appetite for knowledge, or the discovery of new truths,

seems an attribute specially of our own nature, and is the stimulus ever urging us forward in the path of intellectual advancement. Scarce has the infant become familiar with the light of heaven, hardly does expression begin to brighten its vacant eye, ere it evinces its incipient curiosity, in touching, tasting, smelling, hearkening, and is thus accumulating ideas of sensation, which are afterward to be compared, abstracted, combined, or, in other words, to be worked up into various new forms, constituting new and inexhaustible sources of mental progress.

To man, then, in addition to his sensual wants, which he has in common with the brutes, belong those of a moral and intellectual character; and his external relations being consequently multiplied, new feelings, new desires, new passions must be generated, which, while they open sources of enjoyment immeasurably exceeding any possessed by the inferior animals, beget a train of moral, and their consequent physical, ills, too often filling life with sorrow, and leading almost to a doubt whether it be a gift of mercy or an imposition of wrath. Thus, in the present disposition of things, do we ever find a system of compensation, an attempt, as it were, at a general equalisation of enjoyment.

The inferior animal, if his appetites are appeased, and he is exempt from physical pain and the fear of danger, is apparently happy in the simple feeling of existence. But what torture of mind may not our own species endure, even when free from all bodily suffering, safe from every harm, and with resources, even in superfluity, for the gratification of every sensual want! An agony sometimes so terrible as to drive its miserable victim to the horrid alternative of self-destruction, a catastrophe rarely brought about by any amount of physical pain. Fortunately, however, by a judicious education of our intellectual and moral nature, much, very much, may be done to avoid such mental sufferings, and the bodily diseases which so generally follow in their train.

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## CHAPTER II.

A JUDICIOUS EXERCISE OF THE INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES IS CONDUCIVE BOTH TO HEALTH and HAPPINESS.—EVILS RESULTING FROM MENTAL INACTIVITY.—INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS DO NOT NECESSARILY, AS SOME HAVE SUPPOSED, ABBREVIATE LIFE.—EXAMPLES OF LONGEVITY AMONG ANCIENT AND MODERN SCHOLARS.

THAT the noblest powers of our nature should have been designed for use and improvement, one might suppose would be universally admitted; nevertheless there are not wanting those, eminent, too, for their learning, who have endeavoured to prove that the savage is our only natural and happy condition. Thus man,—for such has been the picture drawn of him,—in the golden age of his early creation, dwelling in a mild and balmy climate abounding in vegetable productions suitable to his wants, lived solitary, naked, savage; roaming without care or thought the vast forests which he held in common with the brute, and feasting at will on the roots and fruits which the teeming soil spontaneously brought forth. Then was he pure, gentle, innocent; and, exempt from all those multiform and painful maladies which now afflict and shorten his career, his life glided on in a smooth and happy current, and when death at last overtook him, it came, not as at present, fraught with pains and terrors, but like the tranquil sleep that steals over the wearied senses of innocent childhood. Here, free from all those lights and shadows of the soul which spring from cultivated intellect, like the brutes he was happy in the bare consciousness of existence; in exercising his limbs; in basking in the sunshine, or cooling himself in the shade; and in the gratification of his mere animal propensities.

> "Pride then was not, nor arts that pride to aid:
> Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;
> The same his table, and the same his bed;
> No murder cloth'd him, and no murder fed:
> In the same temple, the resounding wood,
> All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God."

But that such a primeval state of blissful ignorance, health and purity, ever existed, we have no other evidence than what rests on the fancies of poetry, or the dreams of poetic philosophy. The savages of the present day, who, one would think, ought to come most nearly to this blessed state of nature, present a picture the very opposite of that described.

The tendency of man is obviously to civilisation and mental progress; whence the highest moral and intellectual advancement of which he is susceptible, is the only natural state that can be predicated of him. As well might it be contended, that the infant is the natural condition of the individual, as the savage that of the species.

The mind, like the body, demands exercise. That the proudest faculties of our nature were intended for slothful inaction,—that talents were given us to remain buried and unproductive,—is repugnant alike to reason and analogy. There is, in fact, no power of the living economy, however humble, but needs action, both on its own account, and on that of the general constitution. So closely united by sympathies are all our functions, that the judicious exercise of each one, beside conducing to its individual welfare, must contribute, in a greater or less degree, a healthful influence to every other.

Man, as already affirmed, discovers a natural desire for knowledge; and the very exertion necessary to its attainment, and the delight experienced in the gratification of this innate curiosity, diffuse a wholesome excitement throughout the system. There is a pleasure in the exercise of thought, in whose kindly effects all the functions must in some measure participate. Agreeable and well regulated studies, or mental occupations, are as essential to the integrity of the mind, as are judicious exercises to that of the body; and as the health of the latter, as all admit, conduces to that of the former, so also, as it will be my constant endeavour to show through the course of this

volume, does a sound state of the mind communicate a salutary influence to the functions of the body.

The mind, then, needs occupation, not only for its own sake, but also for that of the organism with which it is so intricately involved. Mental inactivity, in the existing constitution of society, is the occasion of an amount of moral and physical suffering, which, to one who had never reflected upon the subject, would appear scarcely credible. From this proceeds that *tædium vitæ*, that dreadful irksomeness of life, so often witnessed among the opulent, or what are termed the privileged classes of society, who are engaged in no active, or interesting pursuits, and who, already possessing the liberal gifts of fortune, and consequently the means of gratifying all their natural and artificial wants, lack the stimulus of necessity to awaken and sustain in wholesome action their mental energies. Hence, although they may be objects of envy to those whose straitened circumstances demand continued and active exertions, yet is their situation too often anything but enviable. Their cup of life drugged with the gall and bitterness of ennui, their paramount wish is to escape from themselves, from the painful listlessness of a surfeited existence. The mind must be occupied, else discontented and gloomy, if not wicked, feelings, will be likely to take possession of it.

Paradoxical as it may seem, yet it is questionable if a much heavier curse could be imposed on man, with his present nature, than the complete gratification of all his wishes, leaving nothing for his hopes, desires, or struggles. The joy and animation of the huntsman last but with the chase. The feeling that life is without aim or purpose, that it is destitute of any motive to action, is of all others the most depressing—the most insupportable to a moral and intellectual being.

Men of different constitutions, habits, talents, and education, will, as might be expected, require different sorts and degrees of mental action. Such as are endowed with vigorous intellectual powers, and in whose exercise they have been long accustomed to indulge, are liable to suffer the most when their minds are left unemployed. Those, for example, who are fond of study, and have been long used to devote a part of their time to its prosecution, may even sustain a manifest injury, both in their moral and physical health, by a sudden and continued interruption of such habit; a painful void being thus left in the mind, indirectly depressing its feelings, and, by a necessary consequence, all the important functions of life.

It is told of Petrarch, when at Vaucluse, that his friend the Bishop of Cavaillon, fearing lest his too close devotion to study would wholly ruin his health, which was already much impaired, having procured of him the key of his library, immediately locked up his books and writing-desks, saying to him, "I interdict you from pen, ink, paper, and books, for the space of ten days." Petrarch, though much pained in his feelings, nevertheless submitted to the mandate. The first day was passed by him in the most tedious manner; during the second, he suffered under a constant headache; and on the third, he became affected with fever. The bishop now, taking pity on his condition, returned him his key, and thus restored him to his previous health.

Those, again, who, while yet in the vigour of life, retire from their wonted business, be it mercantile or professional, and thus all at once break up their habits of mental application, are apt to fall into a painful state of listlessness, or ennui, and which, in certain temperaments, will often grow into a morbid melancholy, shading every scene and every prospect with a dismal and hopeless gloom. And sometimes the disgust and loathing of existence become so extreme, that they rid themselves of its hated burden with their own hands. This state of moral depression, if long continued, may also originate painful and fatal physical infirmities, or may pass into some settled form of insanity, especially that of monomania. In some instances, it will change into, or alternate with a reckless and ungovernable excitement, the individual running into wild extravagance, or rash speculations, —giving himself up to habits of gambling, or gross intemperance, to relieve the painful void in his purposeless existence.

Elderly persons, who all at once give up their accustomed occupations, and consequently their mental activity, and retire to enjoy their ease and leisure, will not rarely, especially if they have been previously free livers, experience a rapid breaking up of their mental, and perhaps bodily powers, passing sometimes into a more or less complete state of what has been termed senile dementia.

Under the circumstances of mental *inertia* to which I have been referring, it is often observed, that anything arousing the mind to exertion, even positive misfortunes, will, by reviving the almost palsied feelings, be attended with a manifestly salutary influence. Thus is it that the retired opulent are oftentimes, if not past the age of action, made happier, healthier, and I may also add better, by the loss of so much of their property as to render renewed exertions necessary to their subsistence. Retirement from long established and active duties demands intellectual and moral resources, of which few, in the present condition of society, have a right to boast.

It is an opinion not uncommonly entertained, that studious habits, or intellectual pursuits, tend necessarily to injure the health, and abbreviate the term of life—that mental labours are ever prosecuted at the expense of the body, and must consequently hasten its decay. Such a result, however, is by no means essential, unless the labours be urged to an injudicious excess, when of course, as in all overstrained exertions, whether of body or mind, various prejudicial effects may be naturally anticipated. I mean not to assert, that those in whom the intellect is chiefly engaged, will enjoy the same athletic strength, or display equal muscular development with others whose pursuits are of a more mechanical character,—for Nature seldom lavishes upon us a full complement of her various gifts; —but I do believe that, under prudent habits of

life and with a naturally sound constitution, they may preserve as uniform health, and live as long, as any other class of persons. In support of such belief abundant instances may be cited, both from ancient and modern times, of men eminently distinguished for the amount and profundity of their mental labours, who, being temperate and regular in their habits, have continued to enjoy firm health, and have attained a protracted existence. It has indeed been said by some eminent writer, that "one of the rewards of philosophy is long life." But let me illustrate by a few examples. Among the moderns, Boerhaave lived to seventy; Locke to seventy-three; Galileo to seventy-eight; Sir Edward Coke to eighty-four; Newton to eighty-five, and Fontanelle to a hundred. Boyle, Leibnitz, Volney, Buffon, and a multitude of others of less note that could be named, lived to quite advanced ages. And the remarkable longevity of many of the German scholars, who have devoted themselves almost exclusively to the pursuit of science and literature, must be sufficiently familiar to my readers. Professor Blumenbach, the distinguished German naturalist, died not long since at the age of eighty-eight; and Dr Olbers, the celebrated astronomer of Bremen, in his eighty-first year.

Of the prominent intellectual men of our own country, many might also be mentioned who have attained to very great ages. Chief Justice Marshall and Thomas Jefferson reached their eighty-fourth year; Doctor Franklin and John Jay their eighty-fifth; James Madison his eighty-seventh, and John Adams his ninety-first. Now these men, as is well known, were, during the greater portion of their lives, engaged in the most profound mental labours. Doctor Franklin continued his public services till he was eighty-two, and his intellectual exertions to near the close of his life. In a letter to one of his friends written when he was eighty-two years old, speaking of his advanced age, he says, "By living twelve years beyond David's period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity when I ought to have been abed and asleep. Yet, had I gone at seventy, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed, too, in matters of the greatest importance."

The ancient sages, however, were evidently privileged, in respect to health and longevity, over those of modern days. Physical education was at their period held in much higher regard. More of their time was passed in the open air, and in active muscular exercise, than is common among our own scholars. Their studies were often prosecuted without doors, and not a few of them taught their pupils, and accomplished even many of their astonishing intellectual labours, whilst walking in the fields and groves. It was in this way that Aristotle imparted his instructions, whence, probably, came his disciples to be called peripatetics; the Greek verb περιπατεω, *peripateo*, meaning to walk about, or to walk abroad.

Socrates had no fixed place for his lectures; instructing his pupils, sometimes in the groves of Academus, sometimes on the banks of the Ilyssus, or wherever, indeed, he might chance to be with them. The eminent scholars of those days were likewise in the habit of travelling from country to country to disseminate their stores of knowledge.

I will conclude the present chapter by citing a few of the numerous instances of longevity among the philosophers and learned men of antiquity. Homer, it is generally admitted, lived to be very old. So also did the philosopher Pythagoras, and the historian Plutarch. Thucydides the celebrated Greek historian, and Solon the famous lawgiver of Athens, reached the age of eighty. Plato died in his eighty-first year. Pittacus and Thales, two of the seven wise men of Greece, lived, the former to be eighty-two, and the latter, ninety-six. Xenophon the Greek historian, and Galen the distinguished physician, who is said to have written no less than three hundred volumes, each attained his ninetieth year. Carneades, a celebrated philosopher of Cyrene in Africa, and founder of a sect called the third or new Academy, reached the same age. It is stated of Carneades, that he was so intemperate in his thirst after knowledge that he did not even give himself time to comb his head or pare his nails. Sophocles, the celebrated tragic poet of Athens, died in his ninety-fifth year, and then, according to Lucian, not in the course of nature, but by being choked with a grapestone. Some have placed his death a little earlier, and referred it to a different accident, but all agree that he exceeded his ninetieth year. Zeno, the founder of the sect of the Stoics, lived to be ninety-eight. Hippocrates expired in his ninety-ninth year, and, as we are told, free from all disorders of mind and body. Zenophanes, an eminent Greek writer, and the founder of a sect of philosophers in Sicily called Eleatic, arrived to a hundred, and Democritus to the extreme age of a hundred and nine. But I need not further multiply examples, for they meet us everywhere in the pages of ancient biography.

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## CHAPTER III.

EVIL CONSEQUENCES THAT MAY BE APPREHENDED FROM OVERTASKING THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS. —RULES PROPER TO BE OBSERVED BY STUDIOUS MEN FOR THE SECURITY OF THEIR HEALTH.— THE ABILITY TO SUSTAIN INTELLECTUAL LABOURS VARIES IN DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS, AND CONSEQUENTLY THE PROPORTION OF TIME THAT MAY BE SAFELY DEDICATED TO STUDY.

THE capabilities of the mind, like those of the body, must necessarily have their limits, and are hence liable to be overtasked. The powers of the brain may be impaired by extravagant mental, in like manner as those of the muscles by severe corporeal exertions. And then so close are the sympathetic relations between mind and body, that whatever serves to injure the former, must at the same time put in hazard the welfare of the latter. Hence, if the intellectual faculties are habitually overstrained, a train of moral and physical infirmities may be induced,

which shall embitter existence, and abridge its duration.

Persons who addict themselves immoderately to intellectual pursuits become exposed to affections of the brain, or organ especially abused. They are liable to headaches, and an indescribable host of nervous ailments. Inflammation, too, and other organic diseases of the brain will sometimes supervene. And, as they advance in life, apoplexies and palsies are apt to assail them. Whenever there exists a predisposition in the physical constitution to apoplexy, close mental application is always attended with the utmost hazard, and more particularly so after the middle term of life.

Epilepsy is another melancholy disease of the nervous system, which a highly active and exalted state of the mind would seem to favour. Many individuals, distinguished for their talents and mental efforts, have been the subjects of this unhappy malady ; as, for example, Julius Cæsar, Mahomet, and Napoleon. And among learned men, Petrarch, Columna, Francis Rhedi, and Rousseau, are familiarly cited instances. Still, in these cases how much may be justly ascribed to the abstract labour of intellect, and how much to mental anxiety, or the undue excitement and depression of the moral feelings, cannot be certainly determined.

Extreme mental dejection, hypochondriasis, and even insanity, particularly if there be in the constitution any tendency to such conditions, may sometimes result from the cause I am considering. And in occasional instances, under their intemperate exertion, the energies of the brain have been consumed, the light of intellect has become extinct, and in a state of mental imbecility, or even drivelling idiocy, the wretched victim has been doomed to linger out a pitiable existence within the walls of a madhouse.

I have thus stated what may occur in extreme cases from abuse of the intellectual powers. Still I conceive that the diseases of literary men are far oftener to be imputed to incidental circumstances, as their sedentary habits, injudicious diet, &c., than to their mere mental labours ; and that would students, or those whose avocations draw especially on the energies of the mind, but bestow the requisite attention on their regimen of life, they might, as I have before said, enjoy as good and uniform a share of health as most other classes of the community.

Among the rules of health most essential to be observed by those whose pursuits belong more especially to the mind, we may in the first place mention temperance both in eating and drinking. Persons of studious and sedentary habits neither require, nor will they bear, the same amount and kind of food as those whose occupations call forth greater physical exertion, and produce, consequently, a more rapid consumption of the materials of the body. If such, therefore, will persist in eating and drinking like the day-labourer, they must look to experience indigestion, and all its aggravated train of miseries. Or, even should they escape dyspepsia, the yet graver ills of excessive repletion, as inflammations and congestions, will be likely to overtake them.

It is important, too, that a certain degree of regularity be observed in respect to their meals, the stomach, like every other organ of the animal economy, being subject to the influence of habit ; and that during them the mind be withdrawn as much as possible from all other concerns, and interested especially in the agreeable sensual impressions it is experiencing. The enjoyment of our food forms one of the best of sauces for the promotion of its digestion.

Eating, furthermore, being an imperious animal duty, sufficient time should always be appropriated to its performance. The habit of rapid eating is exceedingly common among studious men, and is very apt to be acquired at our colleges and boarding-schools, the inmates of which often despatch their food more like ravenous animals than civilized human creatures. This most disgustingly vulgar practice of gorging our food but half masticated,—of hurrying through our meals as though we were just going off in the stage-coach,—I believe to have more concern in the production of indigestion among us than has generally been suspected. We are told that Diogenes, meeting a boy eating thus greedily, gave his tutor a box on the ear. And, also, that there were men at Rome who taught people to chew as well as to walk. Whether some such teachers might not be advantageously employed among ourselves, I submit to the judgment of my readers.

There are a class of men who, under an affectation of moral and intellectual refinement, assume to regard eating as one of those base animal gratifications to which as little time and thought as possible should be appropriated. But let us remember that we yet dwell in the flesh, and cannot, therefore, become wholly spiritualized. Those actions which Nature has enjoined as necessary to our constitution, are fortunately, —and, indeed, the species, with its present laws, could not otherwise have been preserved,— associated with enjoyment. It is the part of wisdom, therefore, not to despise, neither slavishly to pursue, the corporeal pleasures, but to accept of them with thankfulness, and to partake of them with prudence. The gratification of all our appetites contributes, both directly and indirectly, to health and happiness ; it is their abuse only that is reprehensible, and followed by pain and regret. How many delightful associations, how many springs of domestic enjoyment, flow from the regularly returning social meal ! An occasion which brings into so near and happy intercourse families and friends, and serves to draw more closely among them the bonds of human affection. He alone who has been deprived of such pleasure can rightly estimate its value. A purely intellectual being would be monstrous to humanity. There belong to our nature, sensual, moral, and intellectual wants, and it is to their wise and duly apportioned gratification that we owe whatever happiness existence can afford.

It is scarcely necessary, I trust, to insist on the importance to the health of intellectual men, of daily exercise in the open air. Without this, no one whose employments are of a sedentary nature can expect to maintain sound health.

The amount of exercise required will depend something on the constitution, and much on the character and quantity of the food. From two to four hours of the day should certainly be devoted to active bodily exertions.

Many students, tempted on by the inviting quietude, are in the habit of protracting their labours late into the hours of the night, and at the manifest expense of their physical health. The wan and sallow countenance of the student is almost proverbially associated with the midnight lamp.

Few causes tend more certainly to shatter the nervous energies, waste the constitution, and hasten on the infirmities of age, than deficient and irregular sleep. Thus "to be a long and sound sleeper," we often find included by the older writers among the signs of longevity. Those persons whose occupations—whatever may be their nature—interfere with their necessary and regular repose, are almost always observed to be pale, nervous, and emaciated. Even a single night of watching will often drive the colour from the cheek, the expression from the eye, and the vigour from the brain. Although so much of evil to mind, body, and estate, is referred to the prodigal indulgence in sleep, yet observation of our own busy and ambitious community has led me to doubt whether, on the whole, more injury is not to be ascribed to its deficiency than excess. Nor do I hesitate to believe that less evil would result, certainly to health, from adding to, than curtailing the needful term of repose.

Constitutions will necessarily vary in the amount of sleep they require, but, in the majority of persons, as much as seven hours of the twenty-four should be appropriated to it. The slumbers of the fore part of the night affording, as there is good reason to believe, most refreshment to the functions, it is advisable that students retire and rise seasonably, and accomplish, if circumstances will permit, their most arduous duties in the early portion of the day. For this is the time, if the body is in health, when the thoughts will be generally most clear, and the labours consequently most profitable. The fittest working-hours, in fact, both for mind and body, would seem to be those which intervene between breakfast and dinner, having reference of course, to our own customary hours for these meals. It is the stillness and seclusion of the night which have mostly rendered it so favourite a period for study and contemplation.

Again, men of intellectual application should frequently relax their minds by amusing recreation—mingling in cheerful society, and joining in its gay diversions; otherwise they are apt to become gloomy, irritable, and misanthropic, states of feeling which are always at enmity with our physical well-being. Let them unite, therefore, in the laugh, the game, the dance, or any of the innocent frivolities of society; the dignity of the most erudite and talented need not suffer in consequence, while the health, from the moral exhilaration thus procured, will be sensibly benefited. It is certainly worthy of inquiry, if the learned and distinguished of the present day, or at least among ourselves, do not cherish an undue contempt for the light and healthful amusements of society, and thereupon unreasonably exclude themselves from their participation. Among the ancients the greatest souls did not disdain occasionally to unbend, and yield to the laws of their human condition. The Catos, with all their severity of manners, found relaxation and enjoyment in the ordinary pleasures of life. Epaminondas, amid all his glory, and moral greatness, felt it no detraction to dance, and sing, and play with the boys of his city. Scipio Africanus could also amuse himself in gathering shells, and playing at quoits on the sea-shore with his friend Lælius. And the sage Socrates became the pupil of the captivating Aspasia in dancing, as well as in eloquence, even when he was advanced in life. Montaigne, after extolling the mighty intellect and lofty virtues of Socrates, his patience and forbearance under poverty, hunger, the untractableness of his children, and the scratches of his wife, concludes by saying that "he never refused to play at cobnut nor to ride the hobby-horse with the boys."—*Essays.*

As a pure air not only serves to invigorate and sustain the body, but likewise to animate the mind, literary men should always choose for their studies, where so much of their time is passed, a large and airy room. The narrow and confined apartments which many select for the prosecution of their mental labours, can scarcely be otherwise than unwholesome.

Different individuals, as we should naturally conclude, vary materially in their capability of supporting mental exertions. This may in some cases be referable to habit, and in others to the native strength or feebleness of the constitution in general, or of the organ of thought in particular. To some persons mental application is always irksome; the task of thinking is the most unwelcome one that can be imposed on them. While in others, just the reverse is observed; the intellectual operations are ever accomplished with ease and satisfaction, and to the new results of their studies and reflections do they owe the purest delights of existence. In the latter, then, the exercise of mind, being less arduous, and associated also with a pleasurable excitement, will be far better sustained than in the former.

I may here remark, what indeed must be obvious to all, that we can form no correct estimate of the absolute amount of mental labour in different individuals from what they accomplish. For as the giant in body may support his three hundred weight with as little effort as the dwarf his one, so also may the gigantic intellect produce its astonishing results with the same ease that the less gifted mind performs its comparatively insignificant tasks. Many a poetaster has doubtless worked as hard to bring forth a volume of doggerel verses, as Newton did in the production of his Principia.

In relation to the period of time that may be safely and profitably devoted to study, we can lay down no rules which will be universal in their application. Few persons, however, can spend advantageously, and without hazard to the physical health, more than seven, or, at the furthest, eight hours of the twenty-four, in close

mental application. As the brain grows weary, its capabilities must diminish, and its productions, in consequence, be comparatively feeble; whence they are said to smell of the lamp. Having then regard only to the intellectual results, nothing is really gained by overtasking the mind. It has been truly remarked, that "There is scarcely any book which does not savour of painful composition in some part of it; because the author has written when he should have rested."

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## CHAPTER IV.

THE INTELLECTUAL OPERATIONS ARE NECESSARILY ASSOCIATED, TO A GREATER OR LESS EXTENT, WITH PASSION.—THOSE MENTAL AVOCATIONS WHICH ELICIT THE STRONGEST MORAL FEELINGS ARE MOST PREJUDICIAL TO HEALTH.

The intellectual operations are seldom, if ever, altogether isolated from passion. Even the mathematical studies, which would seem to belong so purely to the understanding, are not entirely exempt from its encroachment. The mathematician may experience anger or regret if he encounters difficulties in the solution of his problems, and joy under the opposite circumstances.

But then with how many of our intellectual labours do not the strongest feelings, as of hope and fear, envy, jealousy, anger, almost necessarily blend themselves! Need I instance the deep and terrible passions so frequently called forth in controversies of a religious and political character, and which have so often depopulated countries, and deluged fields in blood? Have we an eminent statesman among us, who, if he be not as phlegmatic as a clod of earth, does not at times, even in the midst of his highest mental exertions, feel himself writhing under the most painfully conflicting emotions?

I need hardly say that the particular motives which incite our mental labours will serve to determine their influence upon the feelings. If knowledge be pursued for its own sake, or with a benevolent end, its acquisition will generally be associated with a quiet self-complacency, diffusing a healthful serenity throughout the whole moral constitution. But when, on the other hand, the stimulus to its pursuit is selfish ambition, or personal aggrandisement, then may the most agitating and baneful passions of our nature be engendered.

We see, therefore, that it will be no easy matter to decide, in each individual instance, how much the intellectual operations are immediately concerned in the production of physical infirmities and premature decay, and how far they act indirectly through emotions which become blended with them. The ambitious strife so active among literary men, and the moral commotion growing out of it, will doubtless oftentimes do more to break down the constitution than would even the most arduous mental efforts in their simple operation.

The literary labours of Sir Walter Scott, although so persevering, do not seem, until aided by other causes, to have been productive of any injury to his health; which is to be ascribed, in a great measure, to his peculiarly happy temperament. He appears through his whole career to have enjoyed a remarkable exemption from all those painfully agitating feelings which so wear upon the mind and body of the larger proportion of authors—to have displayed little of that keen sensibility so proverbially characteristic of the aspirants for literary fame. Hence his mental efforts must have been attended with less anxiety, and his moral tranquillity less hazarded by their event, than among the more sensitive tribe of writers. It may furthermore be added that he was constant in his habits of exercise in the open air.

But in the latter part of Scott's life, when the brightness of his fortune had become overcast by the clouds of adversity; when his mental tasks were mingled with anxiety, and broke in upon his needful rest, and his regular and salutary exercise; then did his physical health begin to yield, and fatal disease of the brain soon closed the last and but too painfully, tragic scene.

Those mental employments, then, as it must now be inferred, which have the least tendency to call forth the painful and agitating emotions, will always be found most consonant to health. I may mention in illustration those tranquil and innocent studies which are embraced under the various departments of natural history, as botany, horticulture, zoology, &c.; studies which rarely fail to bring content and serenity to the mind, to soften asperities of feeling, and to render healthier, happier, and better, those who have become devoted to them.

Studies that exercise especially the reasoning faculties, whose aim is truth, and which are attended with positive and satisfactory results, affording the most calm and permanent gratification, are the most safe and salutary in their influence on body and mind. Hence it is that those engaged in the exact sciences, as the mathematician, the astronomer, the chemist, usually enjoy better health, firmer nerves, more uniform moral tranquillity, and a longer term of existence, than those whose pursuits are more connected with the imagination: as the poet, or writer of fictitious narrative. In these latter, the deep and varying passions are more frequently awakened; a morbid sensibility is encouraged; and the flame of life, exposed to such continual and unnatural excitement, must burn more unequally, and waste more rapidly. Who does not rise with more self-satisfaction, with a more calm, equable, and healthful condition of the mind, from studies which exercise and instruct the intellect, than from the morbidly exciting works of romantic fiction? Poetry and romance, then, ever as they wander from the standard of nature, must become the more prejudicial in their effects on the moral and physical constitution. To illustrate this remark, I need but refer to the writings of Byron and Scott.

Reason, the noblest power of our nature, should always reign superior; should always hold in proper subjection the subordinate faculties.

Whenever this rightful order in the mental economy is subverted; whenever reason becomes enslaved to the fancy, and a sickly sentimentality of feeling usurps the place of the bold impressions of truth and reality, the vigour of the nerves decays, health languishes, and life is but too often abbreviated.

Mr Madden has drawn up tables to show the influence of different studies on the longevity of authors. At the head of these we find the natural philosophers, with an average term of existence of seventy-five years. At the foot are the poets, who average but fifty-seven years, or eighteen less than those engaged in the natura sciences.—*Infirmities of Genius.*

In conclusion of the present chapter let me remark, what has been before implied, that all those mental avocations which are founded in benevolence, or whose end and aim are the good of mankind, being from their very nature associated with agreeable moral excitement, and but little mingled with the evil feelings of the heart, as envy, jealousy, hatred, must necessarily diffuse a kindly influence throughout the constitution.

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## CHAPTER V.

DIVERSIFIED LABOURS OF THE MIND ARE LESS FATIGUING AND INJURIOUS THAN THOSE THAT ARE MORE CONCENTRATED, OR WHICH ARE CONFINED TO SOME ONE PARTICULAR SUBJECT.

Mental labours judiciously varied will, in general, be much better supported than such as are more uniform or concentrated in their character. As the same physical effort soon tires and exhausts the muscles concerned in it, so, likewise, will the same mental exertion produce a corresponding effect on the faculties which it particularly engages. Hence the manifest relief we experience in changing our intellectual occupations, just, indeed, as we do in shifting our postures, or our exercises.

Close and undivided attention to any one object of real or fancied moment, is apt, sooner or later, to be followed by pains and dizziness of the head, general lassitude and prostration of strength, diminished appetite, impaired digestion, emaciation, a contracted, sallow, care-worn countenance, and a whitening and falling out of the hairs. Or the mind, too ardently devoted to a particular theme, too long and intently engrossed by some solitary and absorbing subject, may at length, as Doctor Johnson has so well illustrated in the instance of his astronomer, become absolutely insane in relation to it. Hence extravagant enthusiasm comes hard upon the confines of, and sometimes actually passes into, insanity. And we need not wander from the present time to find wild zealots scarcely to be distinguished from monomaniacs, and to whom the discipline of a madhouse might not be unuseful.

The improvement in the countenance and general aspect of the body, and in the healthful vigour of all the functions, consequent to a relaxation from concentrated mental application, there are few but must have experienced in themselves, or observed in others.

Change would seem almost essential to our health and happiness. If subjected to like influences for long continued periods, they cloy and weary the senses, and we pine for novelty. The same food will after a while pall upon the taste; the same scenery cease to delight the eye; the same society lose its early charms, and even the voice of love will fall dull and unmusical on the ear. Healthful and agreeable excitement in most of our organs, is, to a certain extent, dependent on variations in their stimuli, and the brain forms no exception to this rule. It is sameness that begets ennui, or that painful weariness of existence so often witnessed among mankind, urging them sometimes even to self-destruction as a relief.

"Il est donc de la nature du plaisir et de la peine de se détruire d'eux-mêmes, de cesser d'être parce qu' ils ont été. L' art de prolonger la durée de nos jouissances consiste à en varier les causes."—*Bichat. Recherches Physiologiques sur la Vie et la Mort.*

The older writers used particularly to recommend the varying of the habits and scenes of life, as of eating, drinking, exercising, thinking; "to be sometimes in the country, sometimes in the town; to go to sea, to hunt," &c. Some of the ancient medical sages even went so far as to advise, for the sake of change, an occasional slight excess. "To indulge a little, now and then, by eating and drinking more plentifully than usual." Most persons will find their account, both as respects health and happiness, in occasionally quitting old scenes and duties, and interrupting their established habits and associations; since by so doing they will return to them with refreshed powers, and renewed susceptibilities of enjoyment. The law of mutation is stamped upon, and seems necessary to, the harmony and perfection of all the works of creation, and its operation may be equally needful to elicit and sustain the healthful action of our own bodily and mental powers.

Although I have not been disposed to regard even severe mental exertions, of themselves, so common a source of physical infirmity as is generally done, nevertheless I conceive a temperate exercise of the intellect, united with habitual muscular activity, to be most favourable to the general health of the system, to longevity, and, I may furthermore add, to the greatest sum of happiness to the individual.

As, however, at the present period of the world, man rises to power and honour, not, as in the earlier ages, through feats of strength, or bodily exploits, but by the superior influence of his mental endowments, it is not surprising that our physical should so often be sacrificed to our moral nature; that mind should be cultivated to the neglect, if not at the expense, of the body.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EVILS RESULTING FROM THE INORDINATE EXERCISE OF THE INTELLECT IN EARLY YEARS.

PREMATURE and forced exertions of the mental faculties must always be at the risk of the physical constitution. Parents, urged on by an ambition for their intellectual progress, are extremely apt to overtask the minds of their offspring, and thus, too often, not only defeat their own aims, but prepare the foundation of bodily infirmity, and early decay. Such a course, too, is repugnant to the plainest dictates of nature, to be read in the instinctive propensities of the young, which urge so imperiously to physical action.

Exercise, in early existence especially, is a natural want, being then essential to train the muscles to their requisite functions, and to ensure to the frame its full development and just proportions. So strong, indeed, is this tendency to motion, that few punishments are more grievous to childhood, than such as impose restraints upon it. The young, in fact, of all animals of the higher orders, equally display this necessary propensity. Liberate the calf or the lamb from his confinement, and what a variety of muscular contractions will he not immediately exhibit in his active and happy gambols? He is herein but discovering the instincts of his nature, just as much as while cropping the grass and herbage. In tasking, therefore, the functions of the brain, and restraining, consequently, those of the muscles, in early life, we act in contravention to the most obvious laws of the animal constitution.

I would not, however, be understood to say that the powers of the mind are to be absolutely neglected at this period. They are certainly to be unfolded, but then, prudently, and in just correspondence only with the development of the physical organization. To look for ripeness of intellect from the soft, delicate, and immature brain of childhood, is as unreasonable as it would be to expect our trees to yield us fruit, while their roots were unconfirmed, and their trunks and branches succulent.

"Nature," says Rousseau, "intended that children should be children before they are men, and if we attempt to pervert this order we shall produce early fruit, which will have neither maturity nor savour, and which soon spoils: we shall have young learned men, and old children. Infancy has an order of seeing, thinking, and feeling, which is proper to it. Nothing is more foolish than to wish to make children substitute ours for theirs, and I would as soon require a child to be five feet high, as to display judgment at ten years of age."

But, independent of the danger to the physical constitution, nothing is in reality gained as respects the intellect, by such artificial forcing. On the contrary, the energies of the mind being thus prematurely exhausted, it seldom happens that these infant prodigies, which raise such proud hopes in the breasts of parents and friends, display even mental mediocrity in their riper years. In some cases insanity, or even idiocy, has been the melancholy result of such unnatural exertion of the organ of thought, while yet delicate and unconfirmed.

Furthermore, those even whose minds naturally, or independent of education, exhibit an unusual precociousness, rarely fulfil the expectations they awaken. Either falling the victims of untimely decay,

"So wise so young, do ne'er live long,"

or else reaching early the limit of their powers, they stop short in their bright career, and thus, in adult age, take a rank very inferior to those whose faculties were more tardy in unfolding, and whose early years were consequently less flattering. That mind will be likely to attain the greatest perfection, whose powers are disclosed gradually, and in due correspondence with the advancement of the other functions of the constitution. It is a familiar fact, that trees are exhausted by artificially forcing their fruit; and also, that those vegetables which are slow in yielding their fruit, are generally stronger and more lasting than such as arrive earlier at maturity.

"We have frequently seen in early age," observes a French writer on health, "prodigies of memory, and even of erudition, who were, at the age of fifteen or twenty, imbecile, and who have continued so through life. We have seen other children, whose early studies have so enfeebled them, that their miserable career has terminated with the most distressing diseases, at a period at which they should only have commenced their studies."—*Tourtelle.*

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## CHAPTER VII.

### INTELLECTUAL OPERATIONS CONCLUDED.—A FEW SUGGESTIONS ON THE GENERAL PLAN TO BE ADOPTED IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.—SEVERE INTELLECTUAL EXERTIONS ARE ALWAYS HAZARDOUS IN OLD AGE.

IN Sparta, while governed by the laws of Lycurgus, education was wholly under the control of the state: but its direction was not assumed until the age of seven. Up to this time children remained with their parents, who placed little or no restraint upon their natural actions. Afterwards they were enrolled in companies, under the superintendence of governors appointed by the public, and were subjected to a strict and regular course of physical, moral, and intellectual culture. Lycurgus then, who, as Plutarch says, "resolved the whole business of legislation into the bringing up of youth," appears to have fixed upon the age of seven as the proper one to begin the systematic education.

During the first years of existence, the brain—probably from its physical condition—is inadequate to the task of reflection, or to the accomplishment of the higher intellectual functions. It would appear—if I may indulge for a moment in theory—that the vital forces are now especially required by the system at large to maintain its necessary development. If, therefore, they

are too prodigally expended on the intellect, or unequally diverted to the brain, it must be at the cost of the other functions and organs. At any rate, under such circumstances, the growth is generally retarded, the muscular system but imperfectly developed, and the body continues spare and devoid of its fair proportions. The complexion will moreover be pale and sickly, the circulation and digestion feeble, and nervous affections, scrofula, or other infirmities of the flesh, are likely to supervene, overburdening existence, and shortening its term.

But little bodily restraint, therefore, certainly for the first five or six years of their life, should be imposed upon children. Long and irksome confinement to the sitting, or indeed to any one, position, and especially in close rooms, cannot but be inimical to the just and healthful development of their physical constitution. On a general principle too, it is better that they be allowed to choose their own muscular actions,—to run, jump, frolic, and use their limbs according to their inclinations, or, in other words, as nature dictates, than be subjected to any artificial system of exercise.

But let it not be inferred, that the mind is to be the subject of neglect, or is to receive no regard during the term mentioned; all I contend for is that its systematic education be not yet entered upon,—that no tasks demanding confinement and fixed attention are to be imposed upon it. Light instructions, adapted to the capacities, and especially such as can be associated with amusement and exercise, may be advantageously imparted even on the earliest development of the mental faculties. And then the moral education, as I shall hereafter show, can scarce have too early a beginning.

Whenever a precocity of intellect is displayed, or a disposition to thinking and learning in advance of the years, and to the neglect of the usual and salutary habits of early life, it should be restrained rather than encouraged, since it is far more desirable that children grow up to be sound and healthy men, than as premature, sickly, and short-lived intellectual monsters.

In the first period of our being, the perceptive faculties, and the memory for words, are to be more particularly called into action. That such is in accordance with the ordinations of nature, the earliest habits and propensities of children clearly reveal to us. While awake, they are constantly, and almost, as it were, without an effort, learning the sensible qualities of external bodies, and the symbolical sounds by which they are indicated, and thus daily collecting the raw materials of knowledge, to be wrought into various new and wonderful intellectual forms, as the brain and reflective faculties advance to maturity.

In the primary instruction, then, of children, such knowledge only is to be imparted, for the acquisition of which they manifest a natural aptitude. We observe them, for example, catching with interest, repeating, and remembering new words; delighted with, and soon imitating harmonious sounds; pleased with pictures, and attempting rude copies of them. Hence, beside language, music and drawing might not improperly be introduced into the early systematic education. The analogy here between the infancy of society, and that of the individual, cannot fail to strike us. Barbarous people, like children, are particularly impressed by the sensible qualities of objects, and for the expression of which, and their own feelings, they have an imperfect language. They possess, likewise, a rude harmony, painting and sculpture; but no science, no philosophy; scarce anything to intimate the progress of the reflective powers, or the maturity of the species.

From what has been remarked it will be readily seen that paintings and drawings, appealing, as they do, directly to the senses and memory, must be especially useful as a means of conveying elementary knowledge to childhood. In natural history, for example, a good deal of rudimental instruction may in this way be communicated even in very early life.

As the mind and body ripen, those studies may be entered upon which demand more particularly the action of the reasoning faculties; as the science of numbers, intellectual, moral, and the various other departments of philosophy. The period when the more purely intellectual education should be commenced, cannot, of course, be accurately fixed, since no two minds will be likely to mature in exact correspondence with each other. It is questionable, however, whether the more strictly philosophical sciences can be generally prosecuted to much advantage before the sixteenth or seventeenth year.

Although the mind as it becomes more developed may be submitted to a stricter discipline than at first, yet at no period of the scholastic education is it to be rigorously tasked; but agreeable recreations and active exercises should frequently alternate with the labours of study, thus ensuring a sound body as well as an enlightened mind. Plato had much to say on the exercises of the youth of his city, as their races, their games, their dances, &c., and seems to have regarded these as of most important consideration in the training of the young to the lettered sciences. That erudition and health are each most desirable is not to be disputed; nevertheless, to the mass of mankind,—for comparatively but few earn their bread by the efforts of their intellect,—a good share of the latter will be likely to conduce far more to their success and happiness in life, than a large and disproportionate amount of the former.

In children of weakly constitutions, severe mental application is in a particular manner hazardous. In such, the physical education is ever of paramount regard; the future health—for whose absence life has no recompense—being closely dependent on its judicious management. The practice, unfortunately but too common, of selecting the most delicate child for the scholar, is founded in error. This is the very one whom it becomes most necessary to devote to some calling which demands physical action and exposure to the open air, as, for example, agriculture, or a seafaring life, whose effect will be to contribute new vigour to the infirm body.

In reference to the physical health of the

young and the proper development of their frames, it is a matter of the utmost consequence that the apartments appropriated for their instruction be both spacious and airy, and likewise so arranged that all unnatural restraint on the posture of the body shall be avoided. Breathing the corrupted air of crowded school-rooms, and long confinement in them under constrained positions, is doubtless, even at the present time, a not unfrequent source of bodily infirmity.

Finally, the instructions of youth should always, as far as it can be done, be associated with pleasure. Children ought to be allured and encouraged, not forced and frightened, to their mental tasks. Instead of

——"creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school,"

they should go to it cheerfully and merrily as to a place of enjoyment. "How much more decent would it be," says Montaigne, "to see the forms on which the boys sit, strewed with flowers and green leaves, than with the bloody twigs of willows? I should choose to have the pictures of Joy and Gladness in the schools, together with Flora and the Graces, as the philosopher Speusippus had in his, that where their profit is, there might be their pleasure. The viands that are wholesome for children ought to be sweetened with sugar, and those that are hurtful to them made as bitter as gall."

A stern, sour-visaged fellow is fitted for anything rather than a pedagogue. The conduct of education has of late certainly undergone a sensible improvement, yet it needs no great stretch of memory to carry us back to the time when the following remarks of the author just cited on the schools of his own period would have been not very inapplicable to those among ourselves. "They are really so many cages in which youth are shut up as prisoners. Do but go thither, just as their exercises are over, you hear nothing but the cries of children under the smart of correction, and the bellowing noise of the masters raging with passion. How can such tender, timorous souls be tempted to love their lessons by those ruby-faced guides, with wrath in their aspects, and the scourge in their hands?" —*Essays.*

In the last term of existence all severe mental efforts again become hazardous, especially endangering apoplexies, and palsies, to which this period is so peculiarly predisposed. In extreme age, indeed, almost every sort of exertion becomes irksome and difficult, and the brain, and the other animal organs, fatigued as it were by the protracted exercise of life, incline to rest,—to the condition to which they are so fast approximating. Vitality now feeble and nearly expended, it demands the most prudent economy to maintain it to its utmost limits. Both mind and body, therefore, should be suffered to repose from all the cares, and anxieties, and labours of existence, that they may glide easily and gradually into their final sleep.

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# Part Second.

# PASSIONS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DEFINITION OF THE PASSIONS, AND THEIR GENERAL DIVISION.

The mind, equally with the body, is the subject of numerous feelings, pleasurable and painful, and which, according as they are mild or intense, receive the name of affections or passions.

The term passion comes from the Greek verb πασχω, *pascho*, and the Latin *patior*, each meaning to suffer, or to be acted upon, or affected, either pleasantly or painfully. In its literal and primitive sense, then, it imports all mental feelings, without respect to their degree; although in common usage, it denotes only their deeper shades, the word affection being employed to express those of a more gentle character. Still, a division of this sort must be in a great measure arbitrary; for as but different degrees of moral feeling are implied by affection and passion, it is plain that no definite point can be established at which the former will be just exalted into the latter, or the latter just reduced to the former. In truth, the literal signification of the term affection answers precisely to that of passion.

Some have attempted to make a distinction between passion and emotion, employing the former as expressive of passiveness, or the simple feeling immediately resulting from the moral impulse; and the latter, to indicate the visible effects, or the commotion manifested in the frame. But such a distinction, certainly in a physiological and pathological examination of the passions, will seldom be found practicable, since the feeling and physical phenomena are oftentimes so closely associated as to appear to be but the simultaneous effects of the primary exciting cause, and both, therefore, to belong essentially to the constitution of the passion in which they are displayed.

In the ensuing pages, then, the word passion will be employed as a general expression for moral feeling, and its concomitant physical effects, and it will therefore comprehend, and be used synonymously with, both affections and emotions; and, when necessary to designate its degree, an adjective will be introduced for the

purpose. I may observe, however, that it is only the more exaggerated feelings, or what all agree in classing as passions, that endanger the physical health, in particular relation to which it is my business to consider them.

As the design of the present work calls for no detailed metaphysical disquisition on the passions, our classification of them will be very general and simple. We shall consider them under three principal heads, viz., pleasurable, painful, and mixed, or those in which pain and pleasure are manifestly associated. Not that I regard this as an unobjectionable division. Like all others it is in a measure artificial, yet it seems to be the one which will best subserve the grand object of the treatise before us. The line, especially between the two first and last classes, cannot always be very accurately defined; for the passions ranked as pleasurable are seldom wholly pure or unmingled with pain. Thus the happiest love is rarely clear from all pangs of jealousy, or the brightest hope from all sufferings of apprehension: and, as though it were pre-ordained that no human enjoyment should be complete, even when at the summit of our wishes, and under the full gratification of our most ardent passions, fears and forebodings of change will almost always sully the purity of our happiness.

The same is also true of the painful passions. Most rare is it that we find them wholly unmitigated by those which are pleasurable. Some faint beams of hope will generally penetrate even the deepest moral gloom. It is questionable, then, whether any of the passions, could they be perfectly analyzed, would be found absolutely free from any mixture of their opposite.

A large proportion of the painful passions experienced in society are the offspring of such as are pleasurable. We suffer because we have enjoyed. Our present state is darkened by contrasting it with the brighter past. Thus does our happiness too frequently depend much less on what we are, than on what we have been. The humble peasant in his lowly cot may enjoy as much felicity as the noble in his lordly palace; but reduce the latter to the condition of the former, and he becomes overwhelmed with misery. Often, then, might we be happy had we never been so, or could we bury in oblivion all remembrance of the past.

The reverse also holds true, the pleasurable passions deriving their existence from or becoming greatly enhanced by those which are painful. As we suffer because we have enjoyed, so also do we enjoy because we have suffered. Indeed, under our present constitution, the sufferings would seem almost as necessary to the enjoyments of life, as are the toils and fatigues of the day to the balmy slumbers of night.

Knowledge, too, or the enlargement of our ideas, in opening to us new fields of desire, and causing new comparisons with our present condition, becomes a frequent source of discontent, and the various painful passions of which it is the parent.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GENERAL REMARKS ON THE EVILS AND ADVANTAGES OF THE PASSIONS.—INDIVIDUALS, FROM TEMPERAMENT, EDUCATION, AND VARIOUS INCIDENTAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DIFFER VERY SENSIBLY IN THE FORCE AND CHARACTER OF THEIR PASSIONS.

The agency of the passions in the production of disease, especially in the advanced stages of civilisation, when men's relations are intimate, and their interests clash, and their nervous susceptibilities are exalted, can scarce be adequately appreciated. It is doubtless to this more intense and multiplied action of the passions, in union, at times, with the abuse of the intellectual powers, that we are mainly to attribute the greater frequency of diseases of the heart and brain in the cultivated, than in the ruder, states of society. Few probably even suspect the amount of bodily infirmity and disease among mankind resulting from moral causes;—how often the frame wastes, and premature decay comes on, under the corroding influence of some painful passion.

It has seemed to me that our own profession, in seeking for the remote occasions of disease, are too apt to neglect those existing in the mind. Thus does it oftentimes happen that, while the physician is imputing the infirmities of his patient to all their most familiar causes, as bad diet, impure air, want of exercise, &c., it is in reality some unhappy and unrevealed passion which is preying on the springs of life. A knowledge of the secret troubles of our patients would, in many instances, shed new light on their treatment, or save them at any rate from becoming the subjects, if not the victims, of active medicinal agents.

In delicate and sensitive constitutions, the operation of the painful passions is ever attended with the utmost danger; and should there exist a predisposition to any particular form of disease, as consumption, or insanity, for example, it will generally be called into action under their strong and continued influence.

The passions, however, although so greatly abused, and the occasion of so large a proportion of the ills from which we are doomed to suffer, yet, when properly trained, and brought under due subjection to the reasoning powers, are the source of all that is great and good in man's nature, and contribute in a thousand ways, both directly and indirectly, to health and happiness. Intellect, without their quickening influence, even could it exist at all, would be but a dull and dreary waste.—They are the sunbeams which light and cheer our moral atmosphere. The greatest achievements are always accomplished by those of strong passions, but with a corresponding development of the superior faculties to regulate and control them. Sluggish feelings can never be parents to high and generous resolves. It belongs to us, then, to govern, and direct to their proper ends, through the force of reason, the passions which Nature

has implanted in our breasts. They cannot, nor is it desirable that they should, be extirpated.

> "When Reason, like the skilful charioteer,
> Can break the fiery passions to the bit,
> And, spite of their licentious sallies, keep
> The radiant track of glory; passions, then,
> Are aids and ornaments. Triumphant Reason,
> Firm in her seat and swift in her career,
> Enjoys their violence; and, smiling, thanks
> Their formidable flame for high renown."
>
> *Young.*

Mankind, owing to original differences of constitution or temperament, vary remarkably in the ardency of their feelings. The external physical characters will, in fact, often indicate pretty clearly the native force of the passions. Who, for example, would not at once distinguish, even by the complexion, the sanguine, or warm and excitable, from the phlegmatic, or cold and passionless?

Incidental circumstances acting on the constitution will likewise influence the strength of the passions. Thus, the inhabitants of tropical countries are more apt to be hasty and violent in their feelings, and consequently to become enslaved to their sensual and animal nature, than those who dwell in colder climes. Indolence and free living will also aggravate, and activity and temperance weaken, the operation of the passions; hence there are few better antidotes to their ungovernable violence than simple food and drink, and bodily labour.

In some persons, the animal, or baser nature, would appear constitutionally to predominate, the passions readily breaking from the control of reason and the will, and bringing too often sorrow, shame, and disease upon the unhappy individual. In others the reverse of this is true; the intellectual nature holding the supremacy, ever keeping the feelings under a just restraint; and fortunate indeed are they,

> "Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled."

Some, again, seem naturally characterized by the good, and others by the evil passions. We meet individuals, not often, it is true, yet we do meet such, in whom the amiable affections maintain a distinguished pre-eminence even from the earliest development of their moral nature. They appear predestined to be good. Their placid and benevolent tempers would seem to be the result of a physical necessity, or of some happy, but partial action of creative power. Such, however, are exceptions to the general laws of the species, and are consequently never perpetuated. But here the question will necessarily arise, Can we ascribe any virtue, any merit, to such innate goodness, to such constitutional amiableness? Virtue is essentially active. It is engendered out of the contentions between the generous and noble, and the base and despicable passions of the soul. Its very existence depends on the successful struggle with our evil dispositions. Chastity would be no virtue in one without carnal desires, nor clemency in him who was incapable of hatred or anger. The poets glorify their gods by making them war with demons. As the artist heightens and sets off the bright and beautiful colours of his canvas by the dark shades with which he intermingles and contrasts them, and exaggerates the beauty of his angels through the ugliness of his devils, so does Nature, on her moral canvas, inhance the lustre and comeliness of virtue by the very shadows and deformities which she throws into the picture. Hence, on the commonly received notions of the character of God, —as I have somewhere met the idea,—although we may call him good, great, just, bountiful, yet we cannot call him virtuous; for his goodness demands no effort,—no sacrifice; it belongs to his very essence; is as natural to him as it is to the flower to shed its odours, or the sun its luminous rays.

As the good passions greatly preponderate in some natures, so do the bad in others; and we meet those who scarce ever, even from their childhood, manifest an amiable or generous feeling. Such extreme cases, however, are fortunately but rare. Generally there exists in our composition a due mixture of the good and evil dispositions:—"our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues."

Finally, there are those who, from early existence, are distinguished by the predominance of some particular passion, as fear, anger, or ambition; that is, they are constitutionally timorous, irascible, or aspiring in their tempers. Education, however, may do much, very much, in repressing passions originally in excess, and developing such as are deficient; and herein consists moral culture, so vitally essential both to our health and happiness. Need I say, then, how much we must be the creatures of constitution and circumstance? how much of what we are we must owe to our native organization and predispositions, and those resistless influences which, in the necessary current of events, are brought to act upon us?

I am aware that such views as the preceding will be objected to by some as inconsistent with the freedom of our will, or as tending to the doctrine of necessity, of which many appear to entertain such needless apprehensions. That we belong to some vast system, the grand purpose of which is hidden from human intelligence, will scarce be gainsaid; and that our every volition and action may be but infinitesimal and necessary links in the mighty and complicated chain of this great and unsearchable system, it is not irrational to believe. But as I pledged myself in the outset to shun all abstract speculations, I will leave this perplexed subject of fatalism, with the remark only that there was true philosophy in that ancient mariner who, being caught in a great storm at sea, exclaimed thus to Neptune:—"O god, if it is thy will I shall be saved!—and if it is thy will I shall be destroyed!—but I'll still steer my rudder true."

## CHAPTER X.

THE PASSIONS BECOME GREATLY MULTIPLIED AND MODIFIED IN CIVILIZED LIFE.—THE EFFECT OF THE PASSIONS IS PARTICULARLY MANIFESTED IN THE VITAL FUNCTIONS, AS IN THE CIRCULATION, DIGESTION, SECRETIONS, ETC.—CERTAIN CONDITIONS OF THE FUNCTIONS SERVE ALSO TO AWAKEN THE DIFFERENT PASSIONS.

The passions have become so multiplied and modified by our social wants and relations, that every attempt at their particular philosophical classification must be difficult and unsatisfactory. The very same passion will not unfrequently receive different appellations according to its intenseness, or as it is more transient or enduring in its character; as fear and terror; hatred, anger, rage; sorrow, melancholy, despair. And then, again, many of the passions are so complex in their nature, or comprise within themselves such a variety of feelings, that we find ourselves not a little perplexed in deciding to what particular denomination they may legitimately be referred. Could each one, however, be subjected to an accurate analysis, or traced up to its primal elements, they would probably all be reducible to a few simple ones, grounded on our saving instincts, and consequently having a direct or indirect relation to the preservation of the individual, or the perpetuation of the species. Like our organic structure, they would be found to have their original types discoverable in the lower departments of life. Thus in the inferior animal we see the operation of the passions in their most simple and necessary forms, as exemplified in fear and anger.

Some writers on the passions have regarded them all but as emanations from the principle of self-love.

> "Two principles in human nature reign,
> Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain:
> Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
> Reason's comparing balance rules the whole."
> *Pope's Essay on Man.*

Whether such, however, be their essential and primary source, is a question which, interesting as it may be in ethical science, is nevertheless unimportant to the design of the present essay. Our main purpose being to show that the passions founded in pleasure are, as an ordinary principle, healthful, and those associated with pain, or in which pain preponderates, the reverse, the aforementioned summary division of them, viz. into pleasurable, painful, and those in which pleasure and pain are obviously commingled, is all that will be needful.

The general proposition may here be stated, and which will be sufficiently illustrated in the sequel, that the condition of our moral feelings exercises a powerful influence upon our physical organs, while that of our physical organs influences in an equal degree our moral feelings; in other words, that mind and body necessarily participate in the weal and woe of each other. Thus passion has been not unaptly defined, "any emotion of the soul which affects the body, and is affected by it."

The effects of the passions are declared especially in those organs and functions, which have been termed organic, or vegetative; as in the heart and general circulation; in the lungs, the stomach, the liver, the bowels, the kidneys, &c. Need I instance the disturbance in the circulation, respiration, digestion, which so immediately ensues under the strong operation of anger, fear, and grief?

So sudden and sensible is the influence of the different emotions upon the viscera of the chest and abdomen, as to have deceived Bichat, and several other eminent physiologists, into the belief that in these organs is their primary seat. And to the same origin, in truth, would the figurative language of every people, civilized or barbarous, appear to refer them. Thus, while to indicate thought or intellect the hand of the orator is carried to the head, to express sentiment or passion it is directed, almost as it were instinctively, to the chest, or the pit of the stomach; and who of us would not be struck with the impropriety of the contrary? That the passions should be referred to the situation where their physical consequences are particularly felt is certainly most natural. Still they are not primarily and essentially in the viscera, but must originate in some condition of the mind, in some peculiar mode of perception, though immediately—many times even with the swiftness of thought—transmitting their influence to one or more of the organs mentioned.

It has been supposed that each emotion has some special organ or organs on which its power is more particularly expended; that some act most obviously on the heart, as fear and joy; others on the respiration, as surprise: and again others, as grief, on the digestive organs. "We shall find," says Dr Bostock, "a clear indication of this connexion in our common forms of speech, which must have been derived from observation and generally recognized, before they could have become incorporated with our language. The paleness of fear, the breathlessness of surprise, and the bowels of compassion, are phrases sanctioned by the custom of different ages and nations."—*Elementary System of Physiology.* Many instances might be adduced where individual secretions are affected by particular passions. Thus the secretion of milk is well known to be promoted by maternal love. Dr Parry relates the case of a lady who, long after she had ceased to nurse, would have a secretion of milk on hearing a child cry.—*Elements of Pathology.*

The effects of a passion, however, as will hereafter be shown, are rarely limited to a particular one, but a number of the organic viscera are almost always embraced within their influence. But even were it true that each emotion bore a special relation to some individual organ or organs, our physiological knowledge of the passions is far from having reached that degree of perfection which would enable us in every instance to detect such relation.

Let me here remark that there exists a corresponding action between the moral feelings and the viscera; that the particular condition of the former may either determine, or be deter-

mined by, that of the latter. Indigestion, for example, is well known to be sometimes the consequence, and sometimes the cause, of an irritable and unhappy temper. A sour disposition may either occasion, or result from, a sour stomach. Thus, in some instances, we sweeten the stomach by neutralizing the acerbity of the temper, while in others we sweeten the temper by neutralizing the acidity of the stomach. Who but must have felt his digestion improve under the brightening of his moral feelings? And who but must have experienced the brightening of his moral feelings under the improvement of his digestion?

The reason will now be manifest why those children who are so unfortunate as to be indulged with cakes, pastry, sweetmeats, and the like indigestible articles, other things being the same, require the rod so much oftener than such as are restricted to more plain and wholesome food. Indeed, an exclusive diet of bread and milk, united with judicious exercise in the open air, will oftentimes prove the most effectual means of correcting the temper of peevish and refractory children.

When brought into close and frequent intercourse with particular individuals, we cannot fail to remark how sensitive, irritable, and disputatious they are apt to become, if unfavourable weather prohibits for a few successive days their customary exercise abroad; or when they have been feasting more liberally than usual on pastry, or other such tempting and indigestible food. The skin at the same time will look more dingy, and the eye less clear and bright than natural, altogether serving to show that transient indigestion is the occasional cause of such unhappy state of temper. Under these circumstances, a walk of an hour or two in the fresh air will, by restoring the health of digestion, not unfrequently bring about the most agreeable change in the moral feelings.

The condition of the liver is also well known both to be influenced by, and to influence, the temper of the mind. Thus a sallow complexion, spare body, and the other signs of what is termed a bilious habit, are proverbially associated, either as cause or effect, with an unhappy disposition. I have known many individuals of unsteady tempers, in whom their amiable or unamiable fits were almost uniformly announced by the clearness or sallowness of their complexions.

Difficulties in other functions, as those of the uterine system, will likewise often cause a waywardness of temper, rendering the disposition morose and quarrelsome, or, it may be, gloomy and dejected. And the disturbance of the moral feelings, under the action of such physical causes, is sometimes so extreme as to constitute a state even of moral insanity.

The intellectual faculties, as we should naturally expect, do not escape the influence of such physical disorders. Thus, under morbid states of digestion, the memory becomes impaired, the thoughts wander, or are concentrated with difficulty on any particular object, and all mental exertions become irksome, and unsatisfactory in their results.

The well known moral infirmities of many of the distinguished literary geniuses of modern times, may doubtless have been dependent, in a proportion of the cases, at least, upon those of a bodily character. "If health and a fair day smile upon me," says Montaigne, "I am a good-natured man; if a corn trouble my toe, I am sullen, out of humour, and not to be seen." That the capricious and unhappy temper of Pope was owing, in a great measure, to the imperfection of his constitution, and consequent disorder of his bodily functions, especially of digestion, will, I think, hardly be questioned.

Burns is well known to have suffered severely from dyspepsia even before he grew intemperate, and to this may have been mainly owing the great mental despondency under which he laboured. His dyspepsia, however, was greatly aggravated, and in consequence his melancholy, by the indolent, irregular, and intemperate habits which marked the latter portion of his life.

Robespierre was in body meagre, sickly, and bilious; and who can say—for the mightiest events will oftentimes spring from the most insignificant causes,—how much of the horrid cruelties of the French revolution may not have been traceable to the vicious physical constitution of this blood-thirsty monster?

It is worthy of observation that diseases of the organs of the abdomen are more apt to engender the gloomy and painful passions, than such as are confined to the viscera of the chest. Thus it may be stated as a general truth, that the dyspeptic will be more uniformly despondent and irritable than the consumptive subject.

It will now be obvious that a painful mental state having imparted an unhealthy influence to a bodily organ, a reaction must take place from this latter to the mind, adding new force to the moral suffering. And, on the other hand, when bodily disease excites the painful passions, they, in their turn, react upon, and aggravate the morbid physical condition.

In like manner must the happy and healthful states of mind and body be constantly contributing to each other. Thus, sound and easy digestion imparts content and good humour to the moral feelings, which pleasurable mental condition, reacting on the digestive organs, serves to maintain the health of their function. It is a familiar saying that we should ask for favours after dinner. Thus Menenius, in alluding to the obstinacy of Coriolanus, says,—

> "He was not taken well; he had not din'd:
> Therefore I'll watch him
> Till he be dieted to my request,
> And then I'll set upon him."

A knowledge of this action and reaction of mind and body upon each other, should instruct the physician that all his duties to his patients are not comprised under their mere physical treatment; but that he is to soothe their sorrows, calm their fears, sustain their hopes, win their confidence; in short, pursue a vigilant system of moral management, which, although so much neglected, will, in many cases, do even more good than any medicinal agents which the pharmacopeia can supply

## CHAPTER XI.

WHEREIN REAL AND IMAGINARY AFFLICTIONS DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER.—INCIDENTAL REMARKS NATURALLY SUGGESTED BY THE MUTUAL RELATIONS AND DEPENDENCIES OF OUR PHYSICAL AND MORAL CONSTITUTIONS.

Keeping in mind the facts that have been stated in the preceding chapter, we come readily to the distinction between what are called real and imaginary sorrows; terms which, although so familiarly used, do not always carry with them any very definite meaning. The former, or real afflictions, are referable to the agency of extraneous causes operating primarily or immediately on the moral feelings; as loss of property, of relatives and friends, of reputation; and hence are strictly moral in their origin. The latter, or imaginary, are the offspring, for the most part, at least, of unhealthy states of some portion of our organization, and their origin is consequently physical. Thus may we have accumulated about us all those blessings of existence which the world so earnestly covet, as friends, kindred, fortune, fame; in short, every outward source of human enjoyment, and yet be even far more miserable than the penniless, houseless, friendless wretch who is forced day by day to wring his scanty subsistence from the frigid hand of charity. Some morbid condition of the stomach, of the liver or of the nervous system, may, and without causing any well defined or appreciable bodily suffering, so influence the mind as to paralyze all its susceptibilities, dry up all its springs of enjoyment, and overwhelm it with fearful apprehension, or, in the strong language of Dr Brown, with "that fixed and deadly gloom, to which there is no sunshine in the summer sky, no verdure or blossom in the summer field, no kindness in affection, no purity in the very remembrance of innocence itself, no heaven, but hell, no God but a demon of wrath."—*Philosophy of the Human Mind.*

Now these imaginary sorrows, as they are called, are real enough to him who experiences them. They have a positive physical cause constantly operative, and are often infinitely more distressing than any absolute moral affliction, and more frequently lead to despair and suicide.

Our moral have a much closer dependence on our physical infirmities than mankind are generally prepared or willing to admit. It demands, in truth, an exaltation of will of which few can boast, successfully to combat the morbid influences which the body often exercises on the mind. "He," says Dr Reid, "whose disposition to goodness can resist the influence of dyspepsia, and whose career of philanthropy is not liable to be checked by an obstruction in the hepatic organs, may boast of a much deeper and firmer virtue than falls to the ordinary lot of human nature."—*Essays on Hypochondriasis.*

The extent, then, to which human happiness, and I may add, too, human virtue, must depend on the integrity of the bodily organism and its functions can hardly be calculated. There are some whose original fabrication is so defective, whose living machinery, or individual parts of it, are so prone to work wrong, that it would seem almost physically impossible for them to be happy and amiable in their feelings and tempers. While, again, in others, so perfect is the whole organization, and consequently so healthy are all its functions, as to exempt them almost entirely from those multiform and terrible moral sufferings which come primarily from the body. Can we therefore avoid the conclusion that we may be physically predisposed, I had almost said predestined, to happiness or misery? Such, in fact, is implied in the familiar expressions of happy and unhappy constitution or temperament. As, moreover, these vitious constitutions are but too often inherited, and must, probably, in the first instance, have grown out of infringements of the organic laws, it becomes a literal truth, that the sins of the parents may be visited on their unoffending children even to remote generations.

The vast importance of a judicious physical education both to virtue and happiness, cannot now but receive its just appreciation: for under its influence, even a bad constitution, and the moral infirmities which are its almost necessary attendants, may be in a very considerable measure corrected. And we can likewise understand how essential is a prudent moral discipline to the good health of the body. In a perfect system of education, the moral, intellectual, and physical natures are each subjects of most important, if not equal regard.

Finally, knowing how the disposition may be influenced by bodily conditions, ought we not to exercise a mutual forbearance, and to cultivate feelings of charity for those infirmities of temper which even the best of men will occasionally display, and which oftentimes belong more to the flesh than the spirit?

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## CHAPTER XII.

THE PASSIONS CONSIDERED MORE PARTICULARLY.—THE PLEASURABLE PASSIONS WITH THEIR EFFECTS ON THE PHYSICAL FUNCTIONS SUMMARILY NOTICED.

The pleasurable passions include love, hope, friendship, pride, &c. Joy, which is ranked among them, would seem to be rather a general expression, or consequence, of all this class of emotions, than in itself a distinct and specific one. Thus are we said to enjoy love, hope, friendship, &c.; consequently the phenomena of the whole of them may be embraced under the general head of joy.

The passions founded on pleasure cause a universal expansion—if so it may be expressed—of vital action. The blood, under their animating influence, flows more liberally to the superficies, and playing freely through its capillary vessels, the countenance becomes expanded, its expression brightens, and the whole surface acquires the ruddy tint and genial warmth of health. The body also feels buoyant and lively, and there is a consequent disposition to quick

and cheerful muscular motions; to run, to jump, to dance, to laugh, to sing: in short, every function would seem to be gladdened by the happy moral condition. The common expressions, therefore, as "the heart is light, or leaps with joy," "to swell with pride," "to be puffed up with vanity," are not altogether figurative; for the heart does bound more lightly, and the body appears literally to dilate, under the pleasurable affections of the mind.

Nothing now contributes more effectually to the healthful and harmonious action of our organism than an equable distribution of the blood to its various parts, and especially the free circulation of this fluid in the extreme vessels of the surface. Thus a full, bright, and ruddy skin is always ranked among the surest tokens of health. The nervous system must also experience a salutary excitement under the agreeable moral emotions. But I need not further dwell on what will be so apparent to all,—the wholesome influence of a happy state of mind upon our bodily functions. "Love, hope, and joy," says the celebrated Haller, "promote perspiration, quicken the pulse, promote the circulation, increase the appetite, and facilitate the cure of diseases."—*Physiology*.

But, then, as excess of feeling, whatever be its character, is always prejudicial, even this class of passions, when violent, may be fraught with danger to health and life. Even felicity itself, if it surpass the bounds of moderation, will oppress and overwhelm us. Extravagant and unexpected joy unduly excites the nervous system; increases unnaturally and unequally the circulation, and occasions a painful stricture of the heart and lungs, accompanied with sighing, sobbing, and panting, as in severe grief. Under its influence, too, the visage will often turn pale, the limbs tremble and refuse their support to the body, and, in extreme cases, fainting, convulsions, hysterics, madness, temporary ecstacy, or catalepsy, and even instant death, may ensue. If the subject be of a delicate and sensitive constitution, and more especially if he labours under any complaint of the heart, the consequences of the shock to the nervous system, of sudden and immoderate joy, will always be attended with the utmost hazard.

Diogoras, a distinguished athlete of Rhodes, and whose merit was celebrated in a beautiful ode by Pindar, inscribed in golden letters on a temple of Minerva, died suddenly from excess of joy on seeing his three sons return crowned as conquerors from the Olympic Games.

Dionysius, the second tyrant of that name, is recorded to have died of joy on learning the award of a poetical prize to his own tragedy. And Valerius Maximus has ascribed the death of Sophocles to a like cause.

Chilo, a Spartan philosopher, one of the seven wise men of Greece, on seeing his son obtain a victory at Olympia, fell overjoyed into his arms, and immediately expired.

It is related that Pope Leo the Tenth, under the influence of extravagant joy at the triumph of his party against the French, and for the much coveted acquisition of Parma and Placentia, suddenly fell sick and died.

Dr Good tells us of a clergyman, an intimate friend of his own, who, at a time when his income was very limited, received the unexpected tidings that a property had been bequeathed to him amounting to three thousand pounds a-year. "He arrived in London," says Dr Good, "in great agitation; and entering his own door, dropt down in a fit of apoplexy, from which he never entirely recovered."—*Study of Medicine*.

"Excessive and sudden joy," says Haller, "often kills, by increasing the motion of the blood, and exciting a true apoplexy."—*Physiology*.

If the extreme of joy follow unexpectedly an emotion of an opposite character, the danger from it will be materially augmented. A story is recorded of two Roman matrons, who, on seeing their sons, whom they had believed to be dead, return from the famous battle fought between Annibal and the Romans near the lake of Thrasymenus, and in which the Roman army was cut to pieces, passing suddenly from the deepest grief to the most vehement joy, instantly expired.

Examples have likewise happened where culprits just at the point of execution, have immediately perished on the unexpected announcement of a pardon. We may draw, then, the important practical lesson that the cure of one strong passion is seldom to be attempted by the sudden excitement of another of an opposite character. Violent emotions are, as a general rule, to be extinguished cautiously and gradually. Rapid and extreme alternations of feeling, and indeed all sudden extremes, are repugnant to the laws, and consequently dangerous to the well-being, of the animal economy. To endeavour at once to eradicate deep grief by excessive joy is, as I have seen somewhere remarked, as irrational as it would be to expect the restoration of a frozen limb from pouring upon it hot water.

Instances are moreover recorded where the inflation of pride, or immoderate self-esteem, has actually brought on insanity. Menecrates, a physician of Syracuse, was particularly famed for his exalted self-conceit, and which at length so disturbed his intellect that he fancied himself to be the ruler of heaven, and in a letter written to Philip, king of Macedon, styled himself Menecrates Jupiter. The Macedonian monarch, as the story is told, having invited this physician to one of his feasts, had prepared for him a separate table, on which he was served only with perfumes and frankincense, like the master of the gods. At first this treatment greatly delighted him; but, soon growing hungry under such celestial fare and the temptation of the substantial viands on which the rest were feasting, he began to feel that he was a mortal, and stole away in his proper senses.

The importance now can scarcely be too strongly urged, even in reference to bodily health, of an habitual cultivation of the pure, and generous, and amiable feelings of our nature; for they are all fraught with pleasure, and all, consequently, the sources of agreeable and salutary excitement. The mild and benevolent affections necessarily carry with them their own

reward both to body and mind. Under their kindly influence the heart plays more freely and tranquilly, the respiration is more placid and regular, the food acquires new relish, and its digestion fresh vigour;—in short, they animate and perfect every living function, and expand and multiply all the various enjoyments of our being. Without them life would be but a dismal solitude, unworthy of possession. Sad and desolate is his state who has nothing to love! "If we had been destined to live abandoned to ourselves on Mount Caucasus, or in the deserts of Africa, perhaps nature would have denied us a feeling heart; but, if she had given us one, rather than love nothing, that heart would have tamed tigers, and animated rocks."

The exercise of gentleness and good-will in our various social and domestic relations, not only contributes to our own moral and physical well-being, but also to the happiness, and consequently health of those about us, and dependant upon us. Courtesy, like mercy, carries with it a double blessing,—

"It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes."

The ungentle and churlish in heart and manners, however just they may be in principle, chill the feelings, and poison the happiness, of all within the circle of their influence.

Cheerfulness, contentment, hope!—need I say how propitious are their effects on the various functions of the animal economy? Hope has well been termed a cordial; for what mendicament have we so mild, so grateful, and at the same time so reviving in its effects? "Its characteristic is to produce a salutary medium between every excess and defect of operation in every function. Consequently, it has a tendency to calm the troubled action of the vessels, to check and soothe the violent and irregular impetus of the nervous system, and to administer a beneficial stimulus to the oppressed and debilitated powers of nature."—*Cogan on the Passions.* The judicious physician well understands the advantage of encouraging this salutary feeling in the breasts of his patients; and it is to the confidence awakened by his dogmatical promises that the empiric owes his chief success in disease.

I have previously shown that sudden transports of joy may be attended with the most fatal consequences; is it unreasonable therefore to suppose that the pleasurable feelings may in some rare instances exist in too great ardour, consuming with an unnatural rapidity the mysterious forces of life? I have occasionally met with individuals, and I dare say many of my readers will call some such to mind, who appeared to exist almost continually in an unnatural state of felicity—whose every thought and feeling seemed pregnant with an enthusiasm of delight—who were predisposed, physically predisposed, to be happy, intensely happy; and these seemingly favoured beings have generally come to an early grave, it appearing as though Nature had ordained that none of us should exceed a limited sum of enjoyment, and that in proportion, therefore, as she increases its intenseness, does she curtail its duration.

The human constitution was manifestly never designed for acute excitements, whether of a pleasurable or painful character; hence its energies soon waste under their too constant operation. Even our good desires, then, may be too impetuous, and our virtuous zeal outrun the limits of healthful moderation. It is an apt saying, that "the archer who shoots beyond the mark, misses it as much as he that comes short of it." There is no privilege more to be desired,—there is nothing more conducive to health, longevity, and true enjoyment,—than a just equanimity of mind, a quiet harmony among the various passions; wherefore it is that most philosophers have made our sovereign good to consist in the tranquillity of soul and body, leaving ecstatic pleasures and rapturous feelings to beings of a different nature from our own.

"A constant serenity," says Dr Mackenzie, "supported by hope, or cheerfulness arising from a good conscience, is the most healthful of all the affections of the mind." And the same author, in enumerating the natural marks of longevity, mentions a calm, contented, and cheerful disposition.—*The History of Health and the Art of Preserving it.* Haller, also, in speaking of longevity, says: "Some prerogative seems to belong to sobriety, at least in a moderate degree, temperate diet, peaceable disposition, a mind not endowed with great vivacity, but cheerful, and little subject to care."

As old age comes on, the pleasurable susceptibilities all become weakened, and the keenness of passion in general is blunted. Not, however, that the aged, as some would seem to fancy, are left destitute of enjoyment, for each period of our being has its characteristic pleasures. They have parted, to be sure, with the eager sensibilities which mark the freshness of existence, but then they have gained a moral tranquillity with which earlier years are seldom blessed. The storms of youthful passion have subsided within their breasts, and if life has passed well with them, morally and physically, they now repose placidly amid the calm of its decline.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### GENERAL PHENOMENA OF THE PAINFUL PASSIONS AS MANIFESTED IN THE BODILY FUNCTIONS.

The second class of passions, now to be examined, are distinguished by phenomena very different from those which have just been described. As the emotions based on pleasure determine the blood to the surface, equalize the general circulation and vital action, expand the body, lighten and cheer the heart, and animate all the functions, those founded on pain induce a series of results precisely opposite in their character. Under the active influence of these latter, the whole body appears, as it were, to shrink or contract. The blood abandons the surface, and being thus thrown in undue quantity upon the internal organs, there follows that inward oppression, that painful sense of stricture and suffocation, and the consequent desire for fresh

air, which ever mark the intensity of this class of passions. Hence the frequent sighing under severe grief, which act consists in a deep inspiration, succeeded by a corresponding expiration, and so, by expanding freely the chest, and affording a larger supply of air, it alleviates, in some measure, the heart and lungs of their suffocative load. What human being, unless privileged beyond the rest of his species, but must be acquainted, too painfully acquainted, with that dreadful sense of tightness and weight at the chest, that panting and struggling of the breath, denoting sorrow in its graver forms?

As now an equable distribution of the blood to the various organs, and its free circulation through the capillary vessels of the surface, are, as stated under the pleasurable emotions, most salutary to the physical economy, an inequality, on the other hand, in the dispensation of this vital fluid, or partial determinations of it, are always most unfriendly to the health of the system. Whenever the blood is disproportionably accumulated upon the internal viscera,—as I have shown to happen under the influence of the painful and depressing passions,—their functions quickly become disturbed, and even their physical integrity may be endangered.

The painful passions also act immediately on the nervous system, directly depressing, disordering, expending, and sometimes even annihilating its energies. A morbid concentration of the nervous influence upon the internal organs, has also been supposed to take place under the operation of the painful passions, and to which have been referred those distressing internal sensations which they so commonly occasion.

Although, however, the general effect of the painful emotions is to induce a contraction or concentration, and a depression of the actions of life, yet, in their exaggerated forms, they are sometimes followed by a transient excitement, reaction, or vital expansion, when their operation becoming more diffused, is necessarily weakened in relation to any individual organ. Under such circumstances, the oppression of the heart and lungs is in a measure removed, and the circulation and respiration go on with more freedom. Hence it is that when anger and grief explode, or break forth into violent action and vociferation, and tears flow abundantly, their consequences are much less to to be dreaded than when they are deep, still, and speechless, since here their force is most concentrated. Thus Malcolm says to Macduff, when overwhelmed by the cruel tidings of the murder of his wife and children,—

> "What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
> Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak,
> Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break."

Let me here once more repeat the general and important truth, that the pleasurable passions tend to expand or enlarge the sphere of vital action, and to equalize its distribution, and are therefore salutary in their physical effects; whilst those of a painful nature concentrate or contract, and disturb its just equilibrium, and are consequently deleterious. To be convinced of this, we need but contrast the countenance of the happy and confident with that of the sad and despondent. In the former it is bright and dilated, and the blood plays freely in its extreme vessels. In the latter it is pale, sickly, contracted, and expressive of inward pain.

As, therefore, when we use the familiar expressions,—to be light or buoyant with joy—to expand with pleasure—to be inflated with pride—to be puffed up with vanity, we but express physiological truths; so do we also when we say, the heart is oppressed or breaking with grief, or that the body shrinks with fear, or withers under sorrow and despair.

It is worthy of remark, too, that this same spare or contracted state of the body, and sallowness of the complexion, which result from the operation of the painful and depressing passions, are, when constitutional, or dependent on incidental causes acting primarily on the physical system, very commonly associated with an unhappy and unamiable disposition. Thus Cæsar, while he trusted with confidence in the rosy and expanded face and full-fed sides of Marc Antony, looked with suspicion on the pale and contracted countenance, and meagre frame of Cassius.

> "Would he were fatter!—But I fear him not:
> Yet if my name were liable to fear,
> I do not know the man I should avoid
> So soon as that spare Cassius."

Here, then, we have a farther illustration of the statement previously made—that the like bodily condition may be either the cause or the effect of particular passions; that an interchange of influence is constantly and necessarily taking place between our moral and physical natures.

I will now go on to exhibit, somewhat more in detail, the effects of the painful emotions on our bodily functions, under the general heads of anger, fear, grief, and shame. I select the three former of these, especially, as being by far the most comprehensive in their character. In truth they must enter, one or more, into all the numerous varieties of this division of passions: accordingly the description of their phenomena will necessarily comprise the principal ones of the whole class. Perhaps, indeed, all the painful passions, could they be subjected to an accurate analysis, might be found but modifications of, and consequently be reducible to, anger, grief, or fear.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### ANGER.—PHENOMENA OF THE ACUTE STATE OF THIS PASSION.

ANGER, being founded especially on the instinct of self-preservation, belongs essentially to the constitution of every animate creature. It is aroused by, and at the same time urges us by an instinctive impulse to repel or destroy, all such causes as oppose or threaten our moral or physical ease and security; or, in other words, which bring unhappiness to the mind, or pain, injury, or destruction to the body. Hence it is often directed against the irrational, and even inanimate objects of creation. Modified and

abused, therefore, as we find it, it was originally implanted in our breasts as a necessary safeguard both to our happiness and existence. This passion, although more frequently of a purely selfish nature, yet may owe its origin to our sympathies with the wrongs and injuries of others.

In an extreme paroxysm of anger, which I will now briefly describe, the most painful phenomena display themselves. The countenance becomes distorted and repulsive, and the eye sparkles with a brutal fury. All the vital actions are commonly, in the first instance, oppressed, and are many times nearly overwhelmed. The blood retreats from the surface, leaving it cold and blanched; and tremors and agitations frequently come over the limbs, or even the whole body: and sighing, sobbing, and distressing nervous affections, as hysterics, spasms, convulsions, especially where there is a predisposition to such, will not unfrequently supervene. The vital fluid, and, perhaps I may add, the nervous influence, being impelled from the exterior, and thus accumulated on the internal organs, the functions of these become, of course, sensibly embarrassed. The motion of the heart is feeble, laboured, irregular, and oftentimes painful. The breathing is short, rapid, difficult, or suffocative, and a tightness or stricture is felt in the whole chest, in some cases extending to the throat, and causing a sense of choking, impeding, or, for the time, wholly interrupting the power of speech. Hence probably comes the expression, "to be choked with rage."

The organs of the abdomen also come in for their share of the prejudicial influence. Thus, more or less distress is apt to be felt in the region of the stomach, and the functions of this viscus, with those of the liver and bowels, may be variously disturbed.

Fainting will sometimes take place in violent anger, and, in occasional instances, the system being unable to react under the intensity of the shock, life has yielded almost as to a stroke of lightning; and the death here, that is, from a sudden gust of passion, is, according to Mr Hunter, as absolute as that caused by the electric fluid, the muscles remaining flaccid, the blood liquid, or dissolved in its vessels, and the body passing rapidly into putrefaction. Reaction, however, does, for the most part, speedily ensue, and many times, even in severe paroxysms, the excitement is manifested from the very beginning. Under the active stage of anger, the following train of phenomena will be displayed in greater or less strength.

The heart, now aroused, beats quick and forcibly, and the blood rushing impetuously to the head and surface, the brain becomes heated, the face flushed, the lips swollen, the eyes red and fiery, the skin hot, and literally may it be said that we burn with anger. The muscles also contract with a preternatural strength. The fists and teeth often become clenched as though preparing for combat, and the impulses of instinct subduing perhaps altogether the will and reasoning powers, the individual vociferates, stamps, threatens, is violently agitated, and perceiving and judging in a manner wholly different from what he does in a tranquil state of mind, his character becomes allied to that of the maniac, and thus may he commit acts at the bare thoughts of which he would shudder, under his more rational feelings. To this forcible reaction of anger, the term rage, or fury, is often applied.

Different individuals, owing to their native temperament, bodily health, and moral education, vary remarkably in their propensity to anger, as also, in the pertinacity with which they cherish this passion. In some it is sudden and transient, while in others, though perhaps less hasty, it assumes a more deep and lasting character, settling into that malignant feeling called revenge, the most terrible, and oftentimes the most obstinate one that degrades the human soul; so that by the poets, who are the true painters of our passions, it has even been fabled to be immortal. The disposition to anger will generally be found stronger in hot than in cold climates.

In many of the inferior animals, when enraged, the various physical phenomena of the passion under notice may be witnessed in all their most frightful character. In those of our own species, too, in whom, either from physical organization, or defective moral and intellectual culture, the animal, or baser nature is ascendant, we may oftentimes see exhibitions of it equally formidable.

Anger, accompanied with paleness of the sur face, or in which reaction does not take place, is generally most deep, and its effects are most to be dreaded. Some persons are always pale when under its influence, which may sometimes be owing to the admixture with it of a certain degree of fear, whose action is more depressing.

Anger sometimes proves fatal, the severity of its shock at once suppressing the action of the heart, or, as has occasionally happened, causing an actual rupture of this organ, or some of its large blood-vessels. Apoplexy, hemorrhages, convulsions, or other grave affections, may also succeed to it, speedily terminating existence.

Although the danger of this passion is generally lessened by reaction, still, when such is violent, the blood may be so forcibly impelled as to induce fatal apoplexies, or hemorrhages.

The Emperor Nerva died of a violent excess of anger against a senator who had offended him. Valentinian, the first Roman emperor of that name, while reproaching with great passion the deputies from the Quadi, a people of Germany, burst a blood-vessel, and suddenly fell lifeless on the ground. "I have seen," says a French medical writer, "two women perish, the one in convulsions, at the end of six hours, and the other suffocated in two days, from giving themselves up to transports of fury."—*Tourtelle*.

If there chance to exist any tendency to apoplexy, as in those of a plethoric habit, and who live generously, or if there be any complaint at the heart, the danger from anger will be materially aggravated. Hence it is that old men, who are more particularly disposed to these affections, offer the most frequent examples of sudden death from passion.

Numberless instances of apoplexy excited by anger may be found both in ancient and modern writers on this disease. Thus, Bonetus tells of a lady who, in consequence of a sudden fit of anger, was seized with violent and fatal apoplexy, and in whose brain blood was found largely diffused. "A gentleman," says Dr Cooke, "somewhat more than seventy years of age, of a full habit of body, and florid countenance, on getting into his carriage to go to his country house, was thrown into a violent passion by some circumstances which suddenly occurred. He soon afterwards complained of pain in his head, and by degrees he became sleepy, and in about a quarter of an hour wholly insensible. He was carried into the shop of an apothecary at Kentish Town, and was immediately largely bled. When I saw him, about an hour afterwards, I found him labouring under all the symptoms of strong apoplexy. In about twenty-four hours he died."—*Treatise on Nervous Disease.*

The celebrated John Hunter fell a sudden victim to a paroxysm of anger. Mr Hunter, as is familiar to medical readers, was a man of extraordinary genius, but the subject of violent passions, and which, from defect of early moral culture, he had not learned to control. Suffering, during his latter years, under a complaint of the heart, his existence was in constant jeopardy from his ungovernable temper; and he had been heard to remark that "his life was in the hands of any rascal who chose to annoy and tease him." Engaged one day in an unpleasant altercation with his colleagues, and being peremptorily contradicted, he at once ceased speaking, hurried into an adjoining room, and instantly fell dead.

The heart receiving immediately the shock of every fit of anger, the life of the passionate man who unfortunately labours under an affection of this organ, must be almost momentarily in danger. Nothing, in truth, does more to protract existence under complaints of this nature than moral serenity.

Various morbid effects of a more or less grave and lasting character, may also succeed to intense anger. Thus palsies, convulsions, epilepsy, and mania, are among its occasional consequences. Violent anger, or ungovernable temper, as we sometimes find it expressed, holds, according to the reports of different lunatic asylums, a prominent place among the causes of insanity. Raving madness is the form of insanity which most frequently results from this cause, though dementia has sometimes at once followed upon its operation. Dr Good cites the case of Charles the Sixth of France, "who, being violently incensed against the Duke of Bretagne, and burning with a spirit of malice and revenge, could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, for many days together, and at length became furiously mad as he was riding on horseback, drawing his sword, and striking promiscuously every one who approached him. The disease fixed upon his intellect and accompanied him to his death."—*Study of Medicine.*

Anger destroys the appetite, and checks or disorders the functions of digestion. Let one receive a provocation in the midst of his dinner, and the food at once loses all its relish for his palate. Dr Beaumont, who had under his charge a man with a fistulous opening into his stomach, so that the interior of this organ could actually be inspected, remarked that anger, or other severe mental emotions, would sometimes cause its inner, or mucous coat, to become morbidly red, dry, and irritable; occasioning, at the same time, a temporary fit of indigestion. Pains and cramps of the stomach and bowels sometimes follow the strong operation of this passion, and the liver may also become more or less implicated in its effects. Thus the flow of bile has been so augmented under its sudden influence, as even to occasion a bilious vomiting, or diarrhœa.

Anger, moreover, causes an immediate diminution, and a consequent inspissation, of the saliva; whence that unpleasant dryness of the throat, and frequent swallowing, with the frothy whiteness and adhesiveness of the secretion, which so generally mark its operation. It has even been affirmed that the fluids of the mouth may, under its influence, acquire poisonous qualities, rendering the bite of an animal much more dangerous when he is enraged. Some medical writers have even believed that true hydrophobia may be generated by the bite of an animal when transported by fury. Broussais asserts that anger imparts to the saliva, "poisonous qualities, capable of provoking convulsions, and even madness, in those persons bitten by a man agitated with transports of it."—*Physiology applied to Pathology.* Whether this assertion is grounded on any well-established facts, we are not given to understand.

Hemorrhages from various parts, as the nose, lungs, stomach, and also inflammations of different organs, as of the brain, lungs, skin, &c., are occasionally brought on by severe fits of passion. The author from whom I have just cited, states that he has seen hæmoptysis, or spitting of blood, and violent pneumonia, or inflammation of the lungs, proceed solely from anger. He relates the case of an elderly man, who, owing to a violent fit of anger, occasioned by a visit from some foreign soldiers, was suddenly affected with an extensive inflammation on the right loin, which terminated in a large and bad ulcer.

I have now and then met with instances of erysipelatous inflammation about the face and neck, induced by paroxysms of passion. Other cutaneous affections, as urticaria or nettle-rash, and herpetic eruptions, will oftentimes—more particularly if there exists a disposition to them—be produced by the same cause. The former of these I have known, in some constitutions, to be almost uniformly brought on by any strong mental emotion.

As substances most prejudicial, and even poisonous to the healthy economy, may exercise medicinal virtues in certain states of disease, so extreme anger, although generally so baneful in its effects, has—as we have abundant medical authority to prove—by its powerful impulse, occasionally subdued distressing and obstinate maladies, as neuralgia, agues, hypochondriasis, and various nervous affections.

## CHAPTER XV.

ANGER CONCLUDED.—PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF ITS CHRONIC ACTION.—IT MAY BE EXCITED BY MORBID STATES OF THE BODILY ORGANS, AND THUS BE STRICTLY PHYSICAL IN ITS ORIGIN.

Having learnt in the preceding chapter, how severe and dangerous are the effects of acute anger on the vital economy, it will excite no surprise that under its more chronic action, as in habitual irritability or fretfulness of temper, enmity, hatred, revenge, or other malevolent feelings, as envy or jealousy, in which anger, to a greater or less degree, is almost necessarily blended, the bodily health should sooner or later experience a baleful influence. The constant torture of mind kept up by such unhappy feelings, cannot but be attended with the most deleterious consequences to the physical economy. In the stomach and liver their effects are early and particularly evinced. Thus will the appetite and digestion become impaired, and the hepatic secretion be variously disordered, and sometimes partially or even wholly obstructed, when the bile, being absorbed into the system, taints the complexion with that dark and bilious hue which is so characteristic of an unamiable or malignant temper. Hence the common expression, to turn black with anger, hatred, or revenge, may have originated in correct observation. It is a literal truth, although expressed in poetry, that one may

> ——————" creep into the jaundice,
> By being peevish."

Irritability and moroseness of temper may also cause various inflammatory and nervous complaints, and such, more especially, to which there is any tendency in the constitution. Thus gout, rheumatism, hysterics, nervous headaches, and other nervous pains, as tic douloureux, are very apt to be excited, or their fits to be renewed, under such prejudicial influence.

Nothing, certainly, can be more desirable, both in respect to our moral and physical health, than a quiet resignation to the fate decreed us. Fretting and repining under unavoidable evils only adds to their burden, and to the eye of true philosophy shows a temper about as inconsistent as that exhibited by the heathen world in flagellating their gods for the calamities befalling them.

The condition of temper now occupying our consideration, is in a particular manner injurious when the system is labouring under disease. It is well known to every observing physician, that fractious patients, other circumstances being the same, recover less promptly, and are more exposed to relapses, than those who display greater calmness and resignation in their sufferings. And equally familiar is it to the surgeon, that under a bad state of temper, wounds heal less kindly, and when recently healed will even at times break out afresh. Likewise, that external inflammations pass less safely and regularly through their restorative processes, and that the pus of abscesses may be speedily transformed from a healthy to a morbid condition, under such unfriendly moral agency.

How important, therefore, it is, even if we consider but our physical welfare, to cultivate, as far as in us lies, an amiableness of temper, and to bear the little ills and crosses of life with all possible composure, must now be most apparent. It is, after all, the minor evils, the trifling annoyances, or such as tend merely to ruffle or fret our feelings, that are apt to be the least resolutely supported, and that oftentimes do more to mar our happiness, and impair our health, than even the absolute and severe afflictions of life. Many of us who would be impatient under the pricking of a pin, might submit with scarce a tremor or complaint to the most important and painful operation.

The immediate and distressing physical effects of this mental irritation may be especially noted in those of a nervous or sensitive temperament, when disturbed on retiring to rest by unseasonable noises, as the barking of dogs, crying of children, thrumming of pianos, &c. Under such vexing circumstances, the action of the heart often becomes unnaturally accelerated, and every pulsation of it most painfully sensible. A disagreeable dryness, too, is commonly experienced in the mouth and throat, with feverishness, sometimes itching of the skin, and a general nervous agitation, or restlessness, far more intolerable than any definite pain of body; and the health, as might be expected, remains disturbed through the whole of the subsequent day. Under the condition described, the nervous sensibility will sometimes become so morbidly exalted, that the slightest sounds, as even the ticking of a clock, will be almost insupportable.

Some persons are constitutionally irritable, and in such, therefore, it is hardly to be expected that the infirmity can be completely cured. It is difficult reasoning men out of their physical predispositions. Such faulty temper, however, whatever may be its source, necessarily becomes the instrument of its own punishment:

> "Secum petulans amentia certat."

To so many occasions of annoyance, to so many little vexations, are we all, even the most fortunate of us, exposed, that the happiness of the naturally irritable man must be continually encountering obstacles, and his health consequently be ever liable to injury. How much suffering both of body and mind, and to which no sympathy, no charity is extended, do we not witness in society, referable to the cause I am noticing! How heavy are the penalties to which we are oftentimes doomed for those faults that belong to the very nature of our organization!

It will furthermore appear, from what has preceded, how essential it is to their health that children be early, no matter how early, educated to control their tempers. Those who have been too fondly indulged, or to whose passions an indiscreet license has been permitted, will be likely to enjoy less uniform good health, and to need emetics and cathartics more fre-

quently than such as have been the subjects of a stricter and wiser moral discipline. Erroneous moral education has even been reckoned among the predisposing causes of insanity. "By too great indulgence and a want of moral discipline, the passions acquire greater power, and a character is formed subject to caprice and to violent emotions: a predisposition to insanity is thus laid in the temper and moral affections of the individual. The exciting causes of madness have greater influence on persons of such habits than on those whose feelings are regulated."—*Prichard on Insanity.*

Anger in its various degrees and modifications may grow out of, or the disposition to it may be greatly augmented by, various morbid conditions of our bodily organs. Unhealthy states of the liver are well known to render the temper suspicious, peevish, or morose; and a large share of our moral infirmities were ascribed by the ancients to an excess in the secretion of this organ. Hence comes it that the term gall, or bile, is used synonymously with anger, malignity, or bitterness of temper. And choleric, which signifies passionate, is derived from the Greek word χολη, *cholee*, meaning bile.

In many morbid affections of the stomach, the patients become exceedingly irritable, venting their spleen upon everybody and everything about them; and inflammation of this organ will sometimes induce violent fits of passion. It is doubtless through the morbid excitement which they awaken in the mucous or inner gastric coat, that stimulating food and drinks will, in some constitutions, always enkindle an irascibleness of feeling. Thus, the liberal use of wine, or ardent spirits, is, in certain individuals, uniformly followed by fearful outbreaks of anger. It is said of Lord Byron, that wine made him "savage instead of mirthful." The unhappy state of temper under which most persons awake on the morning subsequent to a debauch, is, I conceive, mainly referable to the morbid and irritable condition left in the delicate lining of the stomach; a part, than which few, if any, in the whole animal economy, have closer sympathies with our moral nature. Hence may be derived an additional argument, if such were needed, in favour of temperance, both in meat and drink, and one especially applicable to those of excitable feelings.

There are various conditions of the nervous system, though we know little of their essential nature, which are associated with a more or less fretful or passionate state of the feelings. In the early stage of hydrocephalus, or under that morbid state of the brain which precedes the effusion of water upon it, exceeding irritability, and frequent and uncontrollable bursts of anger, are very common phenomena. It has also been shown that a large proportion of those afflicted with epilepsy are morbidly irascible, and subject to violent agitations of passion.

Insanity, too, which is now most generally ascribed to morbid changes in the bodily organs or functions, is often marked by the most violent anger against everybody and everything. Or its subject will exhibit a general moroseness of character, or a malignant hatred toward, and a disposition to inflict cruelty and even death upon, particular persons, especially such as are most near and dear to him in his rational mind. This striking propensity to fits of rage, and the destruction of life, sometimes constitutes the only evidence of insanity, the mind remaining, in all other respects, apparently rational. Dr Prichard cites a case of this sort from M. Pinel, which was manifestly referable to physical disease, probably of the nervous system.

"A man who had previously followed a mechanical occupation, but was afterwards confined at Bicêtre, experienced, *at regular intervals*, fits of rage ushered in by the following symptoms. At first he experienced a sensation of burning heat in the bowels, with an intense thirst and obstinate constipation; this sense of heat spread by degrees over the breast, neck, and face, with a bright colour; sometimes it became still more intense, and produced violent and frequent pulsations in the arteries of those parts, as if they were going to burst; at last the nervous affection reached the brain, and then the patient was seized with a most irresistible sanguinary propensity; and if he could lay hold of any sharp instrument, he was ready to sacrifice the first person that came in his way. In other respects he enjoyed the free exercise of his reason; even during these fits he replied directly to questions put to him, and showed no kind of incoherence in his ideas, no sign of delirium; he even deeply felt all the horror of his situation, and was often penetrated with remorse, as if he was responsible for this mad propensity. Before his confinement at Bicêtre a fit of madness seized him in his own house; he immediately warned his wife of it, to whom he was much attached: and he had only time to cry out to her to run away lest he should put her to a violent death. At Bicêtre there appeared the same fits of periodical fury, the same mechanical propensity to commit atrocious actions, directed very often against the inspector, whose mildness and compassion he was continually praising. This internal combat between a sane reason in opposition to sanguinary cruelty, reduced him to the brink of despair, and he has often endeavoured to terminate by death this insupportable struggle."

There are certain states of the functions of the skin which are accompanied with a most painful fretfulness of temper. In what are commonly termed colds, and under the influence of our chilling easterly winds on the seacoast, many persons become excessively irritable. A like uncomfortable state of feeling is displayed in the commencement of some diseases of the lungs. And in disorders of the urinary system, a peculiarly anxious and irascible condition of the mind is very usually witnessed.

Anger, arising out of conditions of our physical organization, must, of course, be directed, not to its real cause, but toward things and persons without, and which have no concern in its production. Thus may we suspect and maltreat those nearest and dearest to us for no other reason than that our stomachs or livers are not executing as they should do, their respective

offices. And most persons must have remarked how apt we are to dream of quarrelling with our friends if we go to bed on an indigestible supper. It is obvious, then, that the cook will often have far more concern in the domestic tranquillity of families than human philosophy has yet suspected. And would this important functionary but cultivate his art in reference to the facility of digestion, as well as to the gratification of the palate, he might contribute more to the happiness of society than nine-tenths of the boasted moral reformers of the time.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

FEAR.—ITS DEFINITION.—IT BELONGS ESSENTIALLY TO ALL ANIMALS.—DISTINCTION BETWEEN MORAL AND PHYSICAL COURAGE.—PARTICULAR CONDITIONS OF OUR BODILY ORGANS FAVOUR TIMIDITY OF CHARACTER.

FEAR, like anger, is based on the principle of self-preservation, though it urges us to a very different course for our security. Thus, while anger is defensive and offensive, stimulating us to repel, or assault and destroy the causes which threaten our safety or happiness, fear, on the contrary, incites us to avoid, or flee from them; and it is only when they can no longer be shunned that our preservative instincts force us to resistance, or even attack.

Fear being, as already said, grounded on the instinct of self-preservation, must naturally belong to all animals; and it will commonly be found to bear a direct relation to the feebleness and defencelessness of the individual,—circumstances, as will at once be seen, rendering it the more necessary to his safety. It may be stated as a general truth, that a sense of weakness begets timidity, while a consciousness of strength imparts boldness of character. Hence it is that fear is more especially conspicuous in the female constitution, that is, I should add, in all such circumstances of danger as demand energy of resistance, or strength of physical action; for under actual calamities and sufferings, where endurance alone is required, woman will oftentimes display a degree of firmness of which our own stronger sex might well be proud. Woman looks to the strong arm and bold spirit of man for protection and defence, while he turns to her more delicate and passive nature for consolation and support under those ills of life against which his courage is powerless, and his strength vain.

Different individuals are by nature more or less susceptible to the action of fear. Thus some, even from their early childhood, are notable for their cowardice, whereas others are equally so for their intrepidity. Habit and education, however, may certainly do much in conquering a native timorousness of character.

In our own species, courage admits of the distinction,—generally recognised,—into physical and moral. The former is constitutional, though habit, by its influence on the physical organization, tends doubtless to increase it. It is oftentimes denominated strength of nerve, and corresponds in its nature with the courage manifested by the inferior animals. The latter, or moral courage, necessarily presupposes a supremacy of the higher faculties, and is therefore peculiar to man. Thus the naturally timid, pricked on by duty, honour, pride, have in many instances become bold and successful warriors. And the most delicate and effeminate in body, through the ascendant influence of their moral nature, have faced dangers, and borne sufferings, under which naturally stouter hearts and firmer nerves would have quailed; have even offered up their lives in the cause of truth, their honour, or their country. We may thus account for the superior firmness always exhibited in a just cause.

"Thrice is he armed, that hath his quarrel just."

Moral courage belongs more especially to cultivated and intellectual man. His will, strengthened by new motives, learns to restrain the trembling nerve, and to subject the weaker flesh to the dominion of the bolder spirit. But in the uncultivated and ignorant, it is the mere animal or brute courage that is principally witnessed. Hence, in hazardous and difficult undertakings, the greatest fortitude and perseverance are almost always displayed by the leaders.

Fear will oftentimes spring rather from mistaken judgment than from any absolute deficiency of courage. Familiarity with any particular danger, according to a law of the animal constitution, serves to diminish our dread of it, although it may not necessarily embolden us in respect to others of a different character. The mariner looks calmly on the ocean tempest, which would strike dismay to the heart even of the far braver landsman. The physician, though he may be constitutionally timid, encounters fearlessly the desolating epidemic, from which the hardiest courage flees in terror. And the delicate female, who would tremble and turn pale at the very sight or sound of a warlike instrument, might bear the pains of sickness, and the approach of death with more serenity and fortitude than the soldier of a hundred battles.

Good health, as a general rule, conduces to boldness, whereas infirmities of body are apt to beget a pusillanimity of character. Thus, disorders of the stomach and liver commonly awaken false apprehensions, and diminish the natural fortitude. So, too, many other morbid states of the system depress the courage, and transform even the most daring into cowards. The effect, however, of different maladies in weakening our moral resolution, and engendering imaginary fears, is more or less strongly marked. The dyspeptic, for example, will generally be more timid and apprehensive than the consumptive subject. And, again, there are some diseases, which, through the unnatural stimulation they promote in the brain and nervous system, tend to excite in us even a morbid excess of courage.

There are certain instincts which completely

conquer the passion of fear. Thus the most timid female will become wholly regardless of danger in the protection of her offspring.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

FEAR CONTINUED.—ACUTE FEAR DESCRIBED.—FASCINATION HAS BY SOME WRITERS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO ITS VIOLENT INFLUENCE.—REMARKABLE EFFECTS IN THE CURE OF DISEASES THAT HAVE OFTEN FOLLOWED EXCESSIVE FRIGHT.

Fear, like the other passions, exhibits numerous shades or degrees. It may be slight and transient, or so aggravated as completely to dethrone the judgment, and jeopard, not only the health, but even the existence of its subject.

Fear is one of the most painful of the passions, and exerts the most astonishing effects, both upon the mental and bodily functions. Under its powerful influence the fiercest animals are rendered gentle, and subservient to our will and purposes.

In acute fear the effects induced on the physical organization and its functions are very remarkable, and oftentimes exceedingly distressing. The respiration becomes immediately and most strikingly affected. Thus, on its first impulse, owing to a spasmodic contraction of the diaphragm, a sudden inspiration takes place, directly succeeded by an incomplete expiration; the latter being, as it would seem, interrupted, or cut short, by a spasm of the throat, windpipe, or lungs. Hence arises the irregular and convulsive breathing so characteristic of extreme fear. Under its action the respiration almost always grows short, rapid, and tremulous,—as may be witnessed in the inferior animals when frightened,—and a painful sense of suffocation is experienced in the chest. The voice becomes embarrassed, trembles, and, in consequence of the diminution and inspissation of the secretions of the mouth and throat, is dry, husky, thick, and unnatural. Even temporary speechlessness may be induced under the first shock of this passion.

"Obstupui, steteruntque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit."

The heart, likewise, suffers severely from the influence of acute fear. It becomes oppressed, constricted; flutters and palpitates, and is variously agitated; and the pulse is consequently small, feeble, rapid, and oftentimes irregular.

The viscera of the abdomen, too, not unfrequently experience disagreeable sensations, unnatural or spasmodic contractions, and a morbid increase of their secretions. Sometimes vomiting, but oftener a diarrhœa—involuntary perhaps—takes place; and jaundice has, in occasional instances, speedily followed its operation. The urine also is increased in quantity, is pale or limpid, and the desire to void it becomes frequent, urgent, and often irresistible.

The blood, as might be anticipated, abandons the surface, the face turns pallid, and the skin becomes universally cold, contracted, and rough, like goose flesh, and in consequence of this contraction, the hairs growing from it are elevated, or, in the common phrase, stand on end, or if not, such is generally the sensation to the individual. Chills often spread themselves over the surface, or portions of it, sometimes as it were in streams; and cold sweats, partial or general, not unusually break forth. A cold dewy sweat may frequently be observed about the forehead when under the influence of great fear.

Partial tremors, as of the limbs, or a general shuddering and shaking, and chattering of the teeth, as under the effects of extreme cold, or in the first stage of a paroxysm of intermittent fever, are also common phenomena. It is worthy of remark here that these same symptoms, when the result of morbid physical states, are apt to be associated with an unnatural degree of timidity or apprehension. Indeed, I feel well satisfied that we possess less courage when chilled and shivering under the influence of cold, than when the surface is warm and comfortable, and the blood circulates freely through its extreme vessels. But to proceed with the physical signs of fear. Under its violent action the eyes glare wildly, seeming almost as though they would start from their sockets, and the whole countenance is drawn into a most painful and unnatural expression; and a convulsive sobbing accompanied by a profuse secretion of tears, and, in delicate and sensitive females, even severe paroxysms of hysterics, will not unfrequently occur. The muscular system may also become terribly convulsed, or its energies may be temporarily suspended, and the individual consequently be rendered dumb and motionless. In extreme cases, the whole chest, and upper part of the abdomen, or region of the stomach, are affected with an agonizing sense of constriction, and syncope, or fainting, is by no means unusual.

The depressing effects of fear just described, are not uncommonly succeeded by reaction; or anger may arise toward the cause of alarm, calling forth even preternatural muscular efforts to repel or destroy it. Few of our passions, in truth, long maintain their simple and original character, but others, often too of a very different nature, are aroused by and become blended with them. And that such should be the case would seem, in many instances, to be even necessary to our welfare; the newly-awakened passion serving to counteract the threatening consequences of the primary one. Thus will the excitement of anger act as a cordial to the depression of fear, and the depression of fear on the other hand, as a wholesome sedative to the excitement of anger.

Generally, as was before remarked, the first impulse of simple fear, when the muscles retain their powers, is to occasion flight, and which is often precipitated with a degree of force which would have been impossible in a more calm state of the mind. This act is truly instinctive, and consequently irresistible, except under the counterworking influence of some other passion. When escape, however, is impracticable, the individual will often be driven to the most fierce and desperate resistance, and thus even the greatest cowards have sometimes acquired the fame of heroes.

Fear, in its most aggravated degree, acquires the name of terror: and under certain circumstances, and in certain constitutions, the most astonishing results have followed its violent impression on the nervous system. That peculiar condition which it has been imagined certain animals have the power to produce in certain others, termed fascination, is not unusually ascribed to the agency of terror, which paralyzing, as is thought, all voluntary muscular action in the victim, renders him an easy prey to his destroyer.

That some species of serpents possess this fascinating influence over birds—even of forcing them by a gradual and irresistible movement actually to fly into their devouring jaws—is not merely a popular belief, but has been maintained by those whose names sustain a prominent place in the annals of science. My readers will, I trust, pardon me for introducing the following citation in relation to this subject, from M. Broussais, an author from whom I have before quoted, and whose writings have been held in no ordinary repute by many medical men of high rank both in Europe and America. It certainly shows a most easy faith and a strange process of reasoning in support of such faith. It is brought in under the head of instinct.

"If we examine instinct in the prey threatened by the voracity of the snake, we discover something very extraordinary. What is the power which compels the tomtit, perched upon a neighbouring bush, to sacrifice itself for the gratification of the wants of an animal creeping upon the ground, at a distance from it? The reptile obstinately pursues it with his looks;—so long as the bird does not perceive the snake, it runs no risk, but if the former rests its eyes for a few moments on those of its pursuer, all is lost, for it will become its prey. The bird is terrified—it cannot abstain from looking fixedly at the snake—it flies from branch to branch, as if with a view of escaping, and yet it gradually approaches it enemy. This latter continues gazing at it, presenting it, at the same time, an open mouth, and the victim finally flies of itself into it. These are not mere fables, but facts, which few shepherds have not had occasion to notice. The public papers have lately detailed the manner in which a boa-constrictor, conveyed to Europe in an English or American ship, was fed. The journalist relates, that those who took care of this monstrous snake, when they conceived that it was hungry, opened its iron cage, and presented to it a goat, (a number of which had been shipped for its use.) As soon as the animal perceived its prey, it unfolded itself, and looked at it fixedly, with open mouth. The goat, after hesitating some time, as if undecided between the instinct of self-preservation and that attracting it towards the monster, precipitated itself head-foremost into the living gulf which was to serve as its tomb."

"I do not see," observes the same author in relation to his above cited remarks, "why an animal destined to become the prey of another, should not be compelled to yield itself up, when this latter is deprived of other means requisite for seizing it. It is generally admitted that a number of animals are born only to be devoured. The end of destruction is as much in nature, as that of formation, and the acts of instinct, which tend to deliver up a prey to its enemy, are as natural as others, the object of which is to avoid danger or gratify an appetite. Now, it appears evident, that, in order to attain these ends, the Author of all things has invariably made use of the same means, namely, instinctive impulses."—*Physiology applied to Pathology.*

Every other writer on the subject of instincts, so far at least as I am informed, has regarded their final purpose to be preservative only; but the author cited from, appears to have introduced a new one, leading its possessor into destruction for another's support. In another part of the same work, Broussais, in the most unequivocal manner, refers fascination to the influence of terror.

Facts, were their details to be relied upon, are certainly not wanting to substantiate such a fascinating influence in serpents. Scarce a peasant, or even a country school-boy, but has some instance to relate in confirmation of it. No one, certainly, can dispute that birds are occasionally seen fluttering about, and apparently under extreme alarm, in close proximity to these reptiles. But this is oftentimes only in defence of their nest which the snake is invading; they being actuated by an instinct whose end is the preservation of the species, instead of one urging them to destruction for the support of their enemy. Nevertheless instances do occur, and I have myself been witness to them, which will not admit of such an explanation. This power of fascination, then, although I am far from regarding it as established, yet can hardly be viewed in the light of a mere vulgar superstition. The propensity, almost resistless, which some persons feel when on the verge of a precipice, to cast themselves down into inevitable destruction, is equally as strange as that a bird should be impelled by an invincible disposition to fly into the deadly jaws of its devourer.

But to resume my principal subject. Extreme terror will, in certain cases, instead of depressing and paralyzing the nervous power, arouse it into new and astonishing action. We read that it has even caused the dumb to speak, and the paralytic to walk, and that the most painful and obstinate diseases have been known suddenly to yield under its potent influence.

Herodotus relates that during the storm of Sardis, "a Persian meeting Crœsus, was, through ignorance of his person, about to kill him. The king, overwhelmed by his calamity, took no care to avoid the blow or escape death; but his dumb son, when he saw the violent designs of the Persian, overcome with astonishment and terror, exclaimed aloud, 'Oh, man, do not kill Crœsus!" This was the first time he had ever articulated; but he retained the faculty of speech from this event as long as he lived."

Van Swieten records the case of a man, who, under the action of sudden terror, recovered from hemiplegy, or palsy of one half of the body, that had afflicted him for years.

Many instances have also happened where gout has been immediately expelled by the

influence of unexpected fright. An old author relates of one of his patients suffering under a paroxysm of this disease, that having his feet and legs wrapped in cataplasms of turnips, a hog entering his room and beginning to feed on the turnips, so alarmed him that he began to run and jump, and all his gouty pains straightway vanished.

Intermittent fevers or agues have also yielded to the same impulse. Dr Fordyce tells of a man afflicted with a fever of this description, that his brother having led him to walk by the edge of a mill-dam, pushed him suddenly into the water; and which, as he was unable to swim, naturally put him into a very great fright. He was speedily, however, taken out, and from that time forth had no further paroxysm of his disease.—*Dissertations on Fever*.

Boerhaave appears to have employed the passion under notice with much success at the Orphan-house at Haerlem, in the cure of epileptic fits, which, owing to the force of sympathy, or that propensity to imitation so remarkable in our nature, had spread extensively among the children who were its inmates. He ordered to be brought among them a chafing-dish of burning coals containing a heated iron, with which all those who should be attacked with epilepsy were directed to be burnt. The terror, it seems, excited by this proceeding, kept off the usual access, and their fits were radically cured in consequence.

Dr Cooke cites from the eighteenth volume of the Medical and Physical Journal, the following instance of the disappearance of epilepsy from sudden fright. "A lady in the prime of life, of robust habit, was for four years afflicted with this complaint in a violent degree, the paroxysms returning three or four times a week, continuing for some hours, and leaving the patient in a state of stupor. A variety of medicines had been tried in vain, and the case was considered hopeless, when, on receiving a dreadful mental shock, by the circumstances of her daughter being accidentally burnt to death, the disease entirely and finally left her."

Even severe and settled insanity has been completely removed by immoderate fright. In the thirty-first volume of the Medico-Chirurgical Review, we find the following case, quoted from a Prussian Medical Journal. "A man, between thirty and forty years of age, had been, from the year 1827 to 1831, affected with an extreme degree of insanity, amounting almost to idiocy, and alternating with periodic fits of raving madness. His condition bordered on bestiality, and none dared to approach him in his maniacal paroxysms. His case was deemed quite hopeless; and for the two following years, he vegetated, so to speak, in the public lunatic house of the place. A fire having accidentally broken out near his cell, his mental powers, which had so long slumbered, were suddenly aroused; and Dr Ollenroth, upon visiting him a few days afterwards, found him perfectly intelligent, and assiduously occupied with some domestic arrangements. He had no recollection of his former condition. All that he remembered was simply that, on the approach of the flames, he felt himself seized with an indescribable sense of terror, that he sprung up from his bed, and that he suddenly regained his intelligence."

Many minor affections are also known to be immediately removed, or suspended, under the strong impression of fear, as toothache, and other nervous pains; hypochondriasis, sea-sickness, &c.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

FEAR CONTINUED.—DEATH IS SOMETIMES THE SPEEDY CONSEQUENCE OF EXTRAVAGANT FEAR. —VARIOUS PAINFUL DISEASES MAY ALSO BE THE RESULT OF ITS OPERATION.—THE TERRORS OF RELIGION ARE OFTENTIMES FOLLOWED BY THE MOST MELANCHOLY EFFECTS.—THE FEARS AWAKENED IN THE IMAGINATION DURING SLEEP, WHEN FREQUENT AND IMMODERATE, MAY BECOME PREJUDICIAL TO HEALTH.

Terror may prove instantly fatal, at once destroying the nervous energy, and suppressing the action of the heart; or it may bring on hemorrhages or convulsions quickly terminating in death. Children and females, in consequence of the higher degree of nervous sensibility with which they are generally endowed, are the most liable to fall victims to fear.

Montaigne informs us that at the siege of St Pol, a town of France, "a gentleman was seized with such a fright, that he sunk down dead in the breach without any wound."

Marcellus Donatus tells of a child who instantly fell dead in a field on seeing, in the morning twilight, two persons clothed in black suddenly appear by his side. Another child was so frightened by the report of a cannon from a vessel while he was bathing in the sea, that he instantly fell into convulsions, and died in fifteen minutes.

An old writer relates of a nun, that she was so terrified on seeing herself surrounded by hostile soldiers with drawn swords, that the blood suddenly flowed from all the outlets of her body, and she immediately perished in their presence.

Broussais gives the case of a lady, who, on feeling a living frog fall into her bosom from the claws of a bird of prey, while she was sitting on the grass, was instantly seized with such a profuse bleeding from the lungs that she survived but a few minutes.

Terror may be followed—more especially in the delicate and sensitive—by various morbid phenomena, either of a transient, or lasting and dangerous character. Severe fainting fits are not unfrequently induced by it, and which at times will continue rapidly succeeding each other even for hours. And in some instances a morbid nervous mobility will be engendered by it, from which the unfortunate sufferer never wholly recovers, remaining liable ever afterwards to palpitations, faintings, or nervous tremors, on the slightest alarm, and more particularly if it be of the nature of that which awakened the primary disturbance. Terror operating on females will not unusually excite

paroxysms of hysterics, and even leave a settled disposition to them in the constitution.

Many examples might be adduced where epilepsy has been the consequence of sudden fright, and even where a tendency to it has been thus rendered permanent in the system.

A celebrated German physician asserts, that in six out of fourteen epileptic patients under his care in the hospital of St Mark, at Vienna, the disease had been caused by terror. A man travelling alone by night, encountered a large dog in a narrow path, and fancying himself seized by the animal, he reached home in extreme terror, and on the following morning was attacked with a violent fit of epilepsy, of which he afterwards had many returns. "A young man, having witnessed some of the dreadful events at Paris on the horrible tenth of August, became affected immediately with this disorder." A maid-servant of Leipsic while endeavouring to untie some knots, got the impression that one of them was made by a sorceress, and became so terrified in consequence, that she was immediately seized with a fit of epilepsy.—*Cooke on Nervous Diseases.*

In young children, convulsions and epilepsy are brought on with great facility under the operation of strongly and suddenly awakened fear. Tissot, referring to the foolish and dangerous practice of frightening children in sport, observes, "One half of those epilepsies, which do not depend on such causes as might exist before the child's birth, are owing to this detestable custom; and it cannot be too much inculcated into children, never to frighten one another; a point, which persons entrusted with their education, ought to have the strictest regard to."—*Avis au Peuple, &c.*

Religion, when perverted from its true purpose of hope and consolation, and employed as an instrument of terror, becomes a frequent source of most melancholy nervous complaints. Religion, in its widest signification, has been defined, "An impressive sense of the irresistible influence of one or more superior Beings over the concerns of mortals, which may become beneficial or inimical to our welfare."

Now, according to the fancied character and requisitions of the Power or Powers it worships, it may be the parent of fear, cruelty, and intolerance, or of trust, charity, benevolence, and all the loftiest feelings that adorn our nature. The austere bigot who owns a god of terror and vengeance, becomes the slave of direst passions. All who differ from his creed are to be hated as the enemies of heaven, and the outcasts of its mercy, and he may even persuade himself that to inflict upon them bodily tortures is an acceptable religious duty. The spirit of gloomy fanaticism has been one of the severest scourges of our species. No human sympathy has been able to withstand its merciless power. It has set the parent against the child, and the child against the parent, and has blasted every tie of domestic affection. Even those naturally possessed of the most tender dispositions have become so hardened under the customs of religious bigotry, as to look without the least feeling of compassion on the pangs of the heretic amid the flames, and who, in their faith, was to pass immediately from his temporal, into the indescribable agonies of eternal fires. "I was once," says Dr Cogan, "passing through Moorfields with a young lady, aged about nine or ten years, born and educated in Portugal, but in the protestant faith, and observing a large concourse of people assembled round a pile of faggots on fire, I expressed a curiosity to know the cause. She very composedly answered, 'I suppose that it is nothing more than *that they are going to burn a Jew.*' Fortunately it was no other than roasting an ox upon some joyful occasion. What rendered this singularity the more striking, was the natural mildness and compassion of the young person's disposition."—*Philosophical Treatise on the Passions.*

Need we now feel astonished that such relentless and terrible passions, awakened by the gloomy and fearful apprehensions of the future, should oftentimes, especially in weak and timid natures, become the occasion both of bodily and mental disease?

The influence of the terrors of religion in exciting convulsions and epilepsy will be rendered obvious enough to any one who will visit the religious field-meetings that are annually held among us. On such occasions I have witnessed the most distressing spasms, and contortions of the body, not only in females, but even in the more hardy and robust of our own sex. And the same morbid effects may occasionally be observed among all sects of religionists who seek to make proselytes by appealing to the fears rather than convincing the judgment; affrighting the imagination with

"—damned ghosts, that doe in torments waile,
And thousand feends, that doe them endlesse paine
With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remaine."

Females, and indeed all persons of sensitive feelings and nervous habits, may suffer material injury from being subjected to such superstitious terrors. Not only epilepsy and hysteria, but even settled insanity, as is admitted by all writers on this disease, is liable to be thus induced. Dr Prichard tells us that several instances of mental alienation from this cause have fallen within his own sphere of observation. "Some of these," says he, "have occurred among persons who had frequented churches or chapels where the ministers were remarkable for a severe, impassioned, and almost imprecatory style of preaching, and for enforcing the terrors rather than setting forth the hopes and consolations which belong to the christian religion."—*On Insanity, &c.*

The Society of Friends, or at least such is true of them in England, are in a great measure exempt from what is termed religious insanity. Now this immunity is only to be explained by the fact that their religion being one of peace and charity, they are but little exposed to those fanatical excitements and superstitious apprehensions which work so powerfully on the imaginations of many other christian sects.

Fright, however, from any source, will be found, on recurring to the reports both of our own and foreign lunatic asylums, to hold a prominent place among the causes of mental

alienation. Mania, or raving madness, most commonly follows this cause, though in some instances dementia, or a stagnation, as it were, of all the mental powers, has been the mournful and irremediable consequence.

It is stated by an eminent French writer on insanity, that many facts have come within his information showing that a strong predisposition to madness in the offspring has arisen from fright, experienced by the mother during pregnancy; striking cases of which nature are said to have happened during the period of the French revolution.

Palsies, partial or general, have also immediately ensued as an effect of the passion we are considering. The dumbness which has been known to follow its operation, must probably have depended on a paralysis occasioned in the organs of speech. Permanent disease of the heart also, has, in some instances, been brought on through the agency of the same cause.

Terror will, moreover, display its influence, and sometimes in a very astonishing manner, upon the vital phenomena of the hair; and we are told of cases where, under its extravagant action, the head has almost immediately become blanched as in old age.

Fear, when extreme, and the same is true of other passions, affects very remarkably the secretion of milk. It may wholly or partially suppress it, or so vitiate its natural quality as to render it injurious to the infant for whose nourishment it is designed. Cows, when under the influence of this passion, yield their milk with difficulty; and the observation is a familiar one in the country, that certain of these animals, and which is doubtless to be explained on the same principle, will not "give down" their milk to strange milkers.

The terrors with which some persons are so frequently, or almost habitually agitated during their nightly slumbers, cannot be otherwise than detrimental to the health of the body. A frightful dream will sometimes impair the appetite, and leave the individual pale, melancholy, and with his nervous system in a state of morbid commotion through the whole of the subsequent day. After a night passed amid the agony of fancy-framed terrors, it is not to be expected that the nerves should suddenly regain their composure, that the moral tranquillity should at once be restored.

The different mental feelings, liberated during sleep from the control of the judgment, are in many instances most extravagant, and wholly out of proportion to the causes exciting them. Hence in dreams our fears will oftentimes become exceedingly aggravated and distressing, and some persons are in the habit of starting suddenly from their repose in the greatest dismay, uttering the most direful cries, their bodies perhaps bathed in sweat, and even remaining for a considerable time after they are fully awake under painful impression of the fancy which affrighted them. Even convulsions and epilepsy have been the unhappy consequence of such imaginary terrors. Tissot relates the case of a robust man, who, on dreaming that he was pursued by a bull, awoke in a state of great agitation and delirium, and in not many minutes after fell down in a severe fit of epilepsy.

In childhood, the impression of dreams being particularly strong, so much so, indeed, that they are, in some instances, ever afterwards remembered as realities, and fear, moreover, being then a very active principle, the danger from the source in question will, at this period, be materially enhanced. Some children are very subject to arouse hastily from their sleep, screaming and crying, perhaps springing up on end, or from their bed, in a sort of wild delirium, and it may be a long while ere their fears can be quieted, and their minds composed to rest. These convulsions, too, with which children are occasionally seized at night, may not unfrequently proceed from the same visionary terrors.

If the fears of children from any particular cause have been strongly excited while awake, such will sometimes be renewed even in a more intense degree, and perhaps for several successive nights, during their slumbers, thus multiplying the danger of the primary emotion.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

FEAR CONTINUED.—IN ITS MORE CHRONIC OPERATION IT MAY BE THE OCCASION OF VARIOUS PREJUDICIAL EFFECTS IN THE SYSTEM.—SUPERSTITIOUS FEARS IN REGARD TO DEATH MAY BE A SOURCE OF MUCH SUFFERING BOTH TO BODY AND MIND.—EVILS LIABLE TO ENSUE FROM INDULGING THE FANCIES OF CHILDREN IN TALES OF SUPERNATURAL TERRORS.

Having learned how serious are the consequences to be apprehended from acute fear, the inference will be natural, that even its more chronic action may be productive of important injury to the health.

A bold, intrepid spirit may justly be ranked among the conditions which secure to the constitution its full measure of physical power. Few causes will more certainly impair the vigour of the nerves, break down the manliness of the body, and degrade the energies of the mind, than the habitual indulgence in imaginary fears.

The depressing agency of fear is well known to augment the susceptibility of the constitution to disease; and especially to the action of contagion, and epidemic influences. Thus, in desolating epidemics, those who suffer under the greatest apprehension are, other things being alike, the ones most liable to fall their victims. Whenever, too, the sick yield themselves to the impulse of fear, the chances of their recovery will generally become lessened. It has been remarked that the small-pox is particularly apt to prove unfavourable in the young and beautiful, who naturally dread a disease so fatal to beauty.

We can now comprehend the risk of indulging the fancies of children with those tales, for which they have ever so strong a craving, founded on supernatural events; and more particularly in which ghosts, as they are termed, are introduced as actors; since these of all

the creations of superstition, would seem to be the most terrifying to the youthful mind. It is indeed doubtful whether the arch-fiend himself, with all his fearful accompaniments of sooty-face, barbed tail, cloven foot, and branching horns, awakens half the terrors in the imagination as does that of the pale, sheeted, and stalking ghost of a departed mortal. Other supernatural agents, at any rate, which enter into the machinery of the nursery tales, as the mischievous fairy, the dark sorcerer, the grim witch, carry with them far less dread, and none of that awful gloom, which is ever associated with the re-appearance of the dead.

Whether all stories connected with supernatural events should be denied to childhood, is a question I am not prepared to examine; but that all such as serve to engender imaginary fears ought to be interdicted, few, probably, will be inclined to dispute.

All children, but in a more particular manner those of a delicate and timid nature, are liable to sustain no inconsiderable degree both of bodily and mental suffering, when their feelings are frequently worked upon by false terrors. As night approaches, all their superstitious apprehensions increase, and if they chance to be left alone for ever so short a period, their situation becomes truly pitiable. And then on retiring to rest, appalled by the darkness and silence, and dreading lest their eyes should encounter some frightful spectre, they bury themselves beneath the bedclothes, and thus lie reeking, perhaps, with sweat, and nearly suffocated from the heat and confinement of the air. Nor even here do they escape from their fearful imaginings. Uncouth phantoms keep rising before their vision, and every little noise, though of the most familiar character, as the gnawing of a rat, the jarring of a door or window, or even the moaning of the wind, is magnified or transformed by the dismayed fancy into some alarming supernatural sound. On their falling asleep these waking fantasies may still be continued in the manner of dreams, creating a yet higher degree of terror; hence it is that they will often start abruptly from their slumbers, screaming and in the most wild delirium of fright. In the morning, as might be expected after a night of such painful agitation, they awake gloomy, languid, and unrefreshed.

Under the continued disturbance of such imaginary fears, the health, more especially if it be not naturally robust, must soon begin to decline. Thus, the body grows pale and emaciated, the appetite diminishes, the stomach and bowels get disordered; and so enfeebled, and so morbidly sensitive, may the system at length become, that the slightest noise, if sudden, or any unexpected appearance, as of an individual, or other object, will cause violent palpitations, difficulty of speaking, nervous tremors, and agitations, and at times even fainting. And the nervous system may in this way experience an injury from which it can never be wholly restored.

So deep-seated, in truth, do these fearful associations engendered in the weakness of childhood sometimes become, that darkness and silence will often renew them long after the reason is matured, and their absurdity apparent; and thus may they remain a permanent source of injury to the mental tranquillity, and by consequence to the physical health. The superstitious weaknesses of Doctor Johnson, and perhaps, also, that dread of death which so constantly haunted him, weighing like a nightmare on his moral energies, and embittering his existence, were in all probability, the result of injudicious associations awakened in the education of his early years.

Plutarch informs us that the Spartan nurses used the children "to any sort of meat, to have no terrors in the dark, nor to be afraid of being alone, and to leave all ill-humour and unmanly crying." Also that Lycurgus, "to take away all superstition, ordered the dead to be buried in the city, and even permitted their monuments to be erected near the temples; accustoming the youth to such sights from their infancy, that they might have no uneasiness from them, nor any horror for death, as if people were polluted with the touch of a dead body, or with treading upon a grave."—*Life of Lycurgus.*

It is certainly most essential to our moral and physical comfort and tranquillity, that the mind be kept as free as possible from all anxiety and superstitious apprehensions in regard to death. It is, as I conceive, the solemn trappings, ceremonials, and fancied horrors that are so generally associated, even in our earliest education, with the dissolution of the body, and the gloomy and fearful imaginings of what is to come after, which cause the feelings to revolt from its idea with such dismal forebodings. That we have an instinctive dread of pain will scarce be disputed; but whether we have naturally, or independent of education and association, the same feeling in respect to death, will, at least, admit of question.

Death being the grand goal of life, and that toward which we are all steadily moving, if its image affrights us, it must, as it is ever in view, —for, struggle as we will we cannot shut it out, —be a source of continual and unmitigated torment; a bugbear disquieting our whole existence, and cutting us off even from the little happiness which life might otherwise afford.

It is well known, now, that the mind may, by a proper discipline, be brought to view this final event of our being without the smallest emotion either of terror or regret; and there have been those who, even in the midst of a prosperous fortune, have experienced a pleasing satisfaction in its contemplation; have looked forward to it as the desirable and peaceful repose to the anxious and weary race of life.

> "Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
> Ease after warre, death after life doth greatly please."
> *Spenser.*

It is the part of true philosophy to get from existence all we can,—to participate, so far as fortune permits, in all its rational and innocent pleasures, and yet be willing at any moment to part with it. Such was the philosophy of many of the wisest and best among the ancients, and which soothed their lives, and carried

many of them calmly through the most painful deaths.

To keep the mind familiar with the thoughts of death, the ancient Egyptians, at their entertainments, had a small coffin, containing a perfect representation of a dead body, carried round, and presented to the different guests in rotation, the bearer exclaiming, " Cast your eyes on this figure ; after death you yourself will resemble it :—drink, then, and be happy."—*Herodotus.* I doubt if the human mind can ever reach a state of easy quietude until it has learned a contempt for death ; or, at least, to contemplate it with composure.

Superstitious fears of any sort, when habitually cherished, may become a source of no trifling injury, both to the mental and physical health. The ignorant, and those whose education has been erroneous, and who in early life have been subjected to improper associations, are often exposed to the most aggravated sufferings from the cause in question. No human courage is proof against the terrors of superstition. The hero who defies death in the battle field, may yet tremble at the croaking of the raven, or the screech of the night owl. I scarce need urge, then, the importance of securing the mind by a proper education against all such supernatural and idle sources of fear.

Sporting with the timidity of children, as startling them with sudden and uncommon noises or sights, which appears to afford so much amusement to some inconsiderate people, cannot be too severely censured. Equally censurable, too, is the practice of playing on their natural fears as a method of punishment, or with the view to enforce their obedience, as shutting them up in the dark, threatening them with some of the many nursery spectres which have been created to help inefficient parents in subduing their misgoverned and consequently refractory offspring. How common is it to hear from the lips of mothers while striving to put their children asleep, language like the following :— " Lie still, lie still !—there ! there ! don't you hear the old nigger ?—Shut up your eyes, shut up your eyes, or he'll carry you off. Hush ! hush ! hush ! there !—old rawhead and bloody-bones are coming." Trifling, now, and unimportant as such expressions may seem, yet are they far from being so when we view them in their influence on the moral and physical health of the young. The impression which such thoughtless language is liable to induce on the tender and naturally timid mind of childhood is far deeper than most of us are prepared to believe. If a mother cannot quiet her child to rest in a more harmless way than by working upon its fears, she had better content herself to bear its noise till sleep comes of itself, which it always will do, in proper time, on the young, healthful, and innocent.

Objections equally forcible may be urged against terrifying and confounding the mind, while yet unconfirmed, with the awful mysteries and punishments of religion ; subjects which perplex, and too often disorder, even the ripest intellects.

Why is it that so large a proportion of young children, even at the present period, when superstition is so much on the decline, are afraid to be left a moment by themselves in the dark, are so loath to go to bed, or about the house alone after nightfall, although well assured that no real or earthly dangers can possibly exist, but that their fancies have been indiscreetly wrought upon by the idle tales of superstition ?

Children, I am convinced, suffer far more from the influence under notice than most persons are prone to suspect ; since, ashamed to be thought cowards,—for at what period of life are we not ?—they will often most guardedly conceal the fears which are preying on their health, and crushing all their moral energies. Hence, bodily infirmities in them, excited and maintained by fear, may doubtless be oftentimes imputed to a physical origin, and they, in consequence, be made the subjects of medicinal treatment, which, weakening yet further the powers of the constitution, and adding, of course, to the nervous susceptibility, serves but to aggravate the effect of the secret cause.

We can now understand how important it is, both as regards their moral and physical well-being, to keep the young, as much as possible, from the society of ignorant and superstitious domestics, who are always ready to administer to their eager cravings for supernatural wonders. Parents, to escape the noise and trouble of their children, are too willing to submit them to the care of servants, and hence many actually receive a much larger share of their primary education in the kitchen than in the parlour. That such should be the case is certainly to be regretted, it belonging to our imitative nature readily to acquire the habits, manners, and modes of thinking and speaking of those with whom we habitually associate. And more especially is this true in early life, when the mind and body are unfolding themselves, and the brain, soft and delicate, receives with the greatest facility every new impression. Boerhaave relates that a schoolmaster near Leyden being squint-eyed, it was found that the children placed under his care soon exhibited a like obliquity of vision. It has been well observed that there is a necessity for us either to imitate others, or to hate them.

Fearlessness and self-confidence, let me add, in conclusion of this chapter, operate at all periods of life as a healthful stimulus both to mind and body ; and hence such feelings ought ever, and in a more particular manner when the moral and physical functions are undergoing development, to be most assiduously nurtured. To such salutary feelings, moreover, good conduct is ever most favourable. The opposite being essentially blended with fear and apprehension, must therefore, however it may serve us in regard to mere external goods, be incompatible with the true interests both of our mental and bodily constitution.

## CHAPTER XX.

FEAR CONCLUDED.—THAT PECULIAR MODIFICATION OF FEAR DENOMINATED HORROR BRIEFLY EXAMINED.

That singular mental feeling which we express by the term horror, consists in a deep and painful detestation, almost always more or less mingled with fear, of particular, and, commonly, familiar objects. This, I am aware, is not the only sense in which the word is used, but it is the one to which I shall especially restrict it in the present chapter; and taking its original Latin meaning—a shivering or quaking, as from fear, or the cold fit of an ague—none certainly could better indicate the physical phenomena of the painful moral feeling about to be described.

The manifestations of horror as exhibited in the physical organization, are mostly the same as those witnessed in simple fear. Thus does it occasion sudden paleness, coldness and contraction of the skin, with the consequent elevation of its hairs. Also chills and rigors, or general tremors of the body, with panting, and oppression of the heart and lungs. And when greatly aggravated, it will give rise to the like train of melancholy phenomena, which have been already enumerated as the characteristics of excessive terror; such as fainting, convulsions, epilepsy, and even instant death.

Horror is distinguishable from ordinary fear, inasmuch as it may be excited, and even to a violent extent, by the presence of objects which neither threaten, nor, in fact, cause the slightest apprehension of bodily injury. A reptile, or insect, for example, known to be entirely harmless, may beget such a sense of abhorrence as to bring on fainting or convulsions, even in those who would resolutely encounter the most ferocious animal. The fear, then, mingled in the feeling of horror does not necessarily depend on any real danger apprehended from its object, but upon the suffering which its presence occasions in the nervous system.

Very many persons are known to suffer, and oftentimes during their whole lives, under a horror, or, as it is more commonly termed, an antipathy, toward particular animals or things, and which are in themselves, perhaps, perfectly innocent. This is more especially apt to be the case with those of a sensitive temperament. Indeed there are few nervous people but to whom belongs some object of horror.

> "Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
> Some, that are mad if they behold a cat."

Germanicus could neither endure the sight nor the crowing of a cock. "I have seen persons," says Montaigne, "that have run faster from the smell of apples than from gun-shot; others that have been frightened at a mouse; that have vomited at the sight of cream; and some that have done the like at the making of a feather-bed."—*Essays*. Broussais says he once knew a Prussian officer who could see neither an old woman, a cat, nor a thimble, without experiencing convulsive agitations; without jumping and screaming, and making unnatural grimaces.

Spiders, snakes, toads, crabs, and eels, are very common objects of horror; and an antipathy to a cat is by no means of unusual occurrence. There are, in fact, individuals who experience an indescribable distress whenever a cat chances to be near them, although she may be unrevealed to either of the acknowledged senses. To account for such a remarkable influence, no more rational way presents itself, than by supposing the nervous system of the individual, or a particular portion of it, in consequence of some peculiar modification, to be morbidly sensitive to the subtile effluvia arising from the body of the animal.

Such antipathies may be innate, that is, dependent on some original and mysterious condition of the animal organization, or may owe their existence to a painful association with the particular object of abhorrence which had been awakened in early life. In the former case, being connected with those intimate laws of our constitution which are yet, and perhaps will, ever remain, unveiled to human knowledge, all attempts to trace them to their primary and essential source will necessarily prove futile. That antipathies, or the peculiar character of organism which disposes to them, may sometimes be inherited, can hardly be questioned. A popular notion is that they often arise from fright or injury experienced by the mother when pregnant, from the particular object of horror. In support of such notion, the singular case of James the First has been often cited. This monarch, though all his family were distinguished for their bravery, was constitutionally timid, even to a most ludicrous extent, and could never look upon a naked sword without shrinking; and "turned away his head even from that very pacific weapon which he was obliged to draw for the purpose of bestowing the *accolade* on a knight dubbed with unhacked rapier, from carpet-consideration."—*History of Scotland, by Sir Walter Scott*. Now, it is well known to the readers of history, that David Rizzio was stabbed at the feet of Queen Mary, two months previous to the birth of James.

Dr Copland relates that a man-servant in his family, advanced in life, "had so great an antipathy to the sight of a mouse, that he would fly as fast as he was able from the place where one was seen, and become quite frantic at the sight. He stated that his mother, who likewise had an antipathy to mice, had been distressed by one thrown upon her when pregnant of him."—*Medical Dictionary: Article, Antipathy*. Numerous instances of an analogous character will, it is not unlikely, recur to the minds of many of my readers. But even in cases of this description, the origin of the antipathy can generally be explained quite as plausibly, to say the least, on the principle of association. Thus, James, from his earliest childhood, must doubtless have often heard the recital of all the frightful circumstances connected with Rizzio's cruel death; probably have observed his mother express horror, as we might suppose she would, of the instrument of the murder: and the deep

and fearful impressions thus made on his tender mind, may have served to suppress his natural courage, and have been the occasion of his remarkable aversion to the sight of a drawn sword.

In the other instance quoted, the mother would, of course, be frequently telling of, and manifesting, her repugnance to a mouse, in the presence of her child, and thus necessarily create the same dread of it in his infant mind, the impression of which would remain indelible. If a mother has a detestation of any particular insect, as a spider, for example, is it not well known that she will be repeatedly expressing it? every little while crying out to her child, with a fearful shudder, "Take care of that awful spider?" Is it strange, therefore, that the mind of her offspring thus early imbued with, or, as it were, educated to a horror of this insect, should ever afterwards retain it?

Although, then, our antipathies may sometimes be innate, and may possibly in certain instances be referable to the influence of the imagination of the mother strongly excited during some period of gestation, nevertheless I conceive them much oftener to originate in some painful or alarming association with the object of aversion engendered in infancy or childhood.

Mr Locke, when speaking of antipathies, says, "A great part of these which are accounted natural would have been known to be from unheeded, though, perhaps, early impressions, or wanton fancies at first, which would have been acknowledged the original of them, if they had been warily observed."—*On the Human Understanding.*

It many times happens that the primary and incidental source of the antipathy is known and admitted. Thus, Peter the Great, when an infant, had a fall into the water on riding over a bridge, in consequence of which, even in mature life, he could neither bear the sight of water, nor the rattling of a carriage upon a bridge.

We may now perceive how essential it is in the education of children, to avoid, as far as may be, all occasions of erroneous association, or false prejudices; exciting or cherishing imaginary terrors in relation to any particular object; as from such sources will often grow up aversions causing no little suffering both to body and mind during the whole future existence.

When antipathies already exist, and more especially if toward common objects, or such as we are every day liable to encounter, both health and happiness demand that the most persevering efforts be made to subdue them. They may generally be surmounted, either entirely or to a very considerable extent, by gradually inuring the mind to the presence or influence of the object of horror, the well known effect of habit being to obtund the feelings. If, however, the repugnance be very strong, a greater share of moral energy than most persons possess will be required to vanquish it. James being naturally timid, and weak in his resolutions, never, that we learn, overcame his aversion to the naked sword. Whereas Peter, of a more bold and determined character, in the end completely conquered his painful dislike of the rattling of a carriage over a bridge, and his dread of the water, by resolutely exposing himself to the former, and repeatedly plunging into the latter.

It is an unaccountable fact in our constitution that habit will in some cases not merely overcome an antipathy, but will actually beget a fondness for the object of former aversion. Thus does it happen that those who at first experience the greatest horror at the sight of blood, so that they can scarce look upon it without fainting, will, under the influence of custom, not unfrequently become the most bold and devoted surgeons. A similar principle holds also, and in a very striking manner, as respects our sense of taste. Hence many articles which are in the beginning most offensive and sickening to the palate, will, from the power of habit, not only get to be agreeable, but absolutely necessary to our comfort. We have in tobacco a strong and familiar illustration of this remark. It is well known, too, how attached some people become to garlic, though at first so acrid and unpleasant. And even asafœtida, naturally so odious both to taste and smell, was held in such esteem by some of the ancients that they termed it "the meat of the gods." Oftentimes, therefore, while we become cloyed and wearied with, and get even to loathe, the objects which were at first most pleasant to us, by a strange perversion of taste do we derive permanent delight from those which were originally disgusting.

The development of antipathies in early life is ever to be carefully watched, and the mind gradually and cautiously habituated to the impression which awakens them. It is to be regretted, however, that a contrary practice but too often prevails; the child either being scrupulously preserved from the object of his repugnance, or, what is infinitely worse, his terrors of it are purposely excited, or aggravated, for the idle amusement of those who have not sense enough to comprehend the danger of such sport. Children, as well as grown persons, have many times been thrown into convulsions by suddenly subjecting them to the influence of an object of their peculiar horror.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

GRIEF.—GENERAL REMARKS UPON THIS PASSION.—THE ACUTE STAGE, OR A PAROXYSM OF GRIEF DESCRIBED, WITH THE MORBID AND EVEN FATAL EFFECTS OF WHICH IT MAY BE PRODUCTIVE.

GRIEF, consisting essentially in moral pain, must therefore enter, to a greater or less extent, into all the passions of the class we are now considering. It bears, then, to the painful and depressing, a relation analogous to that of joy to the pleasurable and exciting passions.

Grief, presenting itself in diverse degrees and modifications, is consequently known under a variety of names, as sorrow, sadness, melancholy, dejection, &c., all of which induce similar phenomena in the bodily functions. The term

is generally defined to mean the mental suffering arising from the privation of some good in possession, or the disappointment of some pleasing anticipation. I shall allow it, however, as will be seen in the sequel, a signification still broader than this definition implies.

The passion in question may be simple, as is most common under the loss of kindred or friends; or it may be united with chagrin, or impatient and angry repinings. And, again, it may grow out of, and hence be blended with, the various malignant feelings of the heart, as envy, jealousy, hatred, revenge, all of which are more or less fraught with moral pain. As it is a law of our constitution, that every good and benevolent affection should bring with it its own recompense, so likewise is it that every evil one should become the author of its own punishment. "To love is to enjoy, to hate is to suffer." In hating we punish ourselves, not the objects of our hate. Self-interest, therefore, should be a sufficient motive to induce us to cultivate the amiable, and to suppress the vicious feelings of our nature.

Grief may be acute and transient, or it may assume a more chronic or lasting character; in which latter case it is generally designated by the term sorrow or sadness. Other things being equal, its violence will be proportioned to the suddenness and unexpectedness of the cause producing it.

I will now go on to describe the effects induced upon the bodily functions by the acute stage, or what is commonly denominated a paroxysm of grief; and most of these—for there is a close relationship among all the passions founded on pain—will be recognised as nearly resembling those which have already been portrayed under the heads of anger and fear.

On the first strong impulse of mental affliction, an agonising sense of oppression and stricture is experienced at the heart and lungs, accompanied with a dreadful feeling of impending suffocation. The whole chest, indeed, will oftentimes seem as though it were tightly bound by a cord. The want of fresh air becomes at the same time most urgent, giving occasion to the deep and frequent sighing so commonly observed in those stricken with calamity. This act, or sighing, consists in a long-drawn or protracted inspiration, succeeded by a corresponding expiration, which, beside furnishing an increased supply of air, may, by distending the lungs, facilitate the passage of blood through them, and thus serve, in a measure, to alleviate the painful oppression felt in these organs and at the heart.

So distinct and remarkable is the suffering at the heart in deep grief, that the term heart-ache is used to express it, and its victims are said to die broken-hearted. Under its aggravated influence even sharp pains of the heart, shooting perhaps to the shoulder, are experienced, and every pulsation of this organ is attended with the most thrilling distress.

It not unfrequently happens, especially in nervous females, that a sort of spasm affects the throat, producing a sensation as though a ball was rising up in it, and choking the passage of the air. Hence, "to choke with sorrow," is an expression in familiar use. The dryness, too, in the mouth and throat, from the diminution in their natural secretions, adds to, and may even of itself occasion, this choking sensation, and is, moreover, the cause, at least in part, of the frequent and difficult swallowing so often observed in acute grief.

Speaking, owing to this defect of moisture in the mouth and throat, as well as to the embarrassment at the heart and lungs, is attended with a marked effort, and the voice is thick, husky, broken, tremulous, and weak.

The circulation, as we should naturally infer, experiences a more or less marked influence. Thus, the pulse is generally weakened, oftentimes increased in frequency, and the extreme vessels of the surface contracting unnaturally, and unsupplied with their usual quantity of blood from the heart, the skin loses its customary warmth, and its ruddy tint of health.

The energies of the nerves, too, becoming depressed and deranged under the morbid impulse of this passion, tremors, with various other of those disturbances which we term nervous, are liable to supervene.

The organs of the abdomen are also implicated in the general suffering. An uneasiness, in many cases quite severe, is referred to the region, or what we call the pit, of the stomach. The appetite fails, and the powers of digestion become obviously impaired, and sometimes altogether suspended. Let an individual, while in the midst of the enjoyment of his dinner, be unexpectedly apprised of some afflictive calamity, and need I tell the result? On the instant, as though touched by the wand of a magician, will the dishes before him, even the most savory, cease to delight his palate, and he turns, perhaps with a painful sense of loathing, from the very food which but a moment before he contemplated with the most eager desire. Or, should he persist in his meal, every mouthful he attempts to swallow seems to stick in his throat, calling for repeated draughts of liquid to facilitate its passage; and thus is he soon forced to abandon what has now become to him so disagreeable a task. Again, suppose the individual to have just finished his meal when his grief was abruptly excited, then might ensue the various phenomena of indigestion, and even vomiting, were the shock extreme.

Shakspeare had in view the particular effect of grief to which I have just been alluding, where he makes King Henry say to Cardinal Wolsey,—

> ——— "Read o'er this;
> And after, this, and then to breakfast with
> What appetite you have."

Generally, grief tends to diminish the action of the liver, and the consequent secretion of bile; though very intense affliction will occasionally produce a contrary effect, exciting even bilious vomitings.

In the young generally, and in a large proportion of females at whatever age, on the first impression of grief the visage suddenly becomes

distorted, or drawn into a distressed and gloomy expression, as under bodily suffering, and which is strikingly significant of the painful condition within. With this deformation of the countenance, the respiration assumes a new or modified action. Thus, there takes place a deep, and often sonorous and tremulous inspiration, followed by an interrupted, or broken and imperfect expiration, conjoined with the familiar sounds so peculiarly expressive of both mental and bodily anguish, called sobbing, or crying. The secretion of tears, at the same time, becoming much increased, they overflow the eyes, and roll down the cheeks. Now this act of weeping, especially when the tears run copiously, serves to relieve the inward distress and oppression, as of the heart and lungs, and thus forms a sort of natural crisis to a paroxysm of grief, just as sweating does to a paroxysm of fever. Some persons can never weep under afflictions of any character, and such generally experience much sharper sufferings than those whose sorrows find a more ready outlet at their eyes. It is seldom, I believe, if ever, that an individual dies in a fit of grief when weeping takes place freely.

Crying, though more particularly significant of grief, yet is by no means confined to it. It may happen under any strong emotion, being not unusual even in joy, when sudden and unexpected; and doubtless contributes to lessen the danger of all violent passions.

It has been affirmed by some authors, that man is the only animal that indicates sorrow by weeping, but the truth of such assertion is not yet sufficiently established. That the eyes of the inferior animals do oftentimes overflow with tears, no one will, of course, dispute; but the question is whether this secretion is ever augmented in them by the agency of moral emotions. It is said of the orang-outang, that he has been observed to cry much after the manner of our own species. The keeper of one which was exhibited a number of years ago in this country, told me that when grieved or angry she would often cry "just like a child." Some other species of the monkey tribe, and indeed even other animals, as the seal and camel, for example, have been said to shed tears under the influence of mental feelings.

Violent outward expressions, or crying, and noisy vociferations, by no means mark the deepest inward sufferings.

"Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent."

"On the tenth day after the surrender of the citadel of Memphis, Psammenitus, the Egyptian king, who had reigned no more than six months, was by order of Cambyses ignominiously conducted with other Egyptians to the outside of the walls, and, by way of trial of his disposition, thus treated: his daughter in the habit of a slave, was sent with a pitcher to draw water; she was accompanied by a number of young women clothed in the same garb, and selected from families of the first distinction. They passed with much and loud lamentation before their parents, from whom their treatment excited a corresponding violence of grief. But when Psammenitus beheld the spectacle, he merely declined his eyes on the ground. When this train was gone by, the son of Psammenitus, with two thousand Egyptians of the same age, were made to walk in procession with ropes round their necks, and bridles in their mouths. These were intended to avenge the death of those Mitylenians who, with their vessel, had been torn to pieces at Memphis. The king's counsellors had determined that for every one put to death on that occasion ten of the first rank of the Egyptians should be sacrificed. Psammenitus observed these as they passed; but, although he perceived that his son was going to be executed, and while all the Egyptians around him wept and lamented aloud, he continued unmoved as before. When this scene also disappeared, he beheld a venerable personage, who had formerly partaken of the royal table, deprived of all he had possessed, and in the dress of a mendicant, asking charity through the different ranks of the army. This man stopped to beg alms of Psammenitus, the son of Amasis, and the other noble Egyptians who were sitting with him; which when Psammenitus beheld, he could no longer suppress his emotions, but calling on his friend by name, wept aloud, and beat his head.

"This the spies who were placed near him to observe his conduct on each incident, reported to Cambyses; who, in astonishment at such behaviour, sent a messenger, who was thus directed to address him: 'Your lord and master, Cambyses, is desirous to know why, after beholding with so much indifference, your daughter treated as a slave, and your son conducted to death, you expressed so lively a concern for that mendicant, who, as he has been informed, is not at all related to you.' Psammenitus made this reply: 'Son of Cyrus, my domestic misfortunes were too great to suffer me to shed tears: but it was consistent that I should weep for my friend, who, from a station of honour and of wealth, is in the last stage of life reduced to penury.'"—*Herodotus*, Book iii., 14.

The most acute sorrow would appear to concentrate, and, as it were, benumb all the actions of life; and its unfortunate subject—his nervous energies completely overpowered—remains silent, motionless, stupified: whence Niobe, overwhelmed with the suddenness and greatness of her misfortunes, is fabled to have been changed into stone.

When grief breaks forth into tears and lamentations, and violent muscular actions, as beating the breast, wringing the hands, tearing the hair, it shows an energy of resistance in the system, with a more general diffusion of the influence of the passion, and that we have less, therefore, to dread from its consequences. "The soul," as it has been said, "by giving vent to sighs and tears, seems to disentangle itself, and obtain more room and freedom." Anger, too, is here oftentimes awakened, and, mingling with the original emotion, assists in promoting its reaction.

We may now see that it is not those who make the greatest ado about their troubles, who are ever, in season and out of season, forcing

them upon the notice of others, that are likely to feel them the deepest. Slight grief is apt to prattle and complain, whereas the most profound is speechless, avoids every allusion to its source, shuns all society, even the intercourse and consolations of friendship, and tears and sighs are denied to it, or come but seldom to its relief.

We may furthermore learn, that those persons who are anxious to hide their grief, who struggle to confine it within their own bosoms, must undergo far weightier sufferings than such as yield themselves freely to its impulses. Hence those sorrows which are of a more delicate or secret nature, and under which one is often obliged even to feign a contrary sentiment, produce the sharpest inward torture, and are the most speedily destructive to health and life.

> " What equall torment to the griefe of mind,
> And pyning anguish hid in gentle hart,
> That inly feeds itselfe with thoughts unkind,
> And nourisheth her owne consuming smart ?
> What medicine can any leaches art
> Yeeld such a sore that doth her grievance hide,
> And will to none her maladie impart ?"—
> *Spenser's Faery Queene.*

Sometimes the heart is completely overwhelmed, and all the vital powers instantly yield under the sudden impulse of extravagant grief.

" In the war which king Ferdinand made upon the dowager of king John of Hungary, a man in armour was particularly taken notice of by every one for his extraordinary gallantry in a certain encounter near Buda, and being unknown, was highly commended, and much lamented when left dead upon the spot, but by none so much as by Raisciac, a German nobleman, who was charmed with such unparalleled valour. The body being brought off the field of battle, and the count, with the common curiosity, going to view it, the armour of the deceased was no sooner taken off, but he knew him to be his own son. This increased the compassion of all the spectators ; only the count, without uttering one word, or changing his countenance, stood like a stock, with his eyes fixed on the corpse, till, the vehemency of sorrow having overwhelmed his vital spirits, he sunk stone dead to the ground."—*Montaigne's Essays.*

Under the sudden shock of grief, the heart and nervous system may become so greatly agitated and disturbed, as to place the life of the individual in much peril. Here a general throbbing is felt throughout the body, and a distinct thrill may be perceived in all the arteries whose pulsations are sensible, and the anxiety and distress are extreme. Dr Hope relates the case of a healthy plethoric young female, who, on receiving the intelligence that her husband had deserted her, fell into a state of almost complete insensibility, " and the violently bounding, jerking, and thrilling arterial throb, together with universal flushing, heat, and perspiration of the surface, resisted every remedy, and only subsided with the wane of life."—*On Diseases of the Heart, &c.*

Apoplexy, or some other equally fatal malady, is occasionally induced by sudden and poignant affliction speedily terminating existence. Pope Innocent IV. died from the morbid effects of grief upon his system, soon after the disastrous overthrow of his army by Manfred.

Severe grief may likewise call into action various nervous diseases of a more or less grave and lasting character ; as, for example, palsy, epilepsy, catalepsy, St Vitus's dance, hysterics, accompanied sometimes with convulsive laughter. And settled mania, or even dementia, has been known to follow upon the sudden impression of some heavy calamity.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### GRIEF CONTINUED.—THE EFFECTS, ON THE ECONOMY, OF ITS MORE CHRONIC ACTION CONSIDERED.

ALTHOUGH, as has been shown in the preceding chapter, an acute paroxysm of grief may be fraught with the most dangerous consequences to health and life, nevertheless it is the rooted and stubborn sorrow, from whose burden the heart finds no rest, to which disease and untimely death are the more frequently to be imputed.

The deep and settled despondency consequent on a separation from the happy scenes and associations of one's native home, termed homesickness ; or the sorrow growing out of defeated ambition, reverses of fortune, the bereavement of near and dear relatives, or disappointment in the more tender affections of the heart, will not rarely engender or excite some serious malady, under whose influence life must speedily yield. And to those of a frail and delicate constitution, the danger from such unfortunate sources will be immeasurably enhanced.

Morton entitles one of his species of consumption *a melancholia ;* and Laennec, that eminently distinguished French writer on diseases of the chest, is disposed to ascribe the greater prevalence of consumption in large cities, to the numerous and close relations among men affording more frequent occasions for the development of the gloomy and bad passions of the heart. This latter author records the following remarkable example, which was ten years under his observation, of what he believed to be the effect of the melancholy and depressing passions in the production of consumption. " There existed, during the time mentioned, at Paris, a recent religious community of women, who, on account of the extreme severity of their regulations, had obtained only a conditional toleration from the ecclesiastical authority. Their diet, though austere, did not exceed what the powers of nature could endure ; but the rigour of their religious rules was productive of effects both melancholy and surprising. Their attention was not only habitually fixed on the most terrible truths of religion, but they were tried by all kinds of opposition to induce them, as soon as possible, to renounce entirely their own proper will. The effects of this course were alike in all. At the end of one or two months les règles se supprimaient, and in one or two months more consumption was evident.

They not being bound by vows, I urged them, on the first manifestation of the symptoms of the malady, to quit the establishment; and almost all who followed the advice were cured, though many of them had already exhibited evident signs of consumption. During the ten years that I was physician to this household, I saw it renewed two or three times by the successive loss of all its members, with the exception of a very small number, composed principally of the superior, the gate keeper, and the sisters who had the care of the garden, the kitchen, and the infirmary; and it is worthy of remark that those persons were the ones who had the most frequent distractions from their religious austerities, and that they frequently went out into the city on duties connected with the establishment." The same author likewise tells us, that almost all the individuals whom he has seen become phthisical, without the signs of the constitutional predisposition, appeared to owe the origin of their malady to deep or long-continued sorrow.—*Traité de l'Auscultation médiate, et des Maladies des Poumons et du Cœur.* I have seen it also remarked by another French writer, that phthisis, in those convents particularly where the discipline is severe, carries off a great number of the nuns. The gloomy state of mind induced by such austerity may, to say the least, operate in aid of other causes in generating or exciting this fatal disease.

Insanity, certainly where any predisposition to it exists in the system, is very liable to be developed by all such causes as tend to depress the mental feelings, or awaken sorrow. In looking over the reports of various lunatic asylums, we shall see that a large proportion of their cases are ascribed to moral afflictions; as, unrequited love, great reverses of fortune and pecuniary embarrassments, disappointed ambition, religious despondency, remorse, unhappy marriage and domestic trouble, loss of relatives, home-sickness, &c. We are told that the first question which M. Pinel was in the habit of putting to a new patient, who still retained some remains of intelligence, was, "Have you undergone any vexation or disappointment?" and that the reply was seldom in the negative. The causes alluded to being always most influential in civilized life, is regarded as one principal reason why insanity prevails in proportion to the cultivation of society. It has been observed, too, that in those disastrous periods when poverty and reverses of fortune are most common, mental derangement becomes more frequent.

"Anxiety and agitation of mind caused by political events, have occasionally produced a very decided effect on the numbers of persons becoming deranged. M. Esquirol declares that the law of conscription increased the number of lunatics in France, and that at every period of this levy, many individuals were received into the hospitals, who had become insane through the excitement and anxiety occasioned by it; they were partly from the number of those on whom the lot fell, and partly from their friends and relatives. 'The influence of our political misfortunes has been so great,' says the same writer, 'that I could illustrate the history of our revolution from the taking of the Bastile to the last appearance of Bonaparte, by describing in a series of cases the lunatics, whose mental derangement was in connexion with the succession of events.'"—*Prichard on Insanity.*

Monomania is a form of insanity not uncommonly following the chronic action of grief. If an individual of the melancholic temperament sustains some grave misfortune, he is apt to brood over it in painful despondency. His general health, therefore, soon becomes impaired, his moral energy languishes, and no motive can arouse him to wholesome exertion. In time his melancholy becomes more deep and settled,—his temper often grows morose, irritable, suspicious, misanthropic; and at length some unhappy and erroneous impression fastens upon his imagination, and maintaining despotic sway over all his thoughts and feelings, he becomes a confirmed monomaniac.

Obstinate sorrow has sometimes caused a total wreck of all the powers and affections of the mind, leaving a hopeless moral imbecility as its mournful sequel.

Numerous instances are recorded, both by ancient and modern medical authors, where habitual epilepsy has resulted from the baneful influence of moral calamities. Palsies, likewise, and other melancholy nervous affections, are not uncommonly attributable to the same source.

When we consider how immediate and forcible is the impulse of grief upon the heart, it will excite no surprise that disease of this organ should be endangered under its severe and continued operation. Desault and several other French writers have remarked that during the unhappy period of the revolution, maladies of the heart and aneurisms of the aorta became obviously multiplied. Nothing is more common than for derangements of the function of the heart, indicated by intermissions, and other painful and sometimes dangerous irregularities in its pulsations, to be the consequence of lasting anxiety and mental dejection; and such functional disorders, when long continued, may even terminate in some fatal change in the structure of the organ.

Examples, indeed, are not wanting where the first indications of diseases of the heart have been referred to the sudden impression of some painful calamity, under which the organ sustained a shock from whose violence it could never recover. We find an interesting case of this description recorded by the Chevalier Pelletan, in a memoir published by him a number of years since, and while he was chief surgeon of the Hotel Dieu, in Paris, on certain diseases of the heart. The subject of this record was an Irishman, thirty-six years of age, and of the most ungovernable passions. Having experienced during the revolutionary struggle various fortunes and sufferings, he at length, on the affairs of France assuming a more favourable aspect, obtained a pension of twelve thousand francs, but which was immediately taken from him on the death of the patron by whom it had been procured. This last misfortune,

it would seem, completely overthrew him. "He has told me a hundred times," says the Chevalier, "that on hearing the news of his loss, he immediately felt a dreadful weight in his chest. His respiration became fatiguing, and the palpitations of his heart assumed an irregularity, which had no interruption during the two years and a half that he survived his misfortune."

From the period when deprived of his pension, organic disease of the heart appears to have declared itself, and to have gone on increasing in all its terrible symptoms, until the end of two years and five months, when his strength became subdued, and he obtained relief in death.

On inspecting the body, the heart was found colourless, and its whole substance in a remarkable state of flaccidity, such as the distinguished narrator of this case had never before witnessed. "The parietes of the cavities fell together, and the flesh of this organ might be compared to the pale and shrunken muscles of an old woman; there was an astonishing contrast between the flesh of the heart and that of the other muscles of the body." M. Pelletan did not hesitate to believe that the heart, in consequence of the violent mental shock, was struck with a sort of paralysis, and that death ultimately took place from the complete palsy of the organ. Be this as it may, the individual perished of a disease of the heart, the first indications of which immediately followed a strong impression of grief, and this is all that is necessary to our purpose.

Dyspepsia is another complaint exceedingly liable to be induced under the protracted operation of sorrow.

Dr Heberden observes, "There is hardly any part of the body which does not sometimes appear to be deeply injured by the influence of great dejection of spirits; and none more constantly than the stomach and bowels, which hardly ever escape *unharassed* with pains, an uneasy sense of fulness and weight, indigestions, acidities, heartburn, sickness, and wind, in such an extraordinary degree, as to threaten a choking, and to affect the head with vertigo and confusion."—*Commentaries*.

Chronic inflammation, and even scirrhus and cancer of the stomach, will sometimes succeed the deep and prolonged influence of the passion I am noticing. Laennec remarks that the depressing passions, when long operative, seem to contribute to the growth of cancers, and the various other accidental productions which are unlike any of the natural structures of the body. —*Traité de l'Auscultation*.

Bonaparte died of an extensive ulceration of the stomach, which the physicians who inspected his body pronounced to be cancerous. Now, that his malady was originated or excited by the sorrow and chagrin arising from his painful reverse of fortune, and the wrongs and unkind treatment which he received, or fancied he received, while on the island of St Helena, is, to say the least, far from being improbable. The father of Napoleon having fallen a victim to cancer of the stomach, many have thought that a predisposition to this disease was inherited by the emperor. Admitting such to have been the fact, we can then only regard his complaint as developed and hastened, not as generated anew, by the depressing passions which tormented the latter period of his existence. No distinct tokens of the malady which destroyed him, were, at any rate, disclosed, till about a year subsequent to his arrival upon the island, when he first began to complain of an uneasy sensation in his stomach and right side. It was not, however, until October of the following year that he was subjected to any medical treatment. From this time the disease went on slowly though steadily progressing, and on the fifth of May 1821, as the day was about closing, this extraordinary man yielded to its power, and his mighty spirit rested for ever from its vexations and sufferings.

The liver is also very subject, earlier or later, to participate in the morbid effects of mental dejection. At first its secretion is apt to be diminished or obstructed, whence constipation of the bowels, sallowness of the skin, and a train of symptoms generalized under the familiar term bilious, commonly supervene, passing at times even into decided jaundice. Biliary concretions, or gall-stones, are said to be very frequent in such as have experienced long continued moral despondency, and it has likewise been asserted that they are generally found in the gall-bladder of the victims of suicide. M. Pelletan observes, that he has ascertained this fact a great many times in subjects who had been induced to self-murder by lasting distress, but never in those who had committed it on account of sudden grief and despair, such as happens after losses in gaming, or from disappointed love.

Even fatal organic changes may sometimes be induced in the liver by the operation of deep and prolonged mental sufferings. Such, however, can scarce be regarded as a common result, unless the individual, through the influence of climate, is disposed to hepatic disease, or driven on by the weight of his afflictions, adds the morbid effect of intemperance to that of the moral cause.

The depression of sorrow, as of fear, conduces to the action both of contagion and of epidemic influences, and is also, like that of fear, unfriendly to the restorative processes in all diseases and injuries of the body. Every one knows that the danger of sickness becomes essentially aggravated by mental afflictions. And what judicious surgeon but would feel diminished confidence in the success of an important operation, were the spirits of its subject borne down by the pressure of grief!

When sorrow becomes settled and obstinate, the whole economy must ere long experience its baneful effects. Thus the circulation languishes, nutrition becomes imperfect, perspiration is lessened, and the animal temperature is sustained with difficulty; the extremities being in a special manner liable to suffer from cold. The skin, moreover, grows pale and contracted, the eye loses its wonted animation, deep lines indicative of the distress within, mark the countenance, and the hairs soon begin to whiten, or fall out. The effect of the painful passions in depriving the hairs of their colouring matter, is many

times most astonishing. Bichat states that he has known five or six instances where, under the oppression of grief, the hair has lost its colour in less than eight days. And he further adds that the hair of a person of his acquaintance became almost entirely white in the course of a single night, upon the receipt of melancholy intelligence.—*Anatomie Générale*.

The sleep of the afflicted is generally diminished, broken, disturbed by gloomy and terrifying fancies, haunted and distressed by a revival, in new and modified forms, of their waking sorrows; and thus is rarely granted to them even the paltry solace of a few hours' oblivion to their sufferings, and repose is oftentimes almost a stranger to the couch of misery.

> " Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep,
> He, like the world, his ready visit pays
> Where Fortune smiles: the wretched he forsakes;
> Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
> And lights on lids unsullied with a tear."

The nervous system, subjected to the depressing influence of which I have been speaking, soon becomes shattered, and, in the end, all the energies, both of mind and body, sink under the afflictive burden.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

GRIEF CONTINUED.—DESPAIR AND SUICIDE.—GRIEF ASSUMES A SOMEWHAT MODIFIED CHARACTER, AND IS MORE OR LESS BLUNTED BY TIME, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCES WHENCE IT SPRINGS.

Despair is the name by which we express the most aggravated degree of moral depression. Under this dreadful feeling, no ray of hope, no sunbeam of joy, breaks in upon the Cimmerian darkness of the soul. To one who has reached this utter state of despondency, life is no longer desirable; the charms of nature and of art call forth no throb of delight in his dark spirit, or the cheerful earth spreads out before him like some gloomy and barren wilderness.

> " He now no more, as once, delighted views
> Declining twilight melt in silvery dews;
> No more the moon a soothing lustre throws,
> To calm his care, and cheat him of his woes:
> But anguish drops from Zephyr's fluttering wing;
> Veiled is the sun, and desolate the spring;
> The glittering rivers sadly seem to glide,
> And mental darkness shrouds creation's pride."
>
> *Merry's Pains of Memory.*

Despair may proceed from a sense of blasted fame, deep humiliation, or wounded self-love, under which existence, to the proud man, becomes an unremitting torture. It may also be the offspring of blighted expectations, irretrievable losses, and suddenly ruined fortune,—as happens often to the gamester,—and sometimes of remorse of conscience. In those especially of timid, gloomy, and superstitious dispositions, it will not unfrequently result from injudiciously awakened religious terrors; the deluded individual conceiving himself an outcast from God's mercy, predestined to the eternal horrors and torments which mad bigotry has portrayed to his fancy.

Despair, consisting in utter moral desolation, or the complete absence of all hope, abandons every exertion for the future. Thus does it either shun altogether the intercourse of man, burying itself in the deepest gloom and solitude, or seek to lessen the intensity of its misery by violent and undetermined action, or dissipation. Sometimes it urges on its reckless victim to the most criminal and desperate acts—to gross intemperance, or some more sudden method of throwing off a hated existence. Those even who are hopeless of God's mercy, and look forward but to everlasting torture hereafter, will often hurry themselves to meet the very worst their imagination can paint, rather than endure the agony of despair produced by their dreadful apprehensions; as one will sometimes leap down the dizzy height, the bare view of which sickened his brain, and filled his soul with terror.

When despair does not impel to such rash deeds, all consciousness of suffering either becomes lost in insanity, or the physical energies soon yield to its overwhelming influence. Existence cannot last long under the privation of every enjoyment, and the extinction of every hope.

Grief, in whatever measure it may exist, will always be most obstinate and dangerous in those unengaged in active pursuits, and who have consequently leisure to brood over their troubles. Bodily and mental activity, and more especially when the result of necessity, must, by creating fresh trains of association, and diverting the thoughts into new channels, tend to weaken the poignancy of affliction. Nothing, in truth, serves more effectively to lighten the calamities of life, than steady and interesting employment. It is, as I conceive, for the reason that females are generally exempt from the cares and excitements of business, and confined at home to their own relatively tranquil domestic duties, that they so much oftener pine and sicken under wounded affections than our own more active and busy sex. Dr Good observes that " suicide is frequent in the distress of sieges, in the first alarm of civil commotions, or when they have subsided into a state of calmness, and the mischiefs they have induced are well pondered: but it seldom takes place in the activity of a campaign, whatever may be the fatigue, the privations, or the sufferings endured. On the fall of the Roman empire, and throughout the revolution of France, self-destruction was so common at home, as at last to excite but little attention. It does not appear, however, to have stained the retreat of the ten thousand under Xenophon, and, according to M. Falret, was rare in the French army during its flight from Moscow."—*Study of Medicine.*

The subject of suicide referred to in the above quotation, involving as it does so many curious facts and inquiries, and being so frequent a consequence of the pressure of grief, a few cursory remarks upon it may not be deemed irrelevant to our present matter.

Suicide in ancient times, and particularly among the Romans when they were at the

height of their glory, was, under many circumstances, not merely excused, but looked upon as a praiseworthy and heroic act; and it was even held to be base and cowardly to cling to existence under suffering and ignominy. Many of the noblest of the Roman commanders, as Brutus, for example, when the fortune of war turned against them, chose a voluntary death sooner than bear the disgrace of a defeat; and this was regarded as a glorious consummation of their lives.

Cato the younger has, both in ancient and modern times, been held up as an illustrious example of stern and virtuous patriotism, because he took his own life rather than submit to Cæsar. Cato's suicide, as often happened in those days, showed the most determined and desperate resolution, and it has frequently been lauded on this very account. He first stabbed himself, but, owing to an inflammation which at the time affected his hand, did not strike hard enough at once to complete the work of death, but falling from his bed in his struggles, his son and friends were alarmed and entered his room, where they found him weltering in his blood, and with his bowels fallen out, but yet alive. The physician, perceiving the bowels uninjured, put them back and began to sew up the wound; but Cato in the meanwhile coming a little to himself, "thrust away the physician, tore open the wound, plucked out his own bowels, and immediately expired." Great honours were paid to the body by all the people of Utica, and Cæsar himself is reported to have said that he envied Cato his death.—*Plutarch: Life of Cato the Younger.*

The Roman Lucretia, because she plunged a dagger into her breast rather than survive her ravished honour, has acquired a fame which will be likely to endure as long as female virtue is regarded. And of Porcia, the daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus, who, being cut off from other means, killed herself by forcing burning coals into her mouth, or, as is commonly told by swallowing fire. Plutarch says, she "put a period to her life in a manner worthy of her birth and of her virtue."

Plato considered suicide to be justifiable under circumstances of severe and unavoidable misfortune; but for such as committed it from faintheartedness, or a want of moral courage to confront the ordinary chances of life, he directed an ignominious burial. Virgil, however, appears to have regarded it as unexceptionably criminal, having assigned a place in the shades below for all those who have voluntarily taken off their own lives, as is shown by the following passage in his Æneid:—

> "Proxima deinde tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum
> Insontes peperere manu, lucemque perosi
> Projecere animas. Quàm vellent æthere in alto
> Nunc et pauperiem et duros perferre labores!
> Fata obstant, tristique palus inamabilis undâ
> Alligat, et novies Styx interfusa coercet."
> *Lib.* vi. *v.* 434.

> "The next, in place and punishment, are they
> Who prodigally threw their souls away—
> Fools, who, repining at their wretched state,
> And loathing anxious life, suborned their fate.
> With late repentance, now they would retrieve
> The bodies they forsook, and wish to live;
> Their pains and poverty desire to bear,
> To view the light of heav'n, and breathe the vital air:
> But fate forbids; the Stygian floods oppose,
> And with nine circling streams the captive souls
> enclose." *Dryden's Translation.*

"There are certain governments," Montaigne tells us, "which have taken upon them to regulate the justice, and proper time, of voluntary deaths." And he says on the authority of Valerius Maximus, that "a poison prepared from hemlock, at the expense of the public, was kept in times past, in the city of Marseilles, for all who had a mind to hasten their latter end, after they had produced the reasons for their design to the six hundred who composed their senate; nor was it lawful for any person to lay hands upon himself, otherwise than by leave of the magistracy, and upon just occasions."—*Essays.*

In the present state of society, self-murder, although unhappily of so frequent occurrence, finds few advocates, but is generally regarded with sentiments of the deepest horror, and among some people and sects the rights of Christian sepulture are denied to its victims.

One might suppose that nothing but the most consummate and hopeless misery could overcome the strong feeling which binds us to existence; and it is generally true that only the severest moral afflictions, either real or imaginary, can provoke to a deed so rash and unnatural as self-murder. Still there are exceptions, nor are they rare, in which it must be referred to causes of a different and less explicable character. We are told of a suicidal club that existed in Prussia, comprising six members, all of whom, according to its rules, terminated their lives by their own hands. And there is also said to have been one in Paris in recent times, a regulation of which was that one of its number should be selected every year to destroy himself. Persons have killed themselves from the hopes of a better state; and also to escape their agonizing fears of death, or future punishment; and under the impulse of anger.

Suicide may, furthermore, owe its origin to the principle of imitation, and under such influence has occasionally so extended itself in communities as to be regarded as an epidemic. And where, from native organization, or defect of moral culture, fatal propensities exist, the danger from this source will be greatly increased. Instances of the epidemic extension of suicide from imitation or sympathy, have been recorded both in ancient and modern times. It is related by Plutarch, in his treatise on the virtue of woman, that there was a time when all the girls of Miletus were killing themselves, and without any apparent cause. Those who first destroyed themselves served as examples to others, or awakened their imitative propensity; and in this way did the fatal work spread itself among them until counteracted by the stronger influence of shame, it being ordained that their dead bodies should be exposed naked to the people.

In a late number of the London Medical

Gazette, we find an account of a remarkable propensity to suicide spreading itself, as was supposed, from a tendency to imitation.

"For about two months an extraordinary number of suicides, and of attempts at suicide, occurred in London; scarcely a night elapsed but one or more persons threw themselves from some bridge, or from the bank, into the Thames —for that was the favourite mode of self-destruction—till at last the police looked on such an event as a thing to be certainly expected and guarded against. The greater number of persons thus endangering their lives exhibited no common character of insanity;—had not been regarded as of unsound intellect,—had no cause of utter despair,—had scarcely any delusion or mistaken motive. When their lives were saved, they did not give any extravagant reason for the attempt; at most they had been vexed by some untoward circumstance, had had some domestic quarrel, or were poor, though hardly destitute. The fury of the epidemic,—which affected women more than men,—was increasing to a truly alarming extent, when one of the city magistrates—Sir Peter Laurie, who had probably had some advice tendered him at Bedlam, of which he is the president—determined to try the effects of punishment on all who were brought before him for attempts at suicide. The plan succeeded admirably; some were punished summarily, some were committed to take their trial for attempts at the felony of self-murder, and in a very short time—a fortnight at most—the rage had disappeared, and suicides became no more than usually common."

The writer of this article relates another remarkable instance of the same sort, and in which a similar remedy was successful. It happened at a garrison, where a strange propensity existed among the soldiers to hang themselves on lamp-posts. "Night after night were suicides of this kind committed, till the commanding officer issued a notice, that the body of the next man who put an end to his life, should be dragged round the garrison at the cart's tail, and then be buried in a ditch. His order was but once put in force, and then the epidemic ceased."

Several persons have committed suicide by throwing themselves from the top of the Monument in London. And at one time—as my guide there informed me—there seemed to be a growing propensity to jump from the Leaning Tower at Pisa, three persons having thus, in rapid succession, put a period to their existence, on which account visitors were no longer permitted to ascend it without the attendance of a guide.

A French journal—Archives Générales—records that a boy, eleven years of age, being reproved by his father in the fields, went home, put on his suit of holiday clothes, procured from the cellar a bottle of holy-water, and placed it beside him, and then hung himself from the cross-beam of the bed. It appears that the uncle of this boy had a short time previously destroyed himself in a similar manner, having also first placed near him a bottle of holy-water.

Even the reading of cases of suicide may sometimes call into action this principle of imitation, and lead, perhaps, to fatal consequences. An instance in illustration occurred a few years since in Philadelphia, an account of which was published at the time by Isaac Parish, M.D., of that city. The subject was a girl in her fifteenth year, who had been carefully brought up, and whose situation in life was apparently every way agreeable. It seems that early in the morning of the day of her death, "she had held a conversation with a little girl residing in the next house, in which she mentioned having lately read in the newspaper of a man who had been unfortunate in his business, and had taken arsenic to destroy himself. She also spoke of the apothecary's shop near by, and said she frequently went there."

It appeared that two days prior to her death she had purchased half an ounce of arsenic of a druggist in the neighbourhood, for the pretended purpose of killing rats, which she had used as the instrument of her own destruction.—*American Journal of the Medical Sciences, for November* 1837.

It is a fact well known in respect to certain individuals, especially when of a nervous or sensitive temperament, that if the thoughts of any particular deed, calculated, from its criminal or hazardous character, to make a deep impression on the feelings, chance to be strongly awakened in the mind, they cannot be banished, but becoming more and more concentrated, a propensity, sometimes too powerful for resistance, to the commission of such deed, will actually follow. Were such an one now to become deeply affected—either from his connexion with its subject, or its peculiar circumstances—by the occurrence of a suicide, the idea of it might continue pertinaciously to haunt his imagination, and an unconquerable inclination to the like dreadful act be the consequence. And that murders are sometimes committed under the same mysterious and urgent impulse, is a fact too well established for denial. I remember an instance in point, which happened a number of years since under my immediate observation. A young lady, while sitting with an infant in her arms near a fire, over which hung a large kettle of boiling water, suddenly started up, and in a hurried and agitated manner ran to a distant part of the room. On asking her the reason of this, she, after a little hesitation, told me, that fixing her eyes on the boiling water, it occurred to her how dreadful it would be should she by accident let the child fall into it. "On this idea crossing my mind," said she, "I instantly began to feel a propensity to throw it in, which soon grew so strong, that had I not forced myself away I must inevitably have yielded to it."

The following case was first published among other similar ones by M. Marc. It occurred in Germany, in the family of Baron Humboldt, and has the testimony of this distinguished individual. The mother of the family returning home one day met a servant who had previously given no cause of complaint, in a state of the greatest

agitation. She desired to speak with her mistress alone, threw herself on her knees and entreated to be sent out of the house; giving as her reason, that whenever she undressed the little child which she nursed, "she was struck with the whiteness of its skin, and experienced the most irresistible desire to tear it in pieces."

"A country woman, twenty-four years of age, of a bilious sanguine temperament, of simple and regular habits, but reserved and sullen manners, had been ten days confined with her first child, when suddenly, having her eyes fixed upon it, she was seized with the desire of strangling it. This idea made her shudder; she carried the infant to its cradle, and went out in order to get rid of so horrid a thought. The cries of the little being, who required nourishment, recalled her to the house; she experienced still more strongly the impulse to destroy it. She hastened away again, haunted by the dread of committing a crime of which she had such horror; she raised her eyes to heaven, and went into a church to pray.

"The unhappy mother passed the whole day in a constant struggle between the desire of taking away the life of her infant, and the dread of yielding to the impulse. She concealed, until the evening, her agitation from her confessor, a respectable old man, the first who received her confidence, who, having talked to her in a soothing manner, advised her to have recourse to medical assistance."—*Prichard on Insanity. Cited from Dr Michu.*

In another instance recorded of this morbid impulse to infanticide in a young mother, the propensity to destroy the infant would occasionally entirely subside for some days, and an equally strong tendency to suicide take the place of it.

I have known persons, who, on taking a sharp weapon into their hands, would almost always experience a disposition to stab those who chanced to be near them.

In view of such cases as have been cited, and very many of them will be found on record, some late eminent writers on mental diseases have admitted a form of insanity where the afflicted individual, without the slightest apparent disorder of the intellect, or any other discoverable mental aberration, and under a horrid conviction of the atrocity of the deed to which he is blindly impelled, and moreover devoid of all malicious intent, is attacked with a violent, and sometimes insuperable propensity to take life; often that of some particular individual, a friend, or perhaps one bound to him by the closest ties of kindred. This has been termed homicidal monomania, and homicidal madness, and has been classed under a variety of mental disease, recently described, called moral insanity; that is, where the moral feelings only become perverted, the intellect, or reasoning principle, being no further affected than through the influence of their morbid excitement or perversion.

It is to be remembered, however, that there is another form of homicidal madness dependent on actual hallucination, in which the individual is urged on to the commission of murder under a fancied command from heaven, or some other similar delusion of the imagination.

It sometimes happens that this homicidal propensity of which I have been speaking is obviously connected with bodily disorder. Thus it has been preceded by headache, feverishness, thirst, obstinate constipation, pains and other disorders of the stomach and bowels. A case is related where epilepsy, to which the patient had been subject during sixteen years, suddenly changed its character without any apparent cause, and in place of the fits there occurred from time to time an irresistible desire to commit murder. The approach of these attacks was sometimes felt for many hours, and occasionally for a whole day, before they actually seized the individual; and on such premonition he would entreat to be tied down, to prevent him from the commission of the crime to which he was blindly impelled.

This propensity to homicide exhibits the same remarkable tendency to spread from the force of imitation, as we have previously shown exists in that to suicide. In proof of this, examples enough will be found on record. We are told that the trial of Henriette Cornier, in France, for infanticide—it becoming, from its peculiar and deeply exciting circumstances, a subject of very general attention and conversation—occasioned in many respectable females a strong propensity to the same unnatural deed.

It is, in part at least, on this principle of imitation that we are to account for the repeated attempts on the lives of Louis Philippe and Queen Victoria; and the unavoidable publicity of such attempts, and the factitious consequence into which their miserable authors are too often elevated, must serve to propagate the disposition to them.

That unfortunate cases do now and then occur where persons acting under this insane impulse are condemned to the punishment of murder, is hardly to be questioned. Still, such morbid impulses should be admitted with a good deal of caution, or they would be too often pleaded to shield the murderer. Human justice is necessarily imperfect, and it cannot be otherwise than that some must fall the unmerited victims to its imperfection. The existence of such a morbid impulse may rationally be supposed when there is no motive for the crime committed, and when the perpetrator of it makes no effort to escape or to screen himself from punishment.

Suicide, as I have previously asserted, is in some cases to be ascribed to a like inscrutable impulse, and the disposition to it will, at times, be found to alternate, or to be strangely blended with that to homicide; and to be preceded also, or accompanied, by obvious physical derangement. Striking changes, too, in the moral character and habits, are apt to forerun attempts at suicide. Thus, those who had before been social, mild, and cheerful, as a prelude to this tragic act will often become solitary, morose, gloomy, and misanthropic.

There is another strange impulse occasionally witnessed, and doubtless intimately allied to that which has been the subject of our attention, urging to acts of mischief—as the destruction of property—and independent of malevolent feeling, or, in truth, of any discoverable motive. I have

known persons, on taking a watch into their hands, express the strongest desire to dash it in pieces. And I have seen tumblers and wine-glasses actually broken under the forcible influence of such destructive propensity. Children too, it is well known, will not unfrequently manifest the strongest disposition to break their trinkets, even those with which they had been most delighted.

I have heretofore alluded to that propensity which some people experience on looking over the brow of a precipice to cast themselves down. It is, therefore, not improbable that some of the suicides which have been accomplished by jumping from great heights were unpremeditated, the individual having been suddenly overpowered by the force of such inclination. And may it not also be true that some of the deaths ascribed to accidental falls were, in reality, occasioned by this same unnatural impulse?

Suicide is in many instances hereditary, and the disposition to it will sometimes be developed in different members of a family at nearly the same period of life. M. Esquirol mentions a case where the father, the son, and the grandson, all destroyed themselves at about their fiftieth year. In the opinion of M. Falret, of all the forms of melancholy, that which tends to suicide is most frequently hereditary; and he gives an instance where all the female members of a family for three succeeding generations committed or attempted suicide. Indeed, examples of the hereditary transmission of a propensity to suicide, are by no means of uncommon occurrence, and many of my readers will doubtless be able to recal such to their minds.

The relative number of suicides is considerably greater in cities than in the country. In Prussia, the city have been ascertained to bear to the rural cases, a proportion of fourteen to four. M. Guerry, in an essay on the moral statistics of France, states that from whatever point we start, the relative frequency of suicide will always be found to increase as we approach Paris. And the same assertion is also made in respect to Marseilles, this town being regarded as the capital of the South. Just the reverse of this, though one would scarcely look for such a result, he found to hold true of murders and assassinations, these consequently, in relation to the number of inhabitants, being the most, where suicides are the least, numerous.

The propensity to self-destruction would appear to be much stronger in males than in females. In France the number of cases among the former is something more than double that among the latter; and a similar proportion appears to hold in England.

The cases of self-murder vary materially in their relative number in different countries, as well as in the same country at different periods. In France and Germany they have been proved to exceed very remarkably, even three or four times, those in England. In London, as accurately as can be ascertained, there happen annually about a hundred instances of voluntary death. And in the whole of England the proportion of cases to the number of inhabitants, is about one in nine thousand. M. Guerry states the suicides registered in France from 1827 to 1830 to be six thousand nine hundred; but as many cases of this nature, either from inadequate data, or the importunity of friends, will always be classed under the deaths from accident, the actual amount must probably be much greater; and has been estimated to exceed, in the ratio of three to one, the number of murders and assassinations. In the department of the Seine, where the greatest proportion occurs, the instances have been shown to be as one in every thirty-six hundred inhabitants.

In France the cases of suicide appear, of late years, to be growing more and more numerous. M. Charles Dupin has shewn such increase to have been almost regularly progressive in Paris from 1829 to 1836; and recent tables prove that the number throughout France continues yearly augmenting. Thus in 1836 there were registered two thousand three hundred and ten cases of voluntary death; in 1837, two thousand four hundred and thirteen; in 1838, two thousand five hundred and fifty-six; and in 1839, two thousand seven hundred and seventeen.

In a table given by M. Dupin, suicide is shewn to happen at all ages from ten to ninety, but to attain its greatest frequency from forty to fifty, or in middle life, diminishing as we recede from it to either extreme. This has been explained on the supposition, that then, more than at any other period, "the mind is exposed to the disturbing influence of disappointed ambition, of domestic anxiety and distress, and of other causes of chagrin and disquietude; and that it no longer possesses that elasticity or resiliency of spirit, by which it relieved itself from vexing care in more youthful years.

"The middle-aged man feels, when calamities overtake him, that he is less able than he was wont to be, to struggle against them; and the mortification at the change of his circumstances, coupled with the slender hope of regaining his former position, is too apt to prey upon his mind until he is driven to commit suicide."—*London Medico-Chirurgical Review, for July* 1837.

In the city of New York, the whole number of deaths registered from the first of January 1805 to the first of January 1842, a period of thirty-seven years, was 164,976, of which 809, or one out of $203\frac{749}{809}$, come under the head of suicide. It cannot be doubted, however, that this estimate falls considerably short of the true ratio of mortality from this cause, since, for reasons which must be obvious to all, many unquestionable cases of self-murder are here, as, in truth, everywhere else, reported under the head of casualties, visitation of God, &c.

Suicide in New York, so far, at least, as we may judge from the tables of mortality, does not, as in Paris, appear to be an increasing vice. On the contrary, a comparison of recent with former reports will prove to us that the cases of it, I mean in proportion to the population, have been manifestly diminishing. Thus, for the five years from the first of January 1805 to the first of January 1810, we have registered eighty-one cases of suicide; which, compared with the mean of the city population for this term, that is, 86,071½, gives us an

average annual proportion of one case in fifty-three hundred and thirteen and a fraction of the inhabitants. Now for the same number of years, from the first of January 1835 to first of January 1840, there are reported a hundred and ninety-one cases, and the mean number of the inhabitants being 291,399, we have therefore, for this time, an average yearly ratio of one instance of self-murder to every seventy-six hundred and twenty-eight and a fraction of the population—a very manifest decrease when compared with the aforenamed period. An estimate of about one suicide for every seven thousand of the inhabitants of the city of New York would probably not come wide of the truth. This is a larger proportion than is given for London, but considerably less than that for Paris, in which latter city there appears to be an astonishing propensity to self-destruction.

Suicide is peculiar to man. We have no evidence that any other animal, even under the most painful circumstances of suffering, ever voluntarily shortens its own existence. This act, then, belongs to reason, or, I should rather say, the perversion of reason, never to simple instinct.

Grief becomes modified, and assumes a more or less dangerous character, according to the particular nature of its origin. When caused by the decease of friends or kindred, it is, for the most part, sober, solemn, subdued; and instead of provoking, tends rather to soften and quell the sterner passions of man. And then, as death belongs essentially to the scheme of nature, as every human heart is exposed to bleed under its bereavements, it is a law of our constitution that the wounds it inflicts should daily experience the sedative and healing influence of time. To the loss even of the best beloved, the feelings will ultimately get resigned, and the idea of the departed, divested of all the acuteness of its original pain, comes at last to be dwelt upon with that species of soothing melancholy which would scarce be exchanged even for the gayest social pleasures. What a happy serenity will often steal over the feelings when, withdrawing from the busy cares and unsatisfying enjoyments of the world, we yield ourselves to the fond remembrance of those friends and kindred who rest before us from the toils and sorrows of life! And with what gladness will the mourner, his grief sobered by time's tempering power, often quit the noisy scenes of mirth and pleasure, to linger in silence and solitude at that consecrated spot where rests the object of his dearest recollections! But again, other afflictions, as disappointed ambition, ruined fortune, blighted reputation, are apt to awaken moral sufferings of a far less humble and submissive nature, and to which time less certainly extends its healing balm. Such, too, are much more frequently united with the evil passions of anger, envy, jealousy, hatred, and, consequently, oftener lead to dissipation, crime, despair, and suicide. In loss of fortune, for example, especially where successful efforts cannot be made to retrieve it, the grief that follows is many times rather aggravated than appeased by the influence of time and new associations. Here the evils are ever present, ever felt. The constant deprivations and painful comparisons, the dreadful apprehensions for the future, and the agonizing sense of wounded pride, or self-humiliation, which there will be such repeated occasions to call forth, but too often render existence an almost unrelieved torture. How few, under such reverse of circumstances, can look back on the days of their ease and affluence but with feelings of the most bitter regret! And what cause than this has been more productive of despair and self-destruction?

> "But most to him shall memory prove a curse,
> Who meets capricious fortune's hard reverse;
> Who once, in wealth, indulged each gay desire,
> While to possess was only to require:
> Glows not a flower, nor pants a vernal breeze,
> As in his hour of affluence and ease,
> While every luxury that the world displays,
> Wounds him afresh, and tells of better days."
>
> *Merry's Pains of Memory.*

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

GRIEF CONCLUDED.—MENTAL DEJECTION AND EVEN DESPAIR MAY BE EXCITED BY MORBID STATES OF OUR BODILY ORGANS.—THE LIKE MORAL OR PHYSICAL CAUSES MAY, IN DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS, AND EVEN IN THE SAME AT DIFFERENT TIMES, CALL FORTH VERY UNLIKE DEGREES OF MORAL OR PHYSICAL SUFFERING.—IMPORTANCE OF A CHEERFUL AND HAPPY TEMPER TO THE HEALTH OF CHILDHOOD.

MENTAL depression, as has been previously asserted, may grow out of physical as well as moral causes. The intimate relation between good spirits and good health can hardly have escaped even the most common observation. There are circumstances of the body under which the brightest fortune can bestow no happiness:—where in the midst of every outward comfort, the heart is still heavy; and, discontented with ourselves, tired of existence, disgusted with all about us, we can find neither joy in the present, nor hope in the future.

Mental depression, or sadness, was by the ancients ascribed to a redundancy of that humour of the body denominated by them black bile, and for which the spleen, in their fancy, served as the special reservoir. Hence we have the origin of the term melancholia, or melancholy, it being constructed of the two Greek words, μελας, *melas*, meaning black, and χολη, *cholee*, bile. And it will also appear how the word spleen came to be used as expressive of gloomy or unhappy states of the temper. In persons of the melancholic temperament, a distinctive mark of which is a dark sallow complexion, this black bile was supposed to exist in excess over the three other humours formerly assigned to the body. However erroneous, now, may be these theories, yet none the less true are the facts which they were contrived to explain. Although the hypotheses of the ancients were too often visionary, yet were their observations, for the most part, well grounded. That the condition of the biliary secretion has much to do with the mind's tranquillity: that unhealthy, redundant, or obstructed bile, at the same time that it gives

its gloomy tint to the complexion, may imbue the moral feelings with an equally dismal shade; will, in our present state of knowledge, hardly be contested. Thus, the common expression, "to look with a jaundiced eye," means, as every one must know, to view things in their sombrous aspect. We readily conclude, then, that disordered or diseased states of the liver may be comprehended among the physical causes of despondency of the mind. Thus do they engender the same character of feelings of which they themselves are also begotten.

Certain morbid, though unexplainable conditions of the nervous system, as also of other parts of the animal constitution, may in like manner cloud our moral atmosphere in the deepest gloom. That distressing state of mind termed, in medical language, melancholia, probably, in most cases, originates in, or at any rate is soon followed by, a derangement of some part or parts of the vital organization. In many instances we are able to trace it to its primary source in the body. The dreadful sufferings of the poet Cowper, at times amounting to actual despair, from this terrible physico-moral malady, as it has been not inaptly designated, are familiar to most readers. In early life he became the subject of religious melancholy, believing himself guilty of "the unpardonable sin," and consequently that eternal punishment hereafter was his inevitable doom. So poignant, indeed, was his mental agony, that at one time he indulged serious thoughts of committing suicide. His melancholy, with occasional remissions, and sometimes aggravated into the most acute form of monomania, pursued him through the whole of his wretched existence.

Cowper appears to have exhibited from his infancy a sickly and sensitive constitution, and his native bodily infirmities and morbid predispositions were doubtless also favoured by too close mental application, as well as by other circumstances to which he was exposed in early life. It is besides obvious that he must have laboured more or less constantly under an unhealthy condition of the digestive organs, his fits of melancholy being generally associated with headache and giddiness. What dyspeptic sufferer but will sympathize with him where, in one of his letters to Lady Hesketh, he says, "I rise in the morning like an infernal frog out of Acheron, covered with the ooze and mud of melancholy." Judicious medical and moral treatment united, might doubtless have done much in mitigation of the deep sufferings of this distinguished individual.

A morbid or unnaturally irritable state of the inner or mucous coat of the stomach will oftentimes transmit such an influence to the mind as to deaden all its susceptibilities of enjoyment, and oppress it with the severest despondency. Now, such an unhealthy character of this inner surface of the stomach being one of the necessary results of an habitual indulgence in exciting and inebriating drinks, the danger of a recourse to it, with a view to elevate the dejected spirits or drown the remembrance of sorrow, will easily be understood. If the mental depression arises from a physical cause, such injudicious stimulation will be sure to augment it; and if from a moral, a physical one will thus be speedily added to it. There is, indeed, no moral gloom more deep and oppressive than that suffered by the habitually intemperate—whether in the use of distilled spirits, wine, or opium—in the intervals of their artificial excitement. In delirium tremens, a disease peculiar to the intemperate, the mind is always, even in its lightest forms, filled with the most dismal ideas, and a propensity to suicide is by no means unusual. The opium-eater too, when not under his customary stimulus, generally experiences the most terrible mental sufferings.

There are certain affections of the brain which manifest themselves especially, and at first almost entirely, by an oppressive moral gloom. A number of years since, I attended a lady with a fatal complaint of this organ, which displayed itself chiefly in such manner, the physical suffering to which it gave rise being apparently of but little moment. At first, and long before any disease was apprehended, she became exceedingly dejected, secluding herself as far as possible from all intercourse with society, and even from the presence of her most intimate friends. Her melancholy increasing, assumed at length a religious cast, and the idea that she had forfeited the favour of the Almighty, and was therefore doomed to eternal punishment, so tormented her imagination that at one time she made an attempt at self-destruction. What was quite surprising, her mind was all the while apparently rational; she conversed freely of her feelings, admitted the absurdity of her thoughts, but at the same time declared, that in spite of every endeavour they would intrude themselves upon her. At length she died, when, deep in her brain, attached to that part of it which, in anatomical language, is called *plexus choroides*, a cluster of vesicles about thirty in number, and nearly the size of peas, was discovered. Such was the physical cause of all her poignant mental distress.

Low, marshy, malarious situations, where intermittent fevers, or agues, as they are more familiarly named, abound, through some poisonous influence which they generate, so act on the physical constitution as to weigh down all the moral energies, and fill the mind with the darkest gloom. In observing the inhabitants of such unhealthy spots, even when they have become so seasoned to their infection as to resist the fevers or acute effects which it produces in strangers, we cannot but be struck with their sallow, sickly, and emaciated appearance, and the deep melancholy of their countenances, a melancholy which the cheerful smile of more wholesome airs is rarely seen to relax. The nervous system, the liver, and other organs engaged in the function of digestion, almost always, in such situations, labour under more or less obvious derangement. And here we have yet another illustration of the remark which I have before made, namely, that the like physical states which are generated under the operation of grief, will also, when arising from other causes, tend to awaken this painful passion. Thus, the same spare, nervous, and bilious condition that

distinguishes the gloomy inhabitants of the unhealthy sites to which I have just referred, is also witnessed in those who have long suffered under severe mental afflictions.

In passing those infectious spots so common in the South of Europe, the attention is particularly attracted to the sallow and melancholy aspect of the people. We remark this as we journey over the celebrated campagna on our way to Rome. And in a still more striking manner in the Pontine marshes, so long famed for their noxious influence, on our route from Rome to Naples. In Pæstum, too, and all along the rich and fertile shores of Sicily, where the balmy airs, the placid waters, the brilliant skies, and the teeming soil would seem to invite man to joy and plenty, everything is shrouded in the deepest moral gloom, and the occasional forlorn inhabitant, with his dark, sickly and despondent countenance, reminds one of some unblest spirit who has wandered into the favoured fields of Elysium. Here, may it truly be said,

> " Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
> A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
> Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
> Shades every flower, and darkens every green."

The insect that sports about the gaudy flowers, and regales itself on their inviting sweets affords almost the only indication of joy in these devoted seats of malaria.

It has been suggested that Cowper's melancholy was probably favoured by his long residence in the malarious atmosphere of Olney.

Frequent attacks of agues, probably by inflicting an injury on some one or more of the viscera of the abdomen, are very apt to leave the mind a prey to imaginary sorrows embittering the present, clouding the future, and at times leading even to despair and all its terrible consequences.

The well-known influence, especially in sensitive individuals, of different conditions of the atmosphere on the temper of the mind, must be produced through the medium of the physical organization. There are some persons who almost uniformly feel dejected when the air is damp and thick, the alacrity of their spirits returning on its becoming dry and clear. It has therefore been imagined that certain seasons and conditions of the weather dispose, through their depressing influence on the bodily health, to the commission of suicide. M. Falret, who has written on suicide and hypochondriasis, believes that a moist, hot and relaxing atmosphere is conducive to moral despondency, and consequently to self-murder; and it is stated in confirmation of such opinion, that in the months of June and July 1806, sixty suicides occurred in Paris. It may here be remarked, that in some of the extremely hot and relaxing weather of our own summer months, especially when lasting through the night, and interfering with the needful sleep, a most distressing faintness, or sinking, as it is often called, at the epigastrium, or region of the stomach, much like that produced by acute grief, is experienced; and under the agony of which, the individual is sometimes not a great way from the perpetration of the deed referred to. This feeling becomes much more intolerable when, in addition to the heat, we are also subjected to the tainted air and irritating noises of dirty and crowded cities. The experience of every person must teach that a high degree of temperature can be far better borne if the atmosphere be pure, than when it is contaminated with noisome effluvia. One, therefore, who is disposed to suicide, should seek, during the hot season, the unadulterated air of the country, and more particularly of the sea-coast.

The opinion has been heretofore prevalent that in England the foggy and gloomy month of November afforded the most numerous instances of self-destruction; such a conclusion, however, seems not to be borne out by facts. It appears that of the suicides committed in Westminster, from 1812 to 1824, there were thirty-four in the month of June, while but twenty-two happened in the month of November. And, furthermore, that in 1812, 1815, 1820, and 1824, not a case occurred in November.—*Medico-Chirurgical Review, for April* 1837.

It is a prevalent notion that the variable and gloomy weather of the early period of spring, and the latter part of autumn, in the more northern portions of the United States, favours especially a disposition to suicide. Such opinion, however, would seem to arise rather from some fancied association between unpleasant states of the atmosphere and unhappy moral feelings, than to be based on any observation of facts. On examining the bills of mortality of the city of New York for the last five years in reference to this subject, I find the instances of suicide to have been most numerous in the warm and pleasant season of the year. Thus, the months of summer, during the term specified, afford fifty-nine cases; of spring, fifty-three; of autumn, forty-six; and those of winter, but thirty-five. May, generally a very cheerful and agreeable month in the city of New York, has twenty-three cases, while February, almost always bleak and dreary, has but seven. March and November show the least number of any months, with the exception of January and February. My data, it is true, are too limited and uncertain to warrant any decided inference; yet, so far as they go, they are in agreement with the observations on the same subject made in France and England, and tending to show that the strongest propensity to self-destruction exists in the warm season.

From the remarks which have preceded, it will easily be understood that the like moral causes may, in different individuals, and even in the same at different times, call forth very unlike degrees of moral suffering. In those of a naturally sensitive temperament, or whose nervous susceptibility has been morbidly elevated through bodily infirmities, a trifling mischance may be felt as keenly as a really serious affliction in such as enjoy firmer nerve and sounder health. In one cursed with what we call weak nerves, almost everything that is in the least displeasing, irritates and vexes the mind, and a life of unhappiness is but too often the consequence of such physical imperfection. The

colouring of external things depends far more on the character of the internal constitution than has hitherto been generally admitted; and truly therefore has it been said, that "the good or the bad events which fortune brings upon us, are felt according to the qualities that *we*, not *they*, possess." We are the creatures of constitution as well as of circumstance; and with respect to our happiness, it may be said to depend even more upon the former than the latter.

Similar observations are likewise applicable to our physical sensations, their degree being no certain and constant measure of the absolute importance of the cause producing them. Now to the person concerned, what matters it whether a moral or physical source of pain be augmented, or only his susceptibility to its effect? As different material bodies, either from their peculiar nature, or through the help of incidental causes, are more or less combustible, so also are different human beings more or less excitable. And with as much reason, therefore, may we wonder that one substance should be kindled into a flame by a little spark that causes no impression on the next, as that one man should suffer and complain under an influence to which another appears wholly indifferent. We are all of us too much disposed to assume our own sensibilities as a standard for those of the rest of mankind; hence is it that we so often hear expressions like the following, meant for consolation:—"Why, how is it possible that you can let such a little thing trouble you? I am sure *I* shouldn't mind it." Some persons are so phlegmatic, have such thick skins and leaden nerves, that scarce anything will arouse their feelings; and in these, what we dignify with the name of firmness, is, in reality, but the result of dulness or insensibility.

In concluding my remarks on grief, a passion so comprehensive in its nature, I may be permitted for a moment to urge the high importance of preserving in children a cheerful and happy state of temper, by indulging them in the various pleasures and diversions suited to their years. Those who are themselves, either from age or temperament grave and sober, will not unfrequently attempt to cultivate a similar disposition in children. Such, however, is in manifest violation of the laws of the youthful constitution. Each period of life has its distinctive character and enjoyments, and gravity and sedateness, which fond parents commonly call manliness, appear to me quite as inconsistent and unbecoming in the character of childhood, as puerile levity in that of age.

The young, if unwisely restrained in their appropriate amusements, or too much confined to the society of what are termed *serious* people, may experience, in consequence, such a dejection of spirits as to occasion a sensible injury to their health. And it should furthermore be considered that the sports and gaieties of happy childhood call forth those various muscular actions, as laughing, shouting, running, jumping, &c., which are, in early life, so absolutely essential to the healthful development of the different bodily organs.

Again, children, when exposed to neglect and unkind treatment, for to such they are far more sensible than we are prone to suspect, will not unusually grow sad and spiritless, their stomach, bowels, and nervous system becoming enfeebled and deranged; and various other painful infirmities, and even premature decay may sometimes owe their origin to such unhappy source.

Childhood, moreover,—for what age is exempt from them?—will often have its secret troubles, preying on the spirits, and undermining the health. The sorrows of this period are, to be sure, but transient in comparison with those of later life, yet they may be the occasion of no little suffering and injury to the tender and immature system while they do last. And then, again, many of the baleful passions are doubtless agitating the human bosom long before they can be indicated by language. Thus, the manifestations of envy and jealousy, in which passions grief is always more or less mingled, are witnessed even in infancy. "I have seen," says a French writer, "a jealous child, who was not yet able to speak a word, but who regarded another child who sucked with him, with a dejected countenance and an irritated eye." In children who are educated together this feeling of jealousy will be constantly appearing, however anxiously they may strive to dissemble it. An injudicious partiality on the part of parents or teachers is especially apt to awaken it, and may thus produce the most unhappy effects both on the mind and body of youth. Disappointed ambition, too, may wound the breast and disturb the health even in our earliest years.

Children, varying as they do in their temperaments, will be affected in unequal degrees by the moral influences to which I have referred. When delicate, and possessed of high nervous sensibility, they will feel them, of course, much more acutely, and the danger from them will be correspondently enhanced.

## CHAPTER XXV.

SHAME.—ITS NATURE.—THE PHENOMENA WHICH ATTEND IT.—WHEN EXTREME, OR AMOUNTING TO A SENSE OF DEEP HUMILIATION, IT MAY BE FRAUGHT WITH DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES TO THE WELFARE OF THE BODY.

SHAME consists in wounded pride or self-love, and presents itself in every degree, from that which passes away with the transient blush it raises on the cheek, to the painful mortification of spirit, to the deep and terrible sense of humiliation which prostrates all the energies of mind and body, and renders life odious. Such extremes of mortified pride, it is true, are not ordinarily included under the passion specified; still, if we consider them accurately, they will be found legitimately reducible to it.

Shame, in its primary and most commonly observed operation, affects, in a striking manner, the circulation of the extreme or capillary vessels of the head and neck. Thus, in many persons, no sooner is it felt than the blood flies to the face, and not unusually to the neck and

ears, suffusing them with a crimson and burning blush. The eyes, too, will oftentimes participate in it, and the vision, in consequence, become partially and transiently obscured. This sudden flow of blood towards the parts mentioned, is not, as might at first seem, owing to an increase of the heart's action, but, in all ordinary cases, at least, is referable to the immediate influence of the passion on this particular portion of the capillary circulation. Many of the other passions are also known to produce analogous local effects in the circulatory function.

Blushing takes place with remarkable facility in the young and sensitive, and in all persons of fair and delicate complexions, as in those of the sanguine temperament; and still more so if the nervous be engrafted upon it, forming that compound temperament which has received the name of sanguineo-nervous. Here blushing will be constantly occurring, and on the most trivial occasions.

In certain disordered states of the system, owing probably to a morbid exaltation of the nervous sensibility, blushing happens far more readily than in sound health. In indigestion, for example, the face, under every little emotion, is liable to become flushed and heated.

Shame when strongly excited, is productive of very striking phenomena both in the mind and body. Under its sudden and aggravated influence, the memory fails, the thoughts grow confused, the sight becomes clouded, the tongue trips in its utterance, and the muscular motions are constrained and unnatural. Consider, for illustration, a bashful man making his entrance into an evening assembly. Everything there appears to him in a maze. The lights dance and grow dim in his uncertain and suffused vision. He perceives about him numerous individuals, but all seem mingled into one moving and indiscriminate mass. He hears voices, but they are indistinguishable, and convey no definite impressions to the mind. His face burns, his heart palpitates and flutters, and, his voluntary muscles but imperfectly obeying the will, he totters forward in the most painfully awkward manner, feeling as though all eyes were upon him, until reaching that transiently important, and to him, fearful personage, the mistress of the ceremony. He now bows like an automaton, or as if some sudden spasm had seized upon his muscles, and either says nothing,—shame fixing his tongue, and sealing his lips,—or, if he makes out to speak, his voice is tremulous and agitated, and scarce knowing what he says, he stammers forth some most inapposite remark, just such, perhaps, as he should not have made,* and then, overwhelmed with confusion, staggers away, stumbling perchance over a chair or table, or running against some of the company, and is only relieved of his embarrassment on finding himself mixed with the promiscuous crowd. Now, the moral pain experienced under the circumstances described, is oftentimes of the most intense nature, and the abashed individual would be glad to transport himself to almost any other situation, and might prefer rather to face the cannon's mouth, than endure a repetition of such a distressing scene. Here, however, the passion is, in most cases, but temporary in its operation, passing off with the occasion that excited it. But sometimes the individual continues to suffer under the effects of wounded self-love; remains nervous, agitated, unsocial, and depressed through the evening; has no relish for the refreshments before him, and even a disturbed and sleepless night may follow. Such severe effects are more particularly apt to ensue in those whose nervous sensibility is in excess, or in the subjects of what we denominate the nervous temperament.

We witness most obviously the operation of the passion I am noticing, in the intercourse between the young of the opposite sexes, some of whom, especially such as have been educated in a retired manner, can hardly look at or speak to one another without blushing the deepest scarlet. May not this sudden rush of blood toward the head also affect the brain, and contribute in causing that confusion of thought so remarkable when under the influence of the present emotion?

Shame, when habitually manifesting itself in the common intercourse with society, as we see it particularly in the young, is denominated bashfulness, which occasions to many persons, even through life, no trifling amount of inconvenience and suffering. There are those who can never encounter the eye of another without becoming sensibly confused. For the most part, however, this infirmity readily wears off under frequent commerce with the world; and as one extreme often follows another, the most bashful will not rarely come to be the most boldfaced and shameless.

Bashfulness and modesty, although so frequently confounded, have yet no necessary connexion or relationship, and either may exist without the presence of the other. The former, or shamefacedness, as it is often called, is a weakness not unfrequently belonging to the physical constitution, and of which every one would gladly be relieved. It may be a quality of those even who are most impure in their feelings, and, when understrained, most immodest in their conversation. Modesty, on the other hand, pertains especially to the mind, is the subject of education, and the brightest, and, I had almost said, the rarest gem that adorns the human character. That awkward diffidence so frequently met with in the young of both sexes, is of a nature too often very little akin to modesty.

Shame, in its ordinary operation, is not a frequent source of ill health. It is generally too transient in its workings seriously to disturb the bodily functions. Under its severe action, however, headaches, indigestions, and nervous agitations, are by no means of rare occurrence; and even insanity has sometimes followed it when greatly aggravated. Injured self-love, as is proved by the reports of various lunatic asylums, is far from being an unusual cause of mental alienation. Montaigne tells us, on the authority of Pliny, that "Diodorus the logician died upon the spot, from excessive shame, not

* I remember a very sensible and well educated gentleman, who, at a wedding party, on paying his respects to the bride, said, "I wish you many happy returns of this evening."

being able, in his own school, and in the presence of a great auditory, to resolve a quibbling question, which was propounded to him by Stilpo."—*Essays*. So painful is this passion in its extreme degree, that to escape it, the guilty mother is sometimes driven on, in opposition to the strongest instinct of her nature, to the murder of her own offspring.

Sensitive young children doubtless undergo more suffering from the passion in question, than most persons are prepared to believe. Thus, under its strongly awakened influence, will they not uncommonly grow dull, gloomy, sad, lose their appetite, and suffer in the health of their digestive function. The effect on the appetite is particularly sudden and remarkable, so that any child whose feelings are at all quick and delicate may easily be shamed out of his dinner. To any family disgrace children are apt to become early and keenly sensible; and from such source their sufferings are often more deep and painful than is generally suspected; and, especially, which is but too commonly the case, when it is made the occasion of reproach and derision to them by their companions.

The cruel practice of ridiculing the young, making them the subject of contemptuous merriment, and more particularly of reproaching them with, or mocking, their bodily imperfections, cannot be too severely censured, not only as deeply wounding their moral sensibilities, but as serving, also, by an unavoidable consequence, to injure their physical health. It is generally known that Lord Byron, even in his earliest years, was most painfully sensitive to his lameness; and we are told that, "One of the most striking passages in some memoranda which he has left of his early days, is where, in speaking of his own sensitiveness on the subject of his deformed foot, he described the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him when his mother, in one of her fits of passion, called him a 'lame brat.'" Such an expression will be acknowledged by all to have been unfeeling and injudicious in the extreme; and yet how common is it to hear parents upbraiding their children with those infirmities of which they may be the unfortunate subjects, thus awakening in their breasts the most poignant, and oftentimes injurious sense of mortification, and causing them to feel their unavoidable physical defects with all the shame and vexation of some inflicted ignominy.

Some persons would seem to be naturally very susceptible to the passion under notice; even the slightest causes are sufficient to provoke it, and in such it becomes a frequent source of suffering both to mind and body.

As an agent in the moral discipline of the young, no passion than that of shame is more frequently, and I may add, perhaps, successfully brought into requisition; but even here it should be resorted to with a good deal of prudence, or it may tend to crush, instead of correcting the spirit, and thereby to repress the wholesome energies of the constitution. A certain measure of self-esteem is a necessary stimulus equally to our mental and bodily functions, and we should therefore be careful that this sentiment be not too much reduced by the counterworking of shame.

I have met with several instances where inflammation of the skin was a very frequent consequence of the passion we are considering. Thus, under its operation, a deep blush would spread itself over the face, extending perhaps to the neck, or even to the chest; and instead of subsiding, as in ordinary cases, there would be left a more or less extensive erysipelatous inflammation of the parts involved, lasting sometimes to the extent of several days. These examples were presented by females of a delicate complexion and mostly of a nervous temperament. Cutaneous eruptions of different descriptions, but especially those to which a predisposition may chance to exist, will occasionally be induced from the agency of the same passion.

Under an aggravated sense of humiliation, the mind suffers the most terrible anguish, and the bodily health becomes, in consequence, seriously endangered. Thus insanity, convulsions, and even sudden death, may be the sad result of such distressing moral condition. What feeling can be conceived more overwhelming to the proud and lofty spirit, than that of deeply mortified self-love? Under its oppressive influence even existence itself is felt to be a cruel burden. How many face death in the battle field to save themselves from the shame of cowardice, or hazard their lives in single encounter to shun the like reproach, or to wipe, as they believe, some humiliating stain from their honour!

In a state of society, where mankind are necessarily exposed to so many, and oftentimes severe mortifications, and subject to such frequent and painful vicissitudes of fortune, the suffering and disease emanating from wounded pride can scarce be sufficiently estimated.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### MIXED PASSIONS DEFINED.—JEALOUSY.—AVARICE.

If we regard man in the spirit of unbiassed philosophy, we shall find little of unmingled good either in his moral or physical nature. Evil, in our limited view, would seem to be absolutely provided for in his constitution. In the very springs of his enjoyment, health, and life, flow also the elements of suffering, disease, and dissolution. Consider our appetites, the source of so much of human happiness, and so indispensable to our preservation both as individuals and a species, and what a fearful sum of sorrow, sickness, and death shall we not find traceable to them? Look at the law of inflammation! How curious and wonderful appear the processes instituted by it for the restoration of injuries, and how essentially requisite do we find it to the safety and integrity of the vital fabric? And yet out of this very law, the wisdom and benevolence of whose final purpose have afforded so frequent a theme to the medical philosopher, will be found to originate the most

agonising and fatal maladies that afflict our race. Indeed Nature would seem to employ inflammation as her favourite agent in the violent destruction of human life.

Those passions now, with which we have been hitherto engaged, although brought under the classes of pleasurable and painful, yet seldom, if ever, can we expect to meet perfectly pure, or wholly unmingled with each other. Rarely, and perhaps I may say never, does it happen to us, under any circumstances, to be completely blessed, but the good we enjoy must constantly be purchased at the price of some evil.

> "Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
> The source of evil one, and one of good :
> From these the cup of mortal man he fills,
> Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;
> To most he mingles both. . . . .
> The happiest taste not happiness sincere,
> But find the cordial draught is dash'd with care."
> *Iliad.*

Scarcely indeed can even the most prosperous count upon a single moment of unsullied felicity. Or, supposing a passion to be in the first instance purely pleasurable, yet is it sure almost immediately to engender some other of an opposite shade, our very joys becoming the parents of our sorrows. The elation of hope alternates with the depression of fear, the delights of love beget the pangs of jealousy, and out of even our happiest fortunes there will almost necessarily grow some apprehension of change. Thus Othello, when under the full fruition of all his heart's desires, exclaims,

> "If it were now to die,
> 'Twere now to be most happy ; for, I *fear*,
> My soul hath her content so absolute,
> That not another comfort like to this
> Succeeds in unknown fate."

So, too, may it be said of all our painful passions,—seldom are they altogether unrelieved by those of a contrary nature. Through even the darkest night of the soul some gladdening beams may penetrate. Hope, at least, in our very worst conditions, seldom entirely forsakes us. Nature diverts us with it amid the pains and disappointments of life, as the mother soothes her child, under the bitter drug or the surgeon's knife, by holding before it some gilded trinket. Although each day is betraying its futility, yet does its false light continue to allure and cheer us, often even to the hour of our dissolution. Divested of this principle, it is doubtful if the human race, with its present constitution, could possibly have been preserved. Even in the severest extremities it still holds us to existence.

> "To be worst,
> The lowest, and most dejected thing of fortune,
> Stand still in esperance, lives not in fear :"

It will be understood, then, that particular emotions are assigned to the classes pleasurable and painful, not that they are absolutely unmingled, but because pain or pleasure is their obviously predominant and striking feature. Now in this third class, or what we designate as mixed, both the happy and unhappy passions are distinctly blended, and each, even to the most superficial observation, is rendered plainly apparent.

The deleterious consequences proceeding from the mixed emotions will, as must be evident, have a direct relation to the preponderance of the unhappy feelings which enter into their constitution. And their operation may furthermore be greatly aggravated by sudden contrasts ; adverse passions, when alternating or contending, always serving to heighten one another, and thus to produce the most agitating and dangerous effects. The fear, anger, and hate, for example, of sexual jealousy, are each enhanced by the love with which they alternate or are so paradoxically united. Of the hazard of awakening in the mind disturbed by one strong emotion another of an opposite character, I have heretofore had occasion to speak. We can perceive, therefore, why it is that a knowledge of the very worst will generally be better borne than an anxious incertitude under which the feelings are constantly tossed and racked by the painful struggles and oppositions of hope and fear.

I will now proceed to illustrate the mixed passions by a brief account of sexual jealousy, avarice, and ambition.

Sexual Jealousy, an exceedingly complicated passion, is based on the pleasurable emotion of love ; and while this and hope continue blended in its constitution, it will properly come under the present division of mixed passion. But when these feelings have become extinguished, and despair, wounded self-love, hate, and a desire of revenge alone occupy the heart, then must we refer it to the preceding class, or that embracing the painful affections.

Jealousy of the nature mentioned, combining within itself a variety of contending emotions, as hope, fear, anger, suspicion, love, when extreme, few passions are more agitating and harassing, more perversive of the judgment and moral feelings, or tend to more fearful results. Under its unhappy influence the appetite fails, the flesh wastes, the complexion grows sallow, often with a greenish shade, and the sleep is broken, disturbed, painful, and in extravagant cases almost wholly interrupted. Well, therefore, might Iago exclaim, when he had raised in the breast of Othello a doubt of Desdemona's faith,

> "Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou ow'dst yesterday."

The nervous system also experiences violent perturbation, and even a state of frenzy sometimes supervenes, and life itself is jeoparded. That it becomes a not unfrequent cause of settled insanity, the reports of lunatic asylums will afford us satisfactory evidence. This species of jealousy calls up the most terrible and dangerous passions of our nature, and frequently leads to the most cruel and unnatural acts.

Other things equal, sexual jealousy will bear

a direct proportion to the intensity of the love upon which it is based. It is where the latter emotion is deepest, that the former becomes most destructive. Hence may it be seen why the opposite sexes are so fond of exciting the feeling in question, by a thousand little artifices, in the breasts of each other, it being a test of their affection, and flattering, consequently, to that strongest of all sentiments, self-love.

Jealousy from other causes, although torturing the mind, and wasting the body, rarely leads to such dreadful consequences as when the offspring of sexual love. In the former case it is more nearly akin to envy, that "saw of the soul," as a Greek philosopher termed it, that secret and debasing feeling which often preys like a canker on the inmost sources of health and happiness. The only distinction between these two unfortunate passions is this:—Jealousy is felt towards a competitor who is, or we apprehend is, rising to our own rank, and likely, therefore, to interfere either with our present, or anticipated fortunes. Envy is directed toward those who already, or at least as we conceive, enjoy something more and better, as respects internal and external gifts, than belongs to ourselves. They are each, however, attended by corresponding effects, and, as is true of all malignant feelings, become equally the authors of their own punishment, physical as well as moral. But then, this variety of jealousy, like its kindred envy, has little, if anything, that is pleasurable in its constitution; it has none of the love for its object which mingles with sexual jealousy, and therefore will its place be more properly under the division of painful emotions.

Avarice is another passion manifestly reducible to the class I am now examining. The pleasure of avarice consists in accumulating and hoarding up treasures; in computing and gloating over them; in a feeling of the power which they bestow; and likewise in the consciousness of the possession of the means, though there be no disposition to employ them for the purposes, of enjoyment; and finally, it may be supposed, in the anticipation of future gratifications they are to purchase, since even in the most inveterate miser there is probably a sort of vague looking forward to the time when his superfluous stores will be brought into use to administer, in some way, to the indulgence of his wants, and the consequent promotion of his happiness, although such a period never arrives.

The painful feelings mingling in avarice are gloomy apprehensions for the safety of its treasures, with uneasy forebodings of exaggerated ills which would result from their privation. Hence fear, suspicion, and anxiety, serve to counterbalance the pleasure arising from the contemplation and consciousness of possession of the soul's idol. And then, in addition, there is the unhappiness accompanying every little expenditure, even for the common wants of life; the misery, at times amounting almost to agony; of parting with even the smallest fraction of that wealth on which the affections are so strongly fixed. A penny goes from the hands of a miser almost as though it were a piece of his own flesh.

There are numerous passions of a far more guilty character, and whose consequences to the individual and to society are vastly more pernicious; but few are there more despicable, more debasing, more destructive of every sentiment which refines and elevates our nature, than avarice. Nothing noble, nothing honourable can ever associate with the sordid slave of this unworthy feeling. It chills and degrades the spirit, freezes every generous affection, breaks every social relation, every tie of friendship and kindred, and renders the heart as dead to every human sympathy as the inanimate mass it worships. Gold is its friend, its mistress, its god.

In respect to the physical system, avarice lessens the healthful vigour of the heart, and reduces the energy of all the important functions of the economy. Under its noxious influence, the cheek turns pale, the skin becomes prematurely wrinkled, and the whole frame appears to contract, to meet, as it were, the littleness of its penurious soul. Nothing, in short, is expanded either in mind or body in the covetous man, but he seems to be constantly receding from all about him, and shrinking within the compass of his own mean and narrow spirit. He denies himself, not merely the pleasures, but the ordinary comforts of existence; turns away from the bounties which nature has spread around him, and even starves himself in the midst of plenty, that he may feast his imagination on his useless hoards. The extent to which this sordid passion has in some instances reached would appear almost incredible. An old writer tells of a miser, who, during a famine, sold a mouse for two hundred pence, and starved with the money in his pocket.

Avarice does not, like most other passions, diminish with the advance of life, but, on the contrary, seems disposed to acquire more and more strength in proportion as that term draws near when wealth can be of no more account than the dust to which the withered body is about to return. Old age and covetousness have become proverbially associated. Not unfrequently, indeed, will this contemptible passion remain active even to the end, outliving every other feeling, and gold be the last thing that can cheer the languid sight, or raise the palsied touch. Thus have we examples of misers who have died in the dark to save the cost of a candle. Fielding tells of a miser who comforted himself on his death-bed, "by making a crafty and advantageous bargain concerning his ensuing funeral, with an undertaker who had married his only child." I well remember an old man, who, having reached the extremity of his existence, and in a state of torpor and apathy to all around him, would almost always be aroused, and a gleam of interest be lighted up in his dim eye, by the jingling of money.

Even the sudden and almost appalling aspect of death will not always banish this base sentiment from the heart. Thus, in cases of shipwreck, persons have so overloaded themselves with gold that they have sunk under its weight never to rise again. In excavating Pompeii, a skeleton

was found with its bony fingers firmly clutched round a parcel of money. "When," says Dr Brown, speaking of the miser, "when the relations, or other expectant heirs, gather around his couch, not to comfort, nor even to seem to comfort, but to await, in decent mimicry of solemn attendance, that moment which they rejoice to see approaching, the dying eye can still send a jealous glance to the *coffer*, near which it trembles to see, though it scarcely sees, so many human forms assembled, and that feeling of jealous agony, which follows, and outlasts the obscure vision of floating forms that are scarcely remembered, is at once the last misery, and the last consciousness of life."—*Philosophy of the Human Mind.*

Although avarice can scarcely be set down as a very prolific source of disease, still, the painful feelings mingling with it when extravagant, must exercise a more or less morbid and depressing influence on the energies of life. The countenance of the miser is almost uniformly pale and contracted, his body spare, and his temper disposed to be gloomy, irritable, and suspicious—conditions rarely associated with a perfect and healthful action of the various bodily functions. The miser is, moreover, especially as age progresses, very apt to fall into that diseased and painful state of the mind in which the imagination is continually haunted by the distressing apprehension of future penury and want. This is to be regarded as a variety of monomania, and certainly a strange one, inasmuch as it almost always happens to those possessed of means in abundance to secure them against the remotest prospect of such danger; and usually, also, at an advanced period of life, when, in the ordinary course of nature, but a few years more and those ample means can be of no further value.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

MIXED PASSIONS CONCLUDED.—AMBITION.—GENERAL REMARKS UPON IT.—ITS NATURE DEFINED.—EVILS GROWING OUT OF IT WHEN INORDINATE.—THE PECULIAR POLITICAL, AS WELL AS OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, TEND, IN A SPECIAL MANNER, TO CHERISH AMONG THEM THE GROWTH OF AMBITION.

Ambition, although we are so constantly admonished of its vanity and danger, would seem but to acquire new force—additional motives being presented to it—with the moral and intellectual advancement of society. The moralist who writes, and the preacher who declaims, against it, could they rightly analyze the motives which actuate them, would probably find this passion to be one of the most efficient: that their endeavours are often stimulated less by a desire for the good than the applause of mankind. Even humility itself, paradoxical as it may appear, will often have its secret sources in this same passion; and religion, stretching its ambitious views beyond the present life, aspires to glorious distinctions in a world of spirits.

Ambition—such is its tenacity and power—will oftentimes cling to, and buoy us up under the severest trials, amid bodily sufferings of the most exaggerated character, quitting us only with the last conscious throb of our being. Nerved by his desire of glory, the Indian endures without a murmur all the most cunningly devised tortures of his enemies; the martyr experiences the same animating influence amid the fires which persecution has lighted for him; and the felon on the scaffold, while his confused vision wanders over the assembled multitude below him, becomes stimulated by a hero's pride, and dies with a hero's fortitude.

With the evils and sufferings of ambition, both to individuals and society, every one must be familiar, for all history is little else than a record of its enormities and penalties. In its extreme degree it would appear to swallow up, or at least render subservient to itself, all other passions of the soul. It vanquishes even the fear of death; and love itself, however ardent, must submit to its superior force. Nor can it be bounded by the narrow limits of our existence, but there is an eager longing that our names and deeds may still live in the remembrance of posterity, when our forgotten bodies have returned to the elements whence they sprung.

"Of all the follies of the world," says Montaigne, "that which is most universally received, is the solicitude for reputation and glory, which we are fond of to that degree, as to abandon riches, peace, life, and health, which are effectual and substantial goods, to pursue this vain phantom, this mere echo, that has neither body nor hold to be taken of it. And of all the unreasonable humours of men, it seems that this continues longer, even with philosophers themselves, than any other, and that they have the most ado to disengage themselves from this, as the most resty and obstinate of all human follies."—*Essays.*

We may define ambition to be that anxious aspiration, so characteristic of the human species, to rise above our respective stations, or to attain to something loftier, and, as fancy pictures, better than what we now enjoy. It implies, therefore, dissatisfaction with the present, mingled, generally, with more or less elating anticipations for the future. Strictly speaking, it embraces emulation, or the desire which we all feel of a favourable estimation of self when measured with our compeers. Pride and self-love, then, enter essentially into its constitution, and the rivalships and competitions which necessarily grow out of it almost always lead to the painful feelings of envy and jealousy.

This passion, consisting, as it does, especially in the wish for superiority over our own particular class, or those with whom we are brought into more immediate comparison, must operate alike upon all ranks of society. Hence, servants pant for distinction above servants, just as kings do for pre-eminence over kings. And the tailor who excels all others of his craft in fitting a coat to a dandy's back, may feel his ambition as highly gratified as the proud statesman who has equally outstripped all his competitors.

"Philosophy," says Doctor Paley, "smiles at

the contempt with which the rich and great speak of the petty strifes and competitions of the poor; not reflecting that these strifes and competitions are just as reasonable as their own, and the pleasure which success affords, the same."—*Moral Philosophy.*

The aims of ambition will differ, and its aspects become essentially modified, according to the temperament, education, and habits, of its individual subjects, and the various incidental circumstances under which they may chance to exist. Thus wealth—literary, political and military fame, or even mere brute strength—in short, almost anything that can distinguish us from the crowd—may, under different influences, become the object of our aspirations. The cynics or dog-philosophers, while they ridiculed those who were ambitious of wealth and worldly display, were themselves equally ostentatious of their poverty, equally proud of their filth and raggedness. Hence the remark of Socrates to the leader of this sect—"Antisthenes, I see thy vanity through the holes of thy coat." And Diogenes, so distinguished among these currish philosophers, was probably as much the votary of ambition while snarling in his dirty tub, as Alexander when directing his mighty armies; and on making his celebrated reply to the friendly inquiry of the latter who had condescended to visit him, "If there was anything he could serve him in?" "Only stand out of my sunshine," felt, it is not unlikely, as much pride in his singularity and impudence, as did his illustrious and more courteous guest in all the glory of his conquering power. Well, therefore, might the ambitious monarch exclaim, "Were I not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes." And then, again, so much may the bent of ambition depend on adventitious circumstances that he who, under some conditions, would pant to excel as a robber, might, under others be full as eager for excellence as a saint.

> "The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
> In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine;
> The same ambition can destroy or save,
> And makes a patriot as it makes a knave."

Among the worst evils of inordinate ambition is its continual restlessness; its dissatisfaction with the present, and its implacable longings for the future. Honours are no sooner achieved than their vanity becomes apparent, and they are contemned, while those which are not possessed hold out the only promise of enjoyment. The ardour of love—and the same is true of most other strong passions—will be quenched, or at least weakened, by fruition; but the appetite of ambition can never be satiated, feeding serves only to aggravate its hunger. No sooner, therefore, has the ambitious man gained one eminence, than another and yet loftier swells upon his view, and with fresh and more eager efforts and desires he strains forward to reach its summit. And so does he go on, surmounting height after height, still looking and labouring upward, until he has climbed to the very utmost pinnacle. But alas! even here he meets but disappointment and unrest. The same ambitious cravings continue to haunt and agitate him, and, deprived of the cheering influence of hope, and the animating excitement attendant on the struggles of pursuit, he is even less content and less happy than on first starting on the race. He has been chasing, as he finds a phantom; been labouring but to labour; has enjoyed no hour of pleasing respite, and has in the end, perhaps, found only a hell in the imaginary paradise he had framed to himself. Though the rich fruit has ever seemed to wave above him, and the refreshing stream to play before him, yet has he been doomed to an unceasing and a quenchless thirst.

It is certainly a great pity that mankind will not strive more to cultivate a contented spirit, to enjoy what they already possess, instead of wasting themselves in the pursuit of things which owe all their beauty to the distance at which they are removed from us.

Cineas, the friend and counsellor of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, with a view to wean the latter from his ambitious designs on Italy, drew him artfully into the following conversation:—"The Romans have the reputation of being excellent soldiers, and have the command of many warlike nations; if it please Heaven that we conquer them, what use, sir, shall we make of our victory?" "Cineas," replied the king, "your question answers itself. When the Romans are once subdued, there is no town, whether Greek or barbarian, in all the country, that will dare oppose us; but we shall immediately be masters of all Italy, whose greatness, power and importance, no man knows better than you." Cineas having paused a moment, continued, "But after we have conquered Italy, what shall we do next, sir?" Pyrrhus, not yet perceiving his drift, replied, "There is Sicily very near, and stretches out her arms to receive us, a fruitful and populous island, and easy to be taken. For Agathocles was no sooner gone, than faction and anarchy prevailed among her cities, and everything is kept in confusion by her turbulent demagogues." "What you say, my prince," returned Cineas, "is very probable; but is the taking of Sicily to conclude our expeditions?" "Far from it," answered Pyrrhus; "for if Heaven grants us success in this, that success shall only be the prelude to greater things. Who can forbear Libya and Carthage, then within reach, which Agathocles, even when he fled in a clandestine manner from Syracuse, and crossed the seas with a few ships only, had almost made himself master of? And when we have made such conquests, who can pretend to say that any of our enemies, who are now so insolent, will think of resisting us?" "To be sure," said Cineas, "they will not; for it is clear that so much power will enable you to recover Macedonia, and to establish yourself uncontested sovereign of Greece. But when we have conquered all, what are we to do then?" "Why then, my friend," said Pyrrhus, laughing, "we will take our ease, and drink and be merry." Cineas having brought him thus far, replied, "And what hinders us from drinking and taking our ease now, when we have already those things in our hands, at which we propose to arrive through seas of blood, through infinite toils and dangers, through innumerable calamities, which we must both cause and suffer?"—*Plutarch's Lives.*

The passion under notice, existing as it does, to a greater or less extent, in every human breast, would seem to be a necessary element in our moral constitution. Some, even, of the inferior animals exhibit undeniable manifestations of its influence. It cannot, therefore, nor is it desirable that it should, be altogether suppressed. When moderate, and wisely regulated, it may prove an agreeable and wholesome stimulus alike to the mental and physical economy, and contribute in various ways both to individual and social good.

It is when ambition is extravagant, and more especially if it be at the same time ill-directed, that we witness all its pernicious effects on mind and body. He who has once surrendered himself to the thraldom of this passion, may bid farewell, too often for ever, to that contentment and tranquillity of the soul, in which exist the purest elements of happiness. The heart thus enslaved will be ever agitated by the harassing contentions of hope and fear: and if success is unequal to the wishes and anticipations,—and how seldom is it otherwise?—then come the noxious feelings of disappointment and regret; humiliation, envy, jealousy, and frequently even despair, infusing their poison into all the healthful springs of life. The sallow and anxious brow, the dismal train of dyspeptic and nervous symptoms, and the numerous affections of the heart and brain so often witnessed in the aspirants for literary, political, or professional fame, are but too commonly the offspring of the painful workings of the passion under regard. And could we always trace out the secret causes of ill health and premature decay, disappointed ambition would probably be discovered to hold a far more prominent place among them than has hitherto been suspected. How few are adequate, either in their moral or physical strength, to bear up under the blighting of high-reaching expectations, and yet of how many is such the doom! In those, especially, of delicate and susceptive constitutions, the powers of life may soon yield to the disheartening influence of the painful humiliation which is the necessary result.

I cannot but regard it as a mistake in our education, that the principle of ambition is so early and assiduously instilled into, and urged upon us as the grand moving power of our lives; that great men, not happy ones, are held up as the examples for our imitation: in short, from the first dawning of our reasoning powers, there is a constant endeavour to nurture within us an aspiring, and consequently discontented spirit; and by a strange contradiction, while at the same time we are continually hearing denunciations against the vanity and danger of the pursuits of ambition.

The ambition, let me here observe, which aims at moral excellence, or whose ends are generous and benevolent, serving, as it must, to promote, instead of interfering with, the success and advancement of others, and meeting, consequently, but little opposition or rivalship, will enjoy a preponderance of the pleasurable feelings, the salutary effects of which will be imparted to the whole constitution.

Our own peculiar circumstances as a people are especially favourable to the growth of ambition. Hardly as yet emerged from our infancy with a widely extended territory, and an almost unparalleled national increase, with so much to be accomplished, so much in anticipation, every one finds some part to act; every one sees bright visions in the future, and every one therefore becomes inflated with a proud sense of his individual importance. The field of advancement, moreover, is alike free to all, our democratical institutions inviting each citizen, however subordinate may be his station, to join in the pursuit of whatever distinctions our form of society can bestow. Hence, as might be expected, the demon of unrest, the luckless offspring of ambition, haunts us all; agitating our breasts with discontent, and racking us with the constant and wearing anxiety of what we call *bettering* our condition. The servant is dissatisfied as a servant; his heart is not in his vocation, but pants for some other calling of a less humble sort. And so it is through all other ranks—with the mechanic, the trader, the professional man—all are equally restless, all are straining for elevations beyond what they already enjoy; and thus do we go on toiling anxiously in the chase, still hurrying forward toward some visionary goal, unmindful of the fruits and flowers in our path, until death administers the only sure opiate to our peaceless souls. That the people of every country are, in a greater or less measure, the subjects of ambition, and desirous in some way of advancing their fortunes, it is not, of course, intended to deny; yet owing to the circumstances already mentioned, the remarks just made apply most forcibly to ourselves. These same national conditions, too, which are so favourable to the increase of ambition, render us particularly liable to great and sudden vicissitudes of fortune, which are always pernicious both to moral and physical health.

Mental occupation—some determinate and animating object of endeavour, is, as I have before observed, most essential to the attainment of what we are all pursuing—I mean happiness. Yet if the mind is not allowed its needful intervals of relaxation and recreation, if its objects of desire are prosecuted with an unintermitting toil and anxiety, then will this great aim of our being most assuredly fail us. Now, may it not reasonably be doubted if our own citizens, under their eager covetings for riches and preferment, under their exhausting and almost unrelieved confinement to business, do not mistake the true road to happiness? Absorbed in their ardent struggles for the means, do they not lose sight of their important ends? As a people we certainly exhibit but little of that quiet serenity of temper, which of all earthly blessings is the most to be desired.

When, loitering in the streets of Naples, I have contemplated the half-naked and houseless lazzaroni, basking in indolent content in the gay sunshine of their delicious climate, or devouring with eager gratification the scant and homely fare of uncertain charity, and watched their mirthful faces, and heard their merry laugh; and in fancy have contrasted them with our own well-provided citizens, with their hur-

ried step and careworn countenances, or at their plenteous tables, despatching their meals scarce chewed or even tasted, everywhere haunted by their restless and ambitious desires—the question could not but force itself upon me, Are *we* really any nearer the great aim of our being than these heedless beggars? and when each has attained the final goal, is it impossible even that the latter may have actually had the advantage in the sum total of human enjoyment? The casual pains of cold and hunger which make up their chief suffering, will hardly compare in severity with those which continually agitate the discontented breast.

To the force of the same passion, to the uneasy cravings of ambition, is it that the rash speculations so common among us, and so destructive, both to peace of mind and health of body, are in a great measure imputable. This commercial gambling, for such may it be justly termed, will oftentimes be even more widely ruinous in its consequences than that more humble sort to which our moral laws affix a penalty of so deep disgrace. For while the private gamester trusts to the fall of a die, or the turn of a card, but his own gold, the gambler on change risks on the hazards of the market, not what belongs to himself only, but too often the fortunes of those who had reposed their confidence in his honour; and may thus involve in one common ruin whole circles of kindred and friends. And yet such are the ethics of social life, that whilst the latter is respected, courted, and elevated to high places, civil and religious, the former is shut out of all virtuous society.

No truth probably has been more generally enforced and admitted, both by ancient and modern wisdom, while none has received less regard in practice, than that happiness is equally removed from either extreme of fortune; that health and enjoyment are most frequently found associated with the *aurea mediocritas*, the golden mean.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE IMAGINATION, IF NOT PROPERLY RESTRAINED, MAY EXERCISE A DANGEROUS INFLUENCE ON OUR BODILY HEALTH.—THE SOBER REALITIES OF LIFE ACCORD BETTER WITH OUR PRESENT NATURE THAN THE FALSE VISIONS OF FANCY.

An ill regulated and unbridled imagination, associated, as it necessarily is, with strong and varying emotions, must be inimical to the health both of body and mind. In regard to their effect, it matters, in truth, but little whether the passions have their incentive in the creations of fancy, or the sterner truths of reality.

"It was undoubtedly the intention of nature," says Professor Stewart, "that the objects of perception should produce much stronger impressions on the mind than its own operations. And, accordingly, they always do so, when proper care has been taken, in early life, to exercise the different principles of our constitution. But it is possible, by long habits of solitary reflection, to reverse this order of things, and to weaken the attention to sensible objects to so great a degree, as to leave the conduct almost wholly under the influence of imagination. Removed to a distance from society, and from the pursuits of life, when we have been long accustomed to converse with our own thoughts, and have found our activity gratified by intellectual exertions, which afford scope to all our powers and affections, without exposing us to the inconveniences resulting from the bustle of the world, we are apt to contract an unnatural predilection for meditation, and to lose all interest in external occurrences. In such a situation, too, the mind gradually loses that command which education, when properly conducted, gives it over the train of its ideas; till at length the most extravagant dreams of imagination acquire as powerful an influence in exciting all its passions, as if they were realities."—*Philosophy of the Human Mind*.

There is a class of individuals always to be met with in society, who, unsatisfied with the tameness of real life, create for themselves new conditions, and please themselves with impossible delights in the worlds of imagination; who riot amid the false hopes and unnatural joys of entrancing day-dreams, till at last the unreal acquires absolute dominion over their minds—till wholesome truth is sacrificed to sickly mockeries—

> "And nothing is,
> But what is not."

Such persons are apt to be characterized by a certain sentimental melancholy, mingled with a deep and refined enthusiasm, and are not unfrequently distinguished by superior mental endowments, particularly by a genius for poetry, whose license is to range at discretion through fancy's boundless and enchanting fields.

There are few of us, in truth, even of the most sober imaginations, but must sometimes have experienced the ecstasy of revelling among the delights of the unreal; of forgetting our own dull sphere, and indulging in dreams of unearthly felicity,—dreams, alas! which must soon be dispelled by some stern reality, leaving us, like the child who has been enrapt by some fairy show at the theatre, only the more dissatisfied with our actual condition.

Of Rousseau, who affords a strong example of the unhealthy character of the imagination I am describing, and of the unhappy nervous infirmities to which it so constantly leads, Madame de Staël says, "He dreamed rather than existed, and the events of his life might be said more properly to have passed in his mind than without him." Picturing his own morbid excess of sensibility when at Vevay, on the banks of the lake of Geneva, he says, "My heart rushed with ardour from my bosom into a thousand innocent felicities; melting to tenderness, I sighed and wept like a child. How frequently, stopping to indulge my feelings, and seating myself on a piece of broken rock, did I amuse myself with seeing my tears drop into the stream!"

Such a disposition of the imagination may

have its origin in a variety of causes, as native peculiarity of temperament, delicate health, injudicious education, habits of solitary reflection, and, in the young especially, will oftentimes be the fruit of an extravagant indulgence in the works of fictitious narrative, too many of which abound in that mawkish sentimentality so peculiarly unfriendly to moral and intellectual health. It appears that Rousseau was, in his youth, a great reader of novels. In sensitive and secluded individuals, this sort of reading, when carried to excess, has sometimes so wrought upon and disturbed the fancy as to bring on actual insanity. Thus, in one of M. Esquirol's tables we find, out of a hundred and ninety-two cases of insanity produced by moral causes, eight referred to the reading of romances. The history of the renowned knight of La Mancha is doubtless but an exaggerated picture of cases of hallucination, which in those days were frequently happening from the general passion for tales of chivalry and romance. "The high-toned and marvellous stories," says Dr Good, "of La Morte d'Arthur, Guy of Warwick, Amadis of Gaul, the Seven Champions of Christendom, and the Mirror of Knighthood, the splendid and agitating alternations of magicians, enchanted castles, dragons and giants, redoubtable combatants, imprisoned damsels, melting minstrelsy, tilts and tournaments, and all the magnificent imagery of the same kind, that so peculiarly distinguished the reign of Elizabeth, became a very frequent source of permanent hallucination."—*Study of Medicine.*

Such subjects as I am describing are generally characterized by strong and excitable feelings, but which are, for the most part, more ready to respond to ideal than real influences. Truth, in its native guise, unpurified from the feculencies of the world, is too homely and offensive for such spiritualized beings. The squalid and unromantic beggar, perishing of cold or hunger in his wretched hovel, is an object quite too gross and disgusting to harmonize with their fastidious sensibilities. It is elegant, refined, and sentimental misery only that can elicit their artificial sympathies. Their love too, a passion, by the way, to which they are even morbidly susceptible, exhibits the same exquisite refinement, and is, therefore, most apt to fix itself on some ideal model of beauty and excellence. Or should their affections become linked to a carnal nature, such attachment will most commonly proceed from the false colouring and bright associations with which the imagination clothes it. Hence the well-known fickleness and caprice of such persons, and their disappointment with all veritable objects on familiarity, since all must fall short of their high-wrought fictitious standards. Many a poet, through his whole life, has remained constant in his devotion to some peerless idol of his own beautiful imagination. How, indeed, can it be expected that one accustomed to dwell on the pure and transcendental creations of a delicate and sublimated fancy, can contemplate with pleasure, or I may even say without disgust, coarseness and imperfection which so necessarily appertain to our earth-born nature?

Sir Walter Scott has given us, in his character of Wilfred, a well-drawn picture of the imaginative temperament I am endeavouring to portray.

> "But Wilfred, docile, soft, and mild,
> Was Fancy's spoiled and wayward child
> In her bright car she bade him ride,
> With one fair form to grace his side,
> Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
> Flung her high spells around his seat,
> Bathed in her dews his languid head,
> Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
> For him her opiates gave to flow,
> Which he who tastes can ne'er forego,
> And placed him in her circle, free
> From every stern reality,
> Till, to the visionary, seem
> Her day-dreams truth, and truth a dream."
>
> *Rokeby.*

The feelings unduly excited, as they necessarily must be, by the wild dreams of the imagination, react with a morbid influence on the various functions of the body: and if the habits are at the same time sedentary and retired, a train of moral and physical infirmities generalized under the name of nervous temperament, will be the probable result. The subjects of this unhappy temperament are commonly irresolute, capricious, and morbidly sensitive in their feelings. Their passions, whether pleasurable or painful, are awakened with the greatest facility, and the most trifling causes will often elate them with hope, or sink them in despondency. A deep enthusiasm generally marks their character, and they not unfrequently display a high order of talent, and a nice and discriminating taste, yet mingled with all those uncomfortable eccentricities which are so apt to be associated with superior endowments. The poet, the painter, the musician—for their pursuits have all a kindred nature, and all work on the feelings and imagination—are more especially the subjects of this peculiar temperament. The nervous sensibility of poets has been proverbial even from the remotest time, and it is therefore that they have been styled, *genus irritabile vatum.*

The physical functions in this temperament are almost always weak, and pass very readily into disordered states. Its subjects are particularly liable to indigestion, and to sympathetic disturbances in the nervous, circulatory, and respiratory systems. Thus, under sudden excitements, palpitations, flushings of the face, tremors, embarrassment in the respiration, with difficulty of speaking, are apt to occur; and even syncope or fainting will sometimes take place. The body, moreover, is generally spare and feeble, frequently with an inclination forwards; the face is pale and sickly, though, under excitement, readily assuming a hectic glow, and its expression is usually of a pensive character.

The most melancholy nervous affections, as epilepsy, for example, have sometimes been brought on through the workings of a morbidly exalted, and ungoverned imagination. And, in turn, the most enravishing conceits of fancy have at times been experienced while labouring under such disorders. It is in fits of epilepsy and ecstatic trances that religious enthusiasts have

had their celestial visions, which their distempered minds have often converted into realities. The visits of the angel Gabriel to Mahomet, and the journey of this prophet through the seven heavens, under the guidance of the same angel, might not unlikely have taken place in some of the epileptic paroxysms to which he is well known to have been subject.

The imagination, then, exercising so decided an influence on our moral feelings and conduct, and by a requisite consequence on our health and happiness, we perceive how important it is that this faculty be wisely disciplined, or regulated according to the standard of nature; that it be maintained in strict obedience to the judgment and will, and those delusive fancies in which the human mind is so prone to indulge be carefully suppressed; since not only do they withdraw us from the rational ends and practical duties of life, thereby rendering us less useful both to ourselves and to society, but tend also to break down the physical energies, and prepare the constitution for the ingress of disease and for untimely dissolution. The mind as well as the body, let it be remembered, may be feasted too voluptuously. The delights of a fantastic paradise have little harmony with our present nature. The spirit,

> ——— "whilst this muddy vesture of decay
> Doth grossly close it in,"

must forego the raptures of supernal visions, and accommodate itself to its material relations, to the circumstances and necessities of its earthly dwelling-house.

We unfortunately meet with some writers, who, being themselves the subjects of this fanciful temperament, would persuade us to seek enjoyment in the cultivation of morbid sensibilities to the exclusion of the more wholesome realities of life. Thus, says that popular and exquisitely sentimental author, Zimmerman, "To suffer with so much softness and tranquillity; to indulge in tender sorrow, without knowing why, and still to prefer retirement; to love the lonely margin of a limpid lake; to wander alone upon broken rocks, in deep caverns, in dreary forests; to feel no pleasure but in the sublime and beautiful of nature, in those beauties which the world despise; to desire the company of only one other being to whom we may communicate the sensations of the soul, who would participate in all our pleasures, and forget everything else in the universe; this is a condition for which every young man ought to wish, who wishes to fly from the merciless approaches of a cold and contentless old age."—*On Solitude.*

Among the best securities against this prejudicial ascendancy of the fancy, and those uncomfortable nervous infirmities which so generally accompany it, I may briefly mention a life of active employment, directed to some interesting object. It would seem, indeed, necessary to the health and contentment of the human mind, at least in its cultivated state, that it be constantly actuated by some prominent and engaging motive, by the feeling that existence has a determinate purpose. The prosecution, also, of the exact sciences, or such as have truth for their great and ultimate aim, should not be neglected; and, in addition, all those means which tend to sustain and elevate the bodily health, as pure air, muscular exercise, cold bathing, and temperance in its most comprehensive sense; for I need hardly repeat that whatever serves to give vigour to the body, must, at the same time, impart a wholesome influence to the mind.

Finally, to guard ourselves from the aforenamed moral infirmities, and their concomitant physical ills, we should cultivate a contented spirit, confining our wishes and expectations within the limits of reason; and especially striving against the morbid growth of ambition, which, when, from the temperament or other circumstances of the individual, it does not impel to active efforts for its gratification, will cause the mind to be ever wandering amid visionary scenes of wealth and honour, and thus wholly disqualify it for its appointed sphere of action, and enjoyments. Nothing, let me add, contributes more effectually to advance our mental, and, as an established consequence, our bodily health, than a suitable interest in the duties which belong to our several stations.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### GENERAL REMARKS IN CONCLUSION OF THE VOLUME.

I HAVE stated, as my readers will remember, in the first part of this volume, that the exercise of the intellectual functions, abstractedly considered, does not tend, on a general principle, to favour disease, or shorten life. Yet sometimes simple intellectual labours may be prosecuted to such excess as to occasion manifest injury both to the moral and physical constitution. On examining the reports of different lunatic asylums, we shall find, in almost all of them, some of the cases attributed to excess of study. I am satisfied, however, that a larger share, both of mental and bodily ills, than is in accordance with rigorous truth, is referred to immoderate exertion of the intellect; the reasons of which error have been previously explained. Thus, our intellectual efforts are, at the present day, almost always associated with those habits of life, as undue confinement, insufficient and irregular sleep, and other like incidental circumstances, which are well known to be inimical to health. And, furthermore, as knowledge is seldom pursued for its own sake, but for some ulterior advantage, either of fame or pecuniary profit, mental labours are rarely unaccompanied with the workings, too often the strong and painful workings, of passion. Intellectual men, it must be acknowledged, are, either by nature, or the force of circumstances, particularly prone to ambition, and are consequently exposed to all those evils and sufferings heretofore described, which attend upon this passion when it becomes a ruling principle in the human breast. If moderate and obedient to reason, and its aims guided by

wisdom, it may, as I have previously said, serve as an incentive to call into useful and wholesome exertion the different powers of our nature; but when inordinate, as it is unhappily but too apt to become, then will feelings of the most painful and destructive character inevitably grow out of it.

Our own literary and scientific men, those of the learned professions, for example, will afford ample illustration of the truth of the above remarks. How restless, often, and anxious are their struggles in pursuit of a little ephemeral notoriety! To what various expedients do we not see them resorting for the sake even of that brief and equivocal fame derived through the columns of the periodical press? But then, as the flattery of success may not always reward their endeavours; as they may meet the shafts of censure where they looked for the blandishments of praise, too frequently must the painful and noxious passions, born of defeated hope and wounded pride, as anger, hate, jealousy, grief, humiliation, take possession of the soul, marring all life's moral peace, and calling forth a host of physical ills, as indigestions, nervous disorders, palpitations, and all sorts of irregularities of the heart's action, burdening existence, and abbreviating its term.

The intellectual exertions themselves, then, we rationally conclude, are less a source of evil than the incidental circumstances so commonly associated with them; and those mental labours are ever the most harmless which have the least tendency to call forth strong and morbid feeling.

It is, however, to the moral feelings that we are to look for the most evident and decided influence on the bodily functions, and hence it is that we have appropriated to their consideration so much the larger share of the present volume.

The mind is never agitated by any strong affection without a sensible change immediately ensuing in some one or more of the vital phenomena, and which, according to its nature, or the circumstances under which it occurs, may be either morbid or sanative in its effects, in the same manner as is the action of strictly physical agents—the various medicaments, for example. Mental emotions, when curative, operate mostly, it is to be supposed, on that principle generally admitted in medical science, called revulsion; that is, by calling forth new and ascendant actions in the animal economy, they repress or destroy the distempered ones already existing. It is no more strange, then, that the passions should, through their influence on our physical organization, be capable of engendering or subduing morbid phenomena, than that agents, essentially material in their nature, should possess such power.

Hundreds of instances might be adduced to show the force of the imagination, or, more properly, of the moral feelings which it awakens, in altering and controlling physical actions. Such influence, it seems to me, was strikingly illustrated by the novel surgical operations which recently excited so strong, though transient an interest, for the cure of stammering. The different operations that have been tried in this country for the removal of such imperfection are acupuncturation, which consists in the passage of several slender needles transversely through the tongue; the excision of a portion of the uvula, and also of the tonsils; the division of the frænum of the tongue; and lastly, and the one most trusted to, the separation of the genio-hyo-glossus muscle at its origin from the lower jaw. I have had now repeated opportunities of witnessing the trial of each of the operations specified, and, in a large proportion of instances, evident and oftentimes the most astonishing relief was the immediate result. Stammerers of the worst class, as soon as the operation was finished, would frequently talk and read with scarcely any, or perhaps not the slightest hesitation or embarrassment. In truth, the success of the operations appeared to me to be the most striking in those in whom the impediment was the greatest. Unfortunately, however, for the credit of experimental surgery, although some submitted to each of the operations, and even to the repetition of certain of them, the benefit derived was merely temporary, and I am not apprised of a single case where a decided and permanent cure followed. Now, may we not rationally ascribe the remarkable results of these experiments, in a principal measure at least, to the strong influence which they exerted upon the mental feelings?

Having reference only to the laws of our present organization, it seems to me that no truth can be more plain than that pure and well regulated moral affections are essential to the greatest good of the entire animal economy,—that the turbulent and evil passions must necessarily corrupt the sources of our physical, moral, and intellectual health, and thus be followed by the severest penalties to our whole nature.

"He," says an old medical writer, "who seriously resolves to preserve his health, must previously learn to conquer his passions, and keep them in absolute subjection to reason; for, let a man be ever so temperate in his diet, and regular in his exercise, yet still some unhappy passions, if indulged to excess, will prevail over all his regularity, and prevent the good effects of his temperance. It is necessary, therefore, that he should be upon his guard against an influence so destructive."—*The History of Health, and the Art of Preserving it. By James Mackenzie, M.D., &c.*

Nor did this close connexion between a virtuous regulation of the moral feelings and the health of the body, escape the observation of Doctor Franklin's sagacious intellect. "Virtue," says this sententious writer, "is the best preservative of health, as it prescribes temperance, and such a regulation of our passions as is most conducive to the well-being of the animal economy; so that it is, at the same time, the only true happiness of the mind, and the best means of preserving the health of the body."

The ancient sages who wrote upon the philosophy of health, dwelt especially on the importance of a prudent government of the affections. Galen, for example, urged that the mind should be early trained up in virtuous habits,

particularly in modesty and obedience, as the most summary method of ensuring the health of the body in future life.

Our physical interest, then, had we no other motive, should of itself be a sufficient inducement for cultivating the good, and restraining the evil passions of our nature. And let me here urge, that children cannot be too early and vigilantly subjected to a discipline so essential to their present and future welfare. No error is more pernicious, and unfortunately more often committed, than that of delaying the moral education. Every day that this is neglected will the baneful feelings be acquiring new force and obstinacy. It is in their very germ, in the weakness of their birth, that they are to be successfully combated.

We are, as I have previously alleged, the subjects of moral feeling, and therefore of moral discipline, at an age far earlier than is usually imagined. That many children suffer in their health, and oftentimes to no slight extent, under the repeated and severe operation of passions which parents have neglected to reprove, is a truth unfortunately too plain for contradiction. And not only have they to undergo present suffering from such unpardonable remissness, but too often does it become the cause of an afflictive train of infirmities, both of mind and body, in their future years ; and experience, frequently of the most painful nature, must teach them to bring under control feelings which should have been repressed in the impotence of their origin. "We frequently," says Mr Locke, "see parents, by humouring them when little, corrupt the principles of nature in their children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters when they themselves have poisoned the fountain."—*On Education.*

No duties or obligations have been more often and eloquently enforced, both by the moralist and divine, than those of the child to the parent ; and I would not say aught that might serve in any degree to weaken their deep and binding character. Still, it appears to me, that those which the parent owes the child are really of a paramount nature, and that more serious consequences will be hazarded by their omission. Our parents bestow or impose existence upon us, and are therefore bound in the most solemn duty, to spare no sacrifice, to omit no efforts, which may contribute to render that existence a blessing. If, through their culpable neglect and mismanagement, they entail upon us a host of mental and bodily ills, we owe them little gratitude for the life with which they have burdened us.

When we consider the carelessness and misjudgment so often exhibited in the early training of the young—how many children are literally educated, by example if not by precept, to deception, pusillanimity, and intemperance in its widest sense ; in short, how many moral and physical vices are allowed to engraft themselves in the constitution even in the dawn of its development, we are led almost to wonder that human nature does not grow up even more corrupt than we actually find it.

In concluding this volume let me again urge the important truth, that there is no period of our existence, from opening infancy to closing age, wherein a prudent government of our moral, will not contribute a propitious influence to our physical, constitution. Man, unrestrained by discipline, or abandoned to the turbulence of unbridled passion, becomes the most pitiable and degraded of beings. The well-springs of his health and happiness are poisoned, and all the comeliness and dignity of his nature marred and debased. His whole life, in reality, is but a succession of painful mental and physical strugglings and commotions, a curse equally to himself and all around him.

> "Of all God's workes, which doe this worlde adorne,
> There is no one more faire and excellent,
> Than is man's body both for powre and forme,
> Whiles it is kept in sober government;
> But none than it more fowle and indecent,
> Distempred through misrule and passions bace."

But although the passions implanted within us are the occasion of so great an amount of evil, both to the physical and moral constitution, so prolific a source of disease, sorrow, and ignominy, yet fortunately are they the subjects of education, and, as when uncontrolled they become the bane and reproach of our nature, under a wise restraint and prudent culture they may be rendered our richest blessing and fairest ornament.

FINIS.

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