

**Onanism, or, A treatise upon the disorders produced by masturbation : or, the dangerous effects of secret and excessive venery / By M. Tissot ; translated from the last Paris edition, by A. Hume.**

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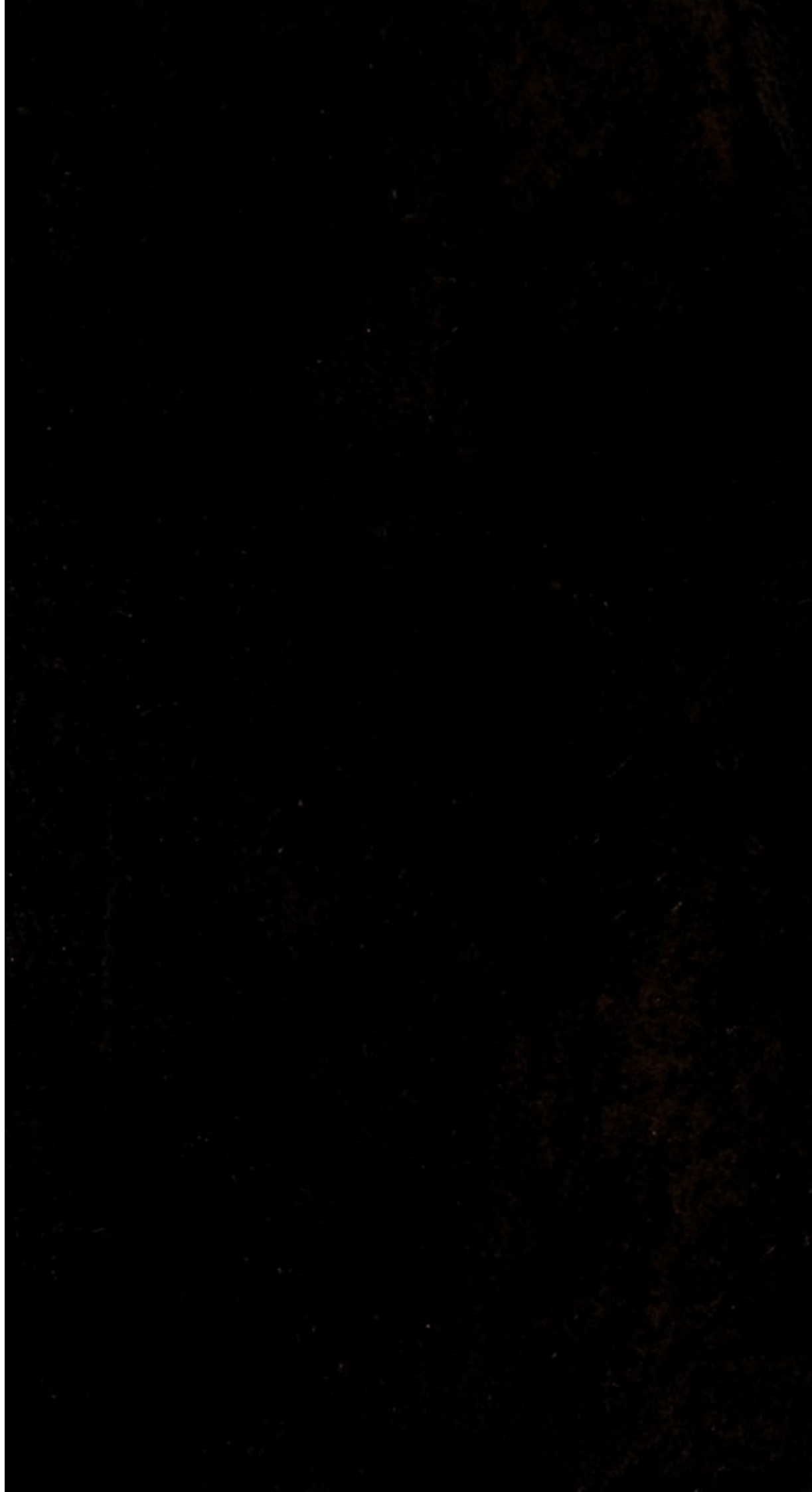
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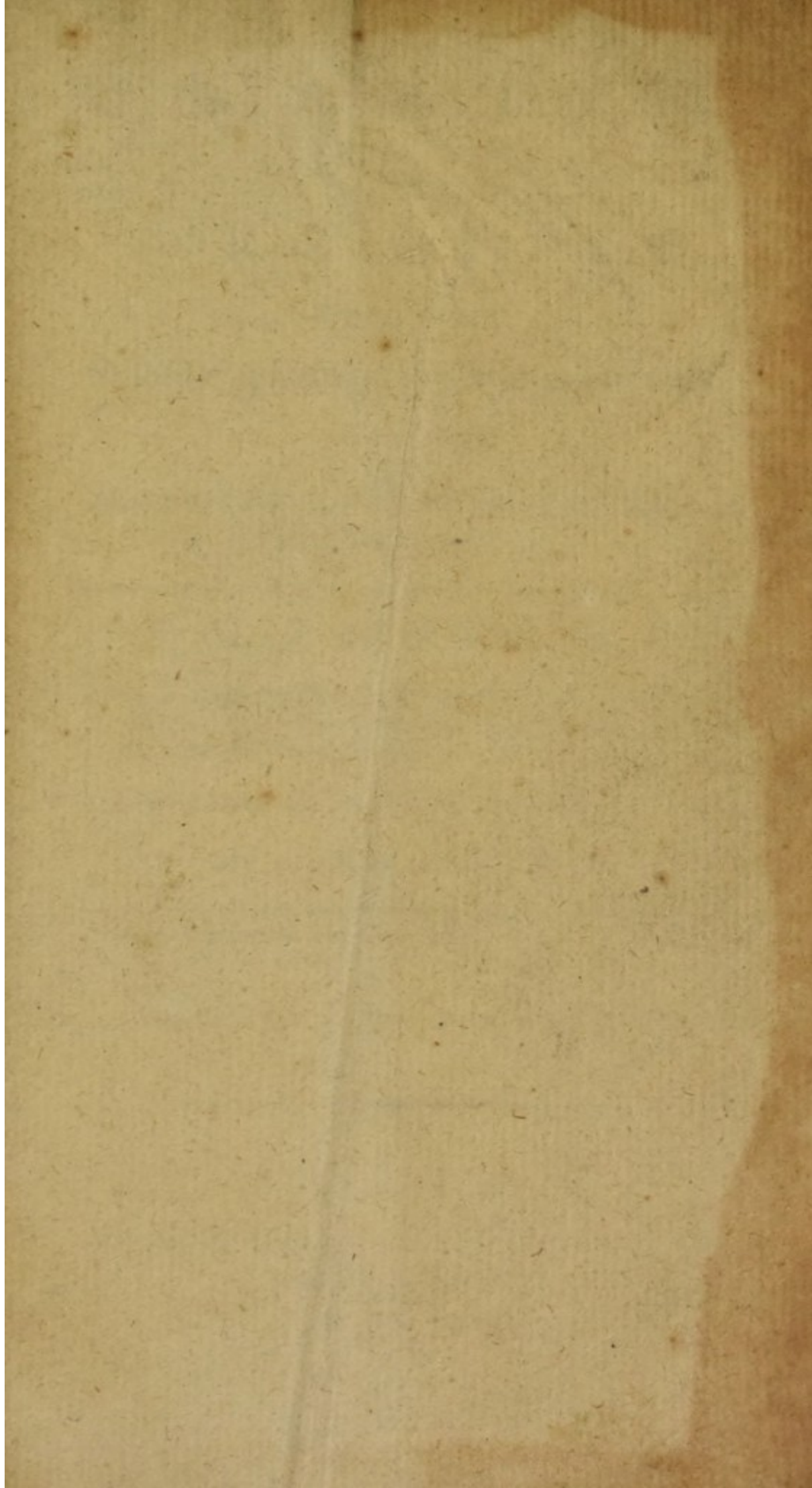
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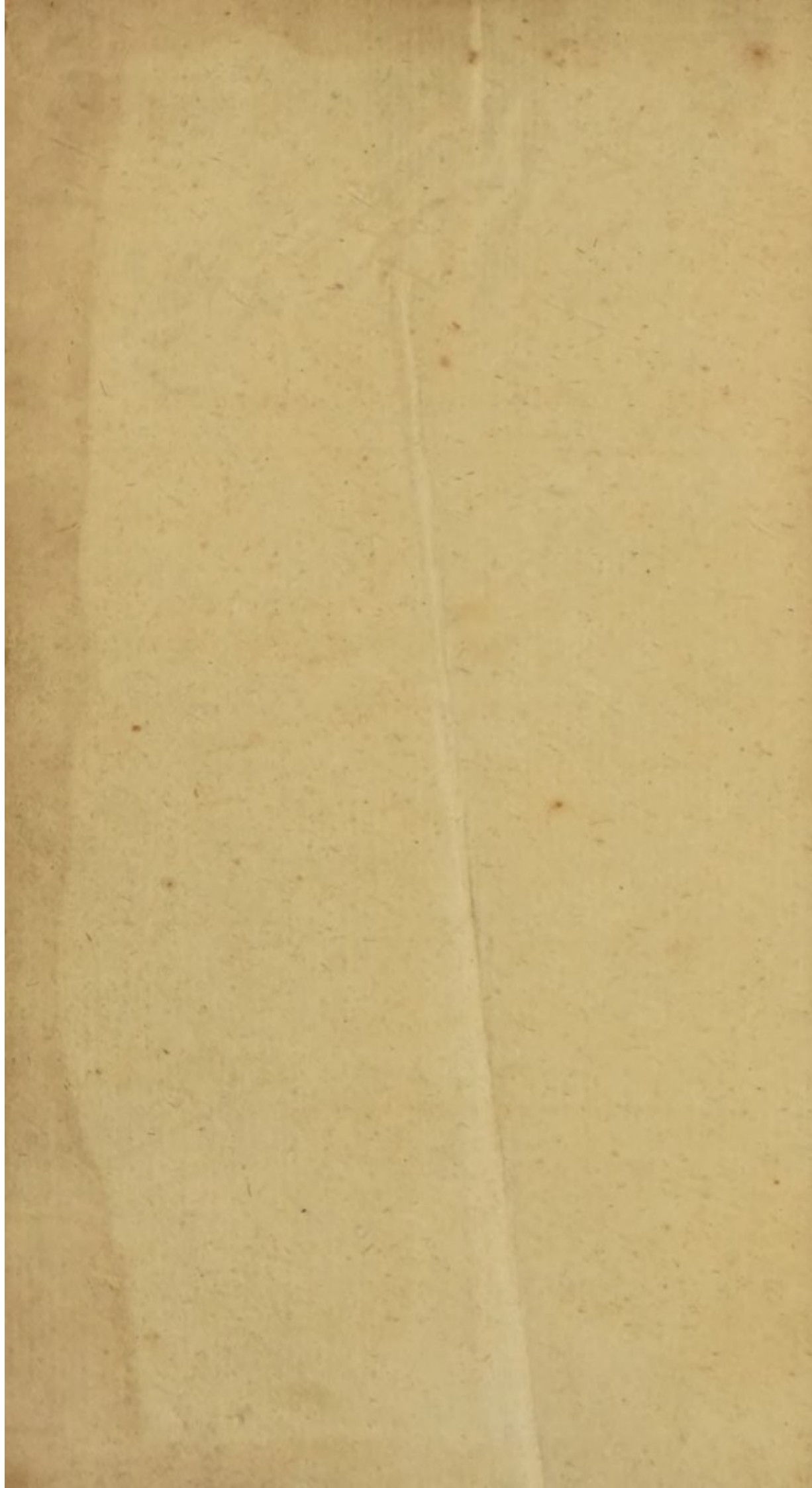
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O N A N I S M:

OR, A

T R E A T I S E

UPON THE

Diforders produced by MASTURBATION:

OR, THE

Dangerous EFFECTS of Secret and Excessive  
VENERY.

---

By M. TISSOT, M. D.

Fellow of the ROYAL SOCIETY of LONDON,  
Member of the Medico-Physical Society of Basil, and of the  
Oeconomical Society of Berne.

Translated from the last PARIS EDITION,

By A. HUME, M. D.

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*Propriis extinctum vivere criminibus.*

GALL.

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The FIFTH EDITION, Corrected.

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Printed for RICHARDSON and URQUHART, under  
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M DCC LXXXI.



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## P R E F A C E.

**I** WAS sensible of the defects of the original Latin of this little work, whilst I was composing it; I made an apology for them, and gave my reasons of justification in the Preface. These errors struck me still more after they were printed, and I found them intolerable upon examining a French translation which I was desired to revise.

Besides several new observations necessary to be subjoined, it was requisite to correct the want of order which frequently occurred, and give a proper extent to articles which were then but out-lines, and scarce conveyed my meaning.

So many corrections rendered the work almost new, and of a much greater length. The difficulty of executing this undertaking in a living language, and the various incidental difficulties did not escape my attention. No other motive than that powerful one, the utility which such a work well executed might be to mankind, could have prevailed upon me to under-

take it; and this in fact is the only one that has determined me to attempt it: the crimes of one's fellow creatures afford indeed but a melancholy reflection; the consideration of them not only affects, but humiliates human nature; the idea of diminishing in some measure their frequency, and softening the miseries that flow from them, is however a kind of recompence.

What has rendered this work more irksome than it would have been, if I had wrote in Latin, is the difficulty of conveying ideas, the terms and expressions of which are indecent. I should have been greatly hurt, had I been compelled to have dispensed with this attention; and this disposition, which I glory in, has rendered the work less tedious than it would have been to me, were I wanting in delicacy: I have nevertheless had innumerable difficulties to surmount. I can venture to aver that I have not neglected any precaution that was necessary to give this work all the decency in point of terms that it was susceptible of. There are stumbling blocks that are inseparable from the subject, how could they be avoided? Should such important subjects be passed over in silence? No certainly. The sacred writers, the fathers of the church, who

who almost all wrote in living languages, the ecclesiastical writers, did not think it proper to be silent upon crimes of obscenity, because they could not be described without words. I thought it was necessary to follow their example; and I may venture to say with St. Augustin, ‘ If what I have written should give offence to any libidinous person, let him rather accuse his own turpitude, than the words which I have been obliged to use to explain my thoughts upon the generation of man. I hope that the wise and modest reader will forgive me for those expressions which I was obliged to make use of.’ To what this holy man says, I shall add, that I hope to deserve the acknowledgment and approbation of virtuous and enlightened men, who are acquainted with the proneness of man to evil, and who will praise, if not my success, at least my undertaking.

I have not here, any more than in the first edition, entered upon the moral part; for the reason which Horace gives,

———Quod medicorum est  
Promittunt medici———

My design was to write upon the disorders occasioned by masturbation, or self-pollution,

pollution, and not upon the crime of masturbation : besides, is not the crime sufficiently proved, when it is demonstrated to be an act of suicide ? Those who are acquainted with men, know very well that it is much easier to make them shun vice by the dread of a present ill, than by reasons founded upon principles, the truth of which has not been sufficiently inculcated into them. I apply to myself what a man whose memory our age will gloriously transmit to the latest posterity, says to a priest. ‘ You make us undertake to  
 ‘ prove the utility of prayer, to a man who  
 ‘ does not believe in God ; the necessity  
 ‘ of fasting to another who has all his life  
 ‘ denied the immortality of the soul. It  
 ‘ is an arduous enterprize, and we have  
 ‘ not the jokers on our side\*.’ Marphurius doubted of every thing, Scanarellus gives him a hearty bastinado, and he believes it.

Those Zoilus’s of society and literature, who do nothing themselves, and condemn all that is done by others, will perhaps have the effrontery to say that this work tends more to promote vice than to suppress it ; and that those who were before  
 ig-

\* See the Persian Letters.

ignorant of it, will hereby become acquainted with it. To such critics I shall make no reply—it is debasing one's self to answer them. But there are weak though virtuous minds, upon whom such discourses may make some impression: this general reflection is due to them; which is, that my book in this respect stands in the same predicament as all books of morality: they should be all suppressed, if it be multiplying a vice to display its dangers. Holy writ, the writings of the fathers, and those of the casuists, should be prohibited before mine. Besides, what young person would think of reading a book upon a medical subject, whilst he was ignorant of its name? It is to be hoped it will become familiar to those persons, who are appointed to superintend the education of children: it will be useful to them to discover in time this detestable practice, and it will enable them to take such precautions as they shall judge necessary to prevent the consequences.

Those who do not understand Latin will perhaps be of opinion that here are too many verses introduced in that language; to these I shall reply that there are no more than what are connected with the subject, as I have quoted none but such as flowed

in the natural chain of ideas. I have, nevertheless, introduced them every where in such a manner that they may be passed over without interrupting the thread of the discourse. They will be relished by such as understand them: a traveller upon a barren heath is agreeably surprized at the sight of a verdant plain. In fine, if this be a fault, it is but a small one; and in so sterile a performance, such a relaxation may be allowed the author. If there are no French verses, which would have been more natural, it is the fault of the poets rather than mine.

This work has nothing in common with the English Onania but the subject, except a quotation of two pages and a half, which I have taken from thence: such a rhapsody could afford me no assistance. Those who read the two works will I hope be sensible of the total difference there is between them: those who read this alone may be misled by the affinity of the titles, and inclined to think there is a great similitude between the two books: but happily there is none.

The additions have increased the size of this edition upwards of one third, and I hope they will meet with a favourable reception from those readers who are capable

ble of judging. Two objections may probably be started, first, that I have added a great number of observations and authorities, which are little more than repetitions of what were in the first edition; and, secondly, that I have in some parts lost sight too much of my title, and that I have considered the dangers resulting from amorous pleasure in only a general point of view. To the first objection I reply, that in a performance of this nature, where the writer must have less grounds to expect he shall convince by reasoning, than he has to hope he shall terrify by examples, too many cannot be recited. To the second objection I answer, that where two subjects are closely connected, the more a writer endeavours to abstract one, the worse he treats of it; and that I was desirous of rendering this work of a more general utility.

I was told by a person, that the reading of this performance greatly shocked an illustrious professor. I cannot give credit to it; but if it be true, I intreat him to condescend to read this preface, which doubtless escaped his notice.

In writing upon inoculation, I proposed promulgating the properest method of stopping the ravages of a fatal disorder;  
and



and I have the satisfaction of having done at least some good: in composing this work, I was in hopes of stopping the progress of a corruption more baneful perhaps than the small-pox, and the more to be dreaded, as by its working in the shades of mystery, it secretly undermines, without even those who are its victims thinking of its malignity. It was essential to divulge it, and I really have several reasons for thinking that I have been so fortunate as to be useful; let the eyes of youth be opened, and let them learn by degrees the danger as well as the evil; this would be the surest means of preventing that decay which is complained of in human nature, and perhaps of restoring to her, in a few generations, the strength and power of our ancestors, with which we have only an historical acquaintance, or by the monuments which they have left us.

May he who has the power of doing all things, shed upon my design that blessing without which our feeble efforts are of no avail! Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God alone giveth the increase.

A N  
E S S A Y

UPON THE  
DISORDERS occasioned by Masturbation.

---

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

**O**UR bodies suffer a continual waste, and if we could not repair this waste, we should soon sink into a state of mortal weakness. This reparation is performed by aliments; but these aliments must undergo different preparations, which are comprehended under the word nutrition. When once this is either not produced, or but badly, all these aliments become useles, and such disorders must inevitably ensue as are the general attendants of extreme debility. Of all the causes which prevent nutrition, there are none, perhaps, more frequent than too copious evacuations.

Such is the frame of our machine, and of animal machines in general, that for these aliments to acquire this degree of preparation necessary for the reparation of the body, it is requisite that a certain quantity of humours ready prepared, and naturalized (if I may be allowed the expression) should be always at hand.

If this condition is wanting, the digestion and concoction of the aliments are imperfect, and the more imperfect in proportion as the deficient humour happens to be of a more elaborate kind, or of greater importance in the animal œconomy.

A robust nurse, who should die by the loss of some pounds of blood, within twenty-four hours could have furnished the same quantity of milk to her child five or six hundred days successively without being sensibly out of order, because milk is of all humours the least elaborated; it is moreover a humour in some shape adventitious, whereas blood is an essential humour. There is another, the seminal liquor, which has so great an influence upon the corporeal powers, and upon perfect digestion, which repairs them, that physicians of all ages have unanimously been of opinion, that the loss of an ounce of this humour would weaken more than that of forty ounces of blood. An idea may be formed of its importance, by observing the effects it produces as soon as it begins to be formed; the voice, the physiognomy, the features of the face change; the beard grows, and the whole body often takes another appearance, because the muscles acquire a thickness and firmness, which form a sensible difference between the body of an adult person and that of a youth not yet arrived at the age of puberty. These changes are prevented by destroying the organ, which serves to separate the liquor that produces it; and just observations evince that the amputation of the testicles, at the age of virility, has made the beard fall, and the puerile voice return\*.

After

\* Vide Boerhaave Prælect. ad Institut. §. 658 F. 5. p. 444. Edit. Goct.

After this, can the power of its operations upon the body be questioned? or can any one doubt of the various ills that must necessarily flow from a profuse evacuation of humour that is so pernicious? Its destination determines the only proper method of its being evacuated. Certain distempers cause it sometimes to run off. It may be involuntarily lost in lascivious dreams. The author of Genesis has given us the history of the crime of Onan, in order doubtless to transmit to us that of his chastisement; and we learn from Galen, that Diogenes polluted himself in committing the same crime.

If the dangerous effects of too abundant a discharge of this humour depended only upon the quantity, or were the same when the quantities were equal, it would be of little importance, in a physical sense, whether this evacuation was occasioned by either of the methods I have mentioned; but the manner is in this respect equal to the substance: I must be allowed the expression; the subject authorizes such licences. Too great a quantity of semen being lost in the natural course, produces very direful effects: but they are still more dreadful, when the same quantity has been dissipated in an unnatural manner. The accidents which happen to such as waste themselves, in a natural way, are very terrible: those which are occasioned by masturbation are still more so. These latter properly form the object of this work; but the close connection which they have with the former makes it necessary to describe them jointly. It is this general description which forms the first part; to this succeeds an explanation of the causes, in the second part, wherein I have set forth such as render

the effects of masturbation more dangerous: the methods of cure, with remarks upon some analogous disorders, complete the work. I shall every where subjoin to my own observations those of the best writers.

---

## P A R T I.

### *The Symptoms.*

#### S E C T I O N I.

*A description taken from the works of medical Authors.*

**H**IPPOCRATES, the most ancient and justest observer, has already described the ills that are occasioned by the abuse of amorous pleasures, under the title of *Tabes dorsalis*\*, ‘ This disorder,’ says he, ‘ arises from the spinal marrow. Young ‘ married people, and those of a lascivious disposition, are afflicted with it. They have no fever; ‘ and though they eat well they fall away and become consumptive. They feel as if a sting or stich ‘ descended from the head along the spinal marrow. ‘ Every time they go to stool, or have occasion to ‘ urine, they shed a great quantity of thin seminal ‘ liquor. They are incapable of procreation, and ‘ they frequently dream of the act of coition. ‘ Walking

\* De Morbis, lib. ii. c. 49. Foëf. p. 479.

‘ Walking, particularly in rugged paths, puts them  
 ‘ out of breath, and weakens them, occasioning a  
 ‘ heaviness in the head, and noise in the ears; which  
 ‘ are succeeded by a violent fever (lypiria) that ter-  
 ‘ minates their days.’

Some physicians have attributed to the same cause, a disorder which they have named *Hippocrates’s second dorsal consumption*; this he describes in another place\*, and it is in some degree analogous to the first. But the preservation of the powers, which he particularly specifies, appears to me a convincing proof that this disorder does not depend upon the same cause as the first; it rather seems to be a rheumatic complaint.

‘ These pleasures,’ says Celsus, in his excellent book upon the Preservation of Health, ‘ are always  
 ‘ hurtful to weak people, and the frequent indul-  
 ‘ gence in them weakens those of stronger constitu-  
 ‘ tions†.’

There can be nothing more dreadful than the picture which Aetius has left us, of the ills that are produced by too great a discharge of the semen. ‘ Young people,’ says he, ‘ have the air and appear-  
 ‘ ance of old age; they become pale, effeminate, be-  
 ‘ numbed, lazy, base, stupid, and even imbecile;  
 ‘ their bodies become bent, their legs are no longer  
 ‘ able to carry them; they have an utter distaste  
 ‘ for every thing, are totally incapacitated, and ma-  
 ‘ ny become paralytic‡.’ In another place, he in-

B 3

cludes

\* De Glandulis, Foëf. q. 273.

† De re medica, lib. i. c. 9 & 11.

‡ De signis and caus. diut. morb. lib. ii. c. 5.

cludes amorous pleasures among the number of the six causes which occasion the palsy.\*

Galen has observed that the same causes occasion disorders of the brain, and of the nerves, and destroy the powers †; and he in another part relates, that a man who was not cured of a violent disorder, died the same night that he paid the conjugal tribute to his wife.

Pliny, the naturalist, informs us, that Cornelius Gallus, the ancient pretor, and Titus Etherius, the Roman knight, died in the very act of coition ‡.

‘The stomach is disordered,’ says Aetius, ‘all the body is weakened; paleness, bodily decay, and emaciation succeed, and the eyes sink into the head §.’ These testimonies of the most respectable ancients are confirmed by innumerable modern writers. Sanctorius, who has examined with the greatest attention all the causes which actuate our bodies, has observed that this weakens the stomach, destroys digestion, obstructs that insensible perspiration, the irregularity of which produces the most fatal consequences, occasions the liver and reins to be over-heated, gives a disposition for the stone in the kidneys, diminishes the natural heat, and usually occasions the loss of, or at least weakens the sight. ||

Lom-

\* Lib. i. c. 6. p. 34. edit. Boerhaave.

† Com. tert. in lib. iii. Hip de Morb. vulg. oper. omn. t. 3. p. 583.

‡ Historia mundi, lib. vii. c. 53. p. 124.

§ Tetrab. 3 Serm. iii. c. 34.

|| Med. static. sect. 6. Aph. 15. 19. 21. 23 and

Lommius, in his beautiful commentaries upon these passages of Celsus which I have quoted, supports the testimony with his own just observations. ‘Frequent emissions of the seed relax, dry up, weaken, enervate, and produce a croud of evils; apoplexies, lethargies, epilepsies, faintings, the loss of sight, tremors, palsy, spasms, and every species of the most racking gout\*.’

The description which Telpius, that celebrated bourgomaster and physician of Amsterdam, has left us, cannot be read without horror. ‘The spinal marrow does not only waste, but the body and mind both equally languish; and the man perishes a miserable victim. Samuel Verspretius was seized with a flux of humour extremely sharp, which immediately affected the hind part of the head and the nape of the neck; from thence it communicated to the spinal marrow, the loins, the buttocks, and the articulation of the thigh; which made this unfortunate man suffer such exeruciating pains, that his countenance was entirely distorted; and he was seized with a slow fever, which by degrees consumed him, but not so fast as he desired; and he was in such a situation that he frequently invoked death, before it snatched him from his misery †.

Nothing, says that celebrated physician de Louvain, weakens the stomash, † and abridges life so soon ‡.

Blan-

\* Comment. de Sanit. tuend. p. m. 36.

† Obs. Med. lib. iii. c. 24.

‡ Zypœus fundam. medic. pars. 2. art. 6.



Blancard has been an eye witness to a simple gonorrhœa, to consumptions, and dropfies, which have flowed from this source\* : and Muys has seen a man still in the prime of life, who has been afflicted with a spontaneous gangrene in the foot, which he attributed to venereal excesses†.

In the memoirs of curious naturalists, we find mention made of a person's losing his sight: the observation is worthy of being quoted at full length. It is not known, says the author, what sympathy there is between the testicles and all the rest of the body, but particularly the eyes. Salmuth hath seen a learned man of a splenetic cast go mad: and another man, whose brain was so dried up, that it was heard to rattle in his pericranium; and both of these disorders were occasioned by excesses of the same nature. I myself have seen a man fifty-nine years of age, who three weeks after his marriage with a young woman, fell suddenly blind, and died at the end of four months‡.

Too great a dissipation of the animal spirits weakens the stomach, destroys the appetite, and nutrition having no longer place, the motion of the heart is weakened, all the parts languish, and an epilepsy succeeds §. It is true, that we are ignorant, whether the animal spirits, and the genital liquor are the same thing; but observation teaches us, as will be hereafter seen, that these two fluids have a  
very

\* Institut. medic. part. 2. c. 28.

† Praxis Chirurgica, dec. 1. obs. 4.

‡ Decur. 2. ann. 5. append. observ. 88. p. 56.

§ Schelammer, Ars medendi universa, lib. ii. sect. 2. c. 4. §. 23.

very strict analogy, and that the loss of the one, or the other, produces the same ills. Mr. Hoffman has seen the most fatal accidents flow from a dissipation of the seed. ‘ After frequent nocturnal pollutions,’ says he, ‘ not only the powers are lost, the body falls away, and the face turns pale; but moreover the memory fails, a cold sensation seizes all the limbs, the sight is clouded, and the voice becomes hoarse \*; all the body languishes by degrees; disturbing dreams prevent sleep administering any relief, and such pains ensue, as are felt from the blows of a cudgel †.’

In a consultation which was held for a young man, who among other ills which he had drawn upon himself by masturbation, was afflicted with a great weakness of sight; he says, ‘ That he had seen several examples of people, even in an advanced age, that is to say, after the body had attained its full vigour, who had not only brought on a redness, and acute pains in the eyes, but also such a weakness of sight, that they could neither read nor write any thing whatever.’ I have also seen two gutta serena’s produced by the same cause ‡. An account of the disorder which gave rise to this consultation will doubtless be agreeable to the reader. ‘ A young man at the age of fifteen, having given way to masturbation, and having frequently practised it, till he was three-and-twenty, was at that period seized with such a weakness in his head and eyes, that the latter were frequently afflicted with violent  
‘ spasms

\* Consult. Cent. 2 and 3. case 102. vol. iii. p. 34.

† Ibid. case 100.

‡ Ibid. case 103.

‘ spasms at the time of his seminal emissions. When  
 ‘ he wanted to read any thing, he was taken with  
 ‘ such a kind of stupor as intoxication creates: the  
 ‘ pupil was very much dilated, and he suffered ex-  
 ‘ quisite pains in his eyes: the lids were very heavy  
 ‘ and shut themselves at night: he was constantly  
 ‘ shedding tears; and a great quantity of whitish  
 ‘ matter gathered in the two corners, which were  
 ‘ very painful. Though he eat with pleasure, he  
 ‘ was reduced almost to a skeleton, and as soon as he  
 ‘ had done eating, he was in a kind of intoxication.’  
 The same author has communicated to us another  
 observation, of which he was an eye-witness, and  
 which I think should find a place here. ‘ A young  
 ‘ man, eighteen years of age, who had frequent con-  
 ‘ nexions with a servant girl, was on a sudden seized  
 ‘ with a weakness and a general tremor in all his  
 ‘ members; his face became red, and his pulse very  
 ‘ weak. He was relieved from this state in an hour’s  
 ‘ time; but an incessant languor continued upon  
 ‘ him. The same fit frequently returned, and threw  
 ‘ him into great agonies, which at the end of eight  
 ‘ days occasioned a contraction and tumour in the  
 ‘ right arm, with a pain in his elbow, which was  
 ‘ greatly increased with the fit. The disorder con-  
 ‘ tinued increasing for a long time, notwithstanding  
 ‘ many remedies were prescribed: at length, Mr.  
 ‘ Hoffman performed a cure upon him \*.’

Mr. Boerhaave delineates these disorders with that  
 strength and precision which are the characteristics of  
 ‘ his

\* De Morbis ex nimia venere, §. 18. oper. omn.  
 suppl. secund. pars prim. p. 496.

his descriptions. ‘ The loss of too much semen occasions lassitude, debilitates, and renders exercise difficult; it causes convulsions, emaciation, and pains in the membrane of the brain; it deadens the senses, and particularly the sight, gives rise to a dorsal consumption, indolence, and various other disorders, which are connected with these.’

The observations which this great man communicated to his auditors, in explaining to them this aphorism, and which treat of the different methods of evacuation, should not be omitted \*. ‘ I have seen a patient, whose disorder began by lassitude, and a weakness in all parts of the body, particularly towards the loins; it was attended with an involuntary motion of the tendons, periodical spasms, and bodily decay, insomuch as to destroy the whole corporeal frame; he felt a pain even in the membranes of the brain, a pain which patients call a dry burning heat, and which incessantly burns internally the most noble parts.

‘ I have also seen a young man afflicted with a dorsal consumption. His person was very agreeable and though he was frequently cautioned not to give way too much to pleasure, he nevertheless yielded to its impulse; he became so deformed before his death, that the fleshy substance, which appears above the spinal apophyses of the loins, was entirely wasted. The brain itself in this case appeared consumed: the patients, in fact, grow stupid. They become so rigid that I never perceived so great a want of motion in the body produced by any

\* Institut. § 776. translated by M. D. L. M.

‘ any other cause; the eyes are so dull, that they  
‘ have no longer the power of sight\*.’

Mr. de Senac, in the first edition of his *Essays*, described the dangers of masturbation, and foretold those victims of this infamous practice, that they would be afflicted with all the infirmities incident to the most languishing old age, in the very flower of their youth. In the succeeding editions may be seen the reasons for his suppressing this passage, and some others.

Mr. Ludwig, in describing the ills which arise from too copious evacuations, does not forget the spermatic: ‘ Young people,’ says he, ‘ of either sex,  
‘ who devote themselves to lasciviousness, destroy  
‘ their health in dissipating those powers which were  
‘ destined to bring their bodies to their greatest de-  
‘ gree of vigour, and they at length fall into con-  
‘ sumptions †.

M. de Goster gives a detail of the most shocking accidents which spring from this cause; but they are too prolix to be copied; I refer all those who understand the language he wrote in to his work §.

After having given a description of the dorsal consumption of Hippocrates, as above transcribed, M. Van Swieten adds, ‘ I have seen all these ac-  
‘ cidents and several others befall those unhappy per-  
‘ sons, who had abandoned themselves to shameful  
‘ pollutions. For three years I used all the aid that  
‘ medicine could afford, without success, for a young  
‘ man,

\* Commentaries upon the same passage, vol. vii.  
p. 214.

† *Instit. physiol.* 870. 872.

§ *De insensibil. Persp. cap. ult.*

‘ man, who had drawn upon himself by this in-  
 ‘ famous practice various pains, as extraordinary as  
 ‘ they were general, with alternate sensations of  
 ‘ hot and cold, particularly in the loins. Some  
 ‘ time after these pains having in some degree dimi-  
 ‘ nished, he felt so much cold in his thighs and  
 ‘ legs, though to the touch they seemed to preserve  
 ‘ their natural heat, that he was continually warm-  
 ‘ ing himself at a fire, even in the heat of summer.  
 ‘ My admiration was particularly excited during  
 ‘ this period by the continual rotation of testicles in  
 ‘ the scrotum, and the patient felt the same sensa-  
 ‘ tion by a similar motion in the loins, which was  
 ‘ very troublesome to him\*.’ This account does not  
 inform us, whether the unhappy patient ended his  
 life at the expiration of three years, or whether he  
 continued to languish some time longer, which must  
 have been still more shocking: there is however no  
 other alternative.

Mr. Klookof, in an excellent work which he has  
 written, upon the disorders of the mind relative to  
 the body, confirms by his observations those which  
 have already been made. ‘ Too great a dissipation of  
 ‘ the semen weakens the spring of all the solid parts;  
 ‘ hence arise weakness, laziness, inertness, phthisics,  
 ‘ dorsal consumptions, numbness, and a depravation  
 ‘ of the senses, stupidity, madness, faintings, and  
 ‘ convulsions†.’

Mr. Hoffman had previously remarked, that young  
 people who gave way to the infamous practices of

C

mastur-

\* Aph. 586. t. ii. p. 46.

† De Morb. anim. ab. infirm. nudul. cereb.  
 P. 37.

mafturbation, were by degrees deprived of the faculties of the foul, particularly their memory, and became quite incapable of ftudy\*.

Mr. Lewis † describes all thefe ill. I fhall not in this place tranfcribe any more of his work than what relates to thofe of the foul. ‘ All the ill  
 ‘ that are occafioned by exceffes with women, more  
 ‘ quickly follow in youth, the abominable practice of  
 ‘ feminal pollution, and which it would be difficult  
 ‘ to paint in colours fo glaring as they merit, a prac-  
 ‘ tice to which youth devote themfelves, without  
 ‘ being acquainted with the enormity of the crime,  
 ‘ and all the ill which are its phyfical confequences. ‡  
 ‘ The foul is fenfible of all bodily diforders but par-  
 ‘ ticularly of thofe which arife from this caufe. The  
 ‘ moft clouded, melancholy indifference (might one  
 ‘ not fay even averfion?) for all pleasures, the im-  
 ‘ poffibility of fharing in the converfation of compa-  
 ‘ ny, wherein they are always abfent; the thought of  
 ‘ their own unhappinefs; the defpair which arifes  
 ‘ from confidering themfelves as the architects of their  
 ‘ own mifery, and the neceffity of renouncing the fe-  
 ‘ licities of marriage, are the fluctuating ideas which  
 ‘ compel thefe miserable objects to fequefter them-  
 ‘ felves from the world, and happy are thofe who do  
 ‘ not put the finishing hand to their exiftence. §’

Frefh

\* Oper. omn. fol. t. iii. p. 295.

† A practical Effay upon the Tables Dorfalis. 3d edit. 1749.

‡ Ibid. 13.

§ Ibid. p. 19.

Fresh observations which occur in the sequel will confirm the truth with which this dreadful picture is drawn. That which M. Stork has delineated, in that valuable work which he has given the public upon the history and method of treating disorders, is no less shocking; but I refer to the book itself (which no physician should be unacquainted with) those who are curious of seeing it.\*

Before I enter upon those observations which have been communicated to me, I shall conclude this section with that fine passage in that excellent work with which M. Gaubius has enriched the province of medicine. He does not only paint the ills, but he also points out the causes, with that strength and truth, that sagacity and precision, which are possessed only by the greatest masters. It is a precious morsel, which I hope, the reader will like to taste in the words of the author. *Immoderata feminis profusio, non solum utilissimi humoris jacturâ, sed ipso etiam motu convulsivo, quo emittitur, frequentius repetito, imprimis ledit. Interim summam voluptatem universalis excipit virium resolutio, quæ crebro ferri nequit, qui enervet. Colatoria autem corporis quo magis emulgentur, eo plus humorum aliunde ad se trahunt, succisque sic ad genitalia derivatis, reliquæ partes depauperatur. Inde ex nimia venere lassitudo, debilitas, immobilitas, incessus delumbis, encephali dolores, convulsiones sensuum omnium, maxime visus, hebetudo, cæcitas, fatuitas, circulatio febrilis, exsiccatio, macies, tabes, & pulmonica & dorsalis, effeminatio. Augentur hæc mala atque insanabi-*

\* Medicus Ann. t. ii. p. 213.



*lia flunt ob perpetuum in venerem pruritus, quem mens, non minùs quàm corpus, tandem contrahit, quoque efficitur, ut & dormientes obscena phantasmata exerceant, & in tentiginem prone partes quavis occasione impetum concipiant, onerique & stimulo sit quam libet exigua reparati spermatis copia, levissimo conatu, & vel sine hoc, de relaxatis loculis relapsura. Quo circa liquet, quare adolescentis florem adeo pessumdet iste excessus.\**

The English reader may perhaps choose to see this rendered in his own language; though M. Tissot has not thought proper to give a translation of it into French.

“ An immoderate emission of seed is not only prejudicial, by reason of the loss of a most useful humour; but likewise by a too frequent repetition of the convulsive motion, by which it is discharged; for the highest pleasure is followed by an universal resolution of the natural powers, which cannot frequently take place without enervation. Besides, the more the strainers of the body are drained, the more humours they draw to them from the other parts; and the juices being thus conveyed to the genitals, the other parts are impoverished. Hence it is that from excessive venery arise lassitude, weakness, numbness, a feeble gait, head-achs, convulsions of all the senses, but especially of the sight, and dullness of hearing, an idiot look, a feverish circulation, excitation, leanness, a consumption of the lungs and back, and effeminacy; these evils are increased and become incurable

\* Institutiones Pathologiæ Medicinalis, auctore, H. D. Gaubio. Lugd. Bat. 1758.

incurable by reason of a perpetual itch for pleasure, which the mind at last contracts as well as the body; and from whence it follows they have obscene dreams in sleep, and that the prone parts upon every the slightest occasion have a tendency to stiffen, and the quantity of replaced semen however small, becomes a burthen and a stimulus, which semen will be discharged from the relaxed cells by the very slightest effort, and even without any effort at all. Thus it is that this excess brings such perdition upon the flower of our youth."

## S E C T I O N. II.

### *Observations communicated.*

I SHALL in this place observe no other order than that of the dates of their reception. I have seen says my illustrious friend M. Zimmermann, a man of twenty-three years of age, who was afflicted with an epilepsy, who had greatly weakened himself by frequent masturbations. Every time he had nocturnal emissions, he fell into a perfect fit of epilepsy. The same thing happened after masturbations, from which he could not abstain, notwithstanding these accidents and all that could be said to him. When the fit was over, he was sensible of very violent pains in the reins and about the coccyx. However, having discontinued this practice for some time, I cured him of these involuntary emissions, and I hoped also to have cured him of the

epilepsy, the fits of which had already discontinued. He recovered his strength, appetite, and sleep, and a good colour, after having resembled a dead corpse. But returning again to his masturbations, which were always followed with these attacks, he was at length seized with the fits whilst walking in the streets; and he was found dead one morning in his chamber wallowing in his blood, having fallen out of bed. May I be allowed to put a question which occurred to me, when I read this observation: Are those who destroy themselves with a pistol ball, those who voluntarily drown themselves, or cut their own throats, more accountable for their deaths, are they greater suicides, than this man was? Without entering into the detail, my friend adds, that he knew another who was exactly in the same situation; and I have since learnt that he went off in the like manner. M. Zimmermann also says, that he knew a man of excellent genius, and of most extensive learning, who had lost all the powers of his mind, and whose body was exactly in the same state as Mr. Boerhaave's patient, which I have related above, occasioned by frequent self-pol-  
lution\*.

The two following facts are borrowed from Mr. Rast, jun. a celebrated physician at Lyons, with whom I had the pleasure of passing some months at Montpellier. A young man of Montpellier, a student in medicine, died of the excess of this kind of debauchery. The idea of his crime had made such an impression on his mind, that he died in a kind of despair, fancying he saw hell opening on every side of  
him.

\* Consult. Med. t. ii p. 36.

him ready to receive him. A child of this city, at the age of between six and seven, instructed, as I imagine, by a servant maid, polluted himself so often, that a slow fever, which succeeded, finished him. His rage for this act was so great, that he could not be restrained from it the very last days of his life. When he was informed that he thereby hastened his death, he consoled himself in saying, that he should the sooner meet with his father, who died some months before.

M. Mieg, a celebrated physician of Basil, known to the learned world by his excellent dissertations, and to whom his country is indebted for the discovery of inoculation, which he continues with as much success as skill, has communicated to me a letter from the Professor Stehelin; a name dear to letters, wherein I have found several important and useful observations. Some I shall reserve for the sequel of this work, where they will be placed with more propriety: this is the proper place for the two others. The son of M——, fourteen years of age, died of convulsions, and a kind of epilepsy, the origin of which was solely masturbation: the most eminent physicians of our city have in vain attended him. I also know a young lady, of between twelve and thirteen years of age; who, by this detestable practice, has brought on a consumption, with a large hanging belly, the *fluor albus*, and a diabetes. Though medicines have given her some ease, she continues languishing, and I dread the consequences.

## SECTION III.

*A description taken from Onania.*

SINCE the publication of this work, I have learnt from the most indisputable authority, that credit should not be given in every respect to the facts alledged in the English collection; and that for this reason, together with false representations of obscenity, and the supposed necessity of an imperial privilege, a German translation of this book in the empire had been suppressed. These motives would have been sufficient to have induced me to omit all that I had extracted from that work; but some considerations have induced me to retain it, after having given this information. The first is, that some of these reasons relate only to the German edition; the second is, that though there may be some imaginary facts, and that some carry this appearance, there is nevertheless testimony, that the greater part of them are but too true. In a word, the third consideration which determined me, is, that I find in the same letter from Mr. Stehelin, that he says, ' I have received a letter from M. Hoffman, at Maestricht, wherein he mentions, that he had seen a masturbator, who had already brought on the tabes dorsalis, which he treated without success, and which was cured by the remedy in *Onania*, of which Dr. Bekkers, at London, must necessarily be the author; and

‘and that he was so well cured, that he has recovered his flesh, and has since had several children.’

The English *Onania* is a real chaos; it is one of the most unconnected productions that has appeared for a long time. Nothing but the observations can be attended to; all the author’s reflections are nothing but theological and moral puerilities. I shall quote nothing from this work, which is pretty long, except a picture of the most common accidents where-with the patients are afflicted; the vivacity and energetic expression of pain, and repentance, which are found in some few letters, and which cannot be introduced in the extract, should not diminish the impression of horror which the reading of them inspires, because this impression depends upon facts; and the reader will be obliged to me for saving him the trouble of perusing a much greater number of letters equally destitute of style and expression. I shall range under six heads, the ills of which the English patients complain, beginning by the most grievous, those of the soul.

I. All the intellectual faculties are weakened, loss of memory ensues, the ideas are clouded: the patients sometimes fall into a slight madness, they have an incessant irksome uneasiness, continual anguish, and so keen a remorse of conscience, that they frequently shed tears. They are subject to vertigoes; all their senses, but particularly their sight and hearing, are weakened; their sleep, if they can obtain any, is disturbed with frightful dreams.

II. The powers of their bodies decay; the growth of such as abandon themselves to these abominable practices before it is accomplished, is greatly prevented.

ed. Some cannot sleep at all, others are in a perpetual state of drowsiness. They are affected with hypochondriac or hysterical complaints, and are overcome with the accidents that accompany those grievous disorders, melancholy, sighing, tears, palpitations, suffocations, and faintings. Some emit a calcareous saliva; coughs, slow fevers, and consumptions, are chastisements which others meet with in their own crimes.

III. The most acute pains form another object of patients complaints; some are thus affected in their heads, others in the breasts, stomach, and intestines; others have external rheumatic pains, aching numbness in all parts of their body, when they are slightly pressed.

IV. Pimples do not only appear in the face, (this is one of the most common symptoms) but even real suppurating blisters upon the nose, the breast, and the thighs; and painful itchings in the same parts. One patient complained even of fleshy excrescences upon his forehead.

V. The organs of generation also participate of that misery whereof they are the primary causes. Many patients are incapable of erection; others discharge their seminal liquor upon the slightest titillation, and the most feeble erection; or in the efforts they make when at stool. Many are affected with a constant gonorrhœa, which entirely destroys their powers, and the discharge resembles foetid matter, or mucus. Others are tormented with painful priapisms, dysuriæ, stranguries, heat of urine, and a difficulty in rendering it, which greatly torments many patients. Some have painful tumours upon their testicles, penis, bladder,

der, and spermatic cord. In a word, either the impracticability of coition, or a deprivation of the genital liquor, renders every one imbecile who has for any length of time given way to this crime.

VI. The functions of the intestines are sometimes quite disordered; and some patients complain of stubborn constipations; others of the hemorrhoids, or of the running of a fœtid matter from the fundament. This last observation recalls to my mind the young man mentioned by M. Hoffman, who after every masturbation was afflicted with a diarrhœa, which was an additional cause of the loss of his strength.

## SECTION IV.

### *Observations of the Author.*

THE picture which my first observation presents is dreadful: I was myself terrified the first time I saw the unfortunate object from whom it was drawn. I then was more sensible than ever of the necessity of displaying to youth all the horrors of that tremendous gulph, in which they voluntarily precipitate themselves.

L. D——— was by profession a watchmaker; he had lived prudently, and had enjoyed a good state of health, till he was about seventeen years of age; at this period he gave himself up to masturbation, which he repeated every day, sometimes even

to



to the third time, and the ejection was always preceded and followed by a slight insensibility, and a convulsive motion in the extending muscles of the head, which drew it very much back, whilst the neck was extremely swelled. A year had not elapsed before he began to feel a great weakness after every act: this notification was not sufficient to rescue him from his filthy practices; his soul, already devoted to these ordures, was incapable of forming any other idea, and the repetition of his crime became every day more frequent, till such time as he was in a state which gave reason to apprehend his death. Too late grown wise, the evil had already made so great a progress that he was incurable, and the genital parts were become so easily irritated, and were so weak, that it was no longer necessary that this unhappy youth should be an agent in order to shed his seed. The slightest irritation immediately procured an imperfect erection, which was immediately followed by an evacuation of this liquor, which daily increased his weakness. This spasm, of which he was not before sensible but in consummating the act, and which ceased therewith, was now become habitual, and frequently attacked him without any apparent cause, and in so violent a manner, that during the whole period of the fit, which sometimes lasted fifteen hours, and never less than eight, he felt such violent pains in the hinder part of the neck, that he did not scream out, but absolutely howled: and all this while it was impossible for him to swallow either solids or fluids. He entirely lost his strength, and was obliged to give up his profession, being altogether incapacitated: thus overwhelmed with

with misery, he languished almost without any assistance for some months; and was the more to be pitied, as what memory he had remaining, and which he was at length entirely bereft of, only served him to take an incessant retrospect of the cause of his misfortunes, which were increased by all the aggravating horrors of remorse. I heard of his situation and went to him; I found a being that less resembled a living creature than a corpse, lying upon straw, meagre, pale, and filthy, casting forth an infectious stench; almost incapable of motion, a watery palish blood issued from his nose; flaver constantly flowed from his mouth; having a diarrhœa, he voided his excrement in the bed without knowing it: he had a continual flux of semen; his sore watry eyes were deadened to that degree, that he could not move them; his pulse was very small, quick, and frequent: it was with great difficulty he breathed, reduced almost to a skeleton in every part except his feet which became œdematous. The disorder of his mind was equal to that of his body; devoid of ideas and memory, incapable of connecting two sentences, without reflection, without being afflicted at his fate, without any other sensation than pain, which returned with every fit, at least every third day. Far below the brute creation, he was a spectacle, the horrible sight of which cannot be conceived, and it was difficult to discover that he had formerly made part of the human species. I had immediate recourse to the assistance of strengthening remedies, in order to remove those violent spasmodic fits, which so dreadfully brought him back to sensibility only by pain: I contented myself with giving him some ease in

this respect, and I discontinued administering remedies which could not ameliorate his condition ; he died at the end of a few weeks, in June 1757, his whole body having become dropfical.

Every one who addict's himself to this odious and criminal habit is not so cruelly punished ; but there are none who are not in some degree afflicted. The frequency of the acts, the variety of constitutions, many foreign circumstances, occasion a considerable difference. The ills which I have the most frequently seen are, first, a total disorder of the stomach, the forerunner of which, with some, is the loss of appetite ; with others, acute pains, particularly in the time of digestion ; frequent vomiting, which baffles all remedies, whilst the patient continues addicted to his shocking practice. Secondly, a weakness in the organs of respiration, from which follow dry coughs, almost always hoarseness, weakness of the voice, and shortness of breath upon the least extraordinary exercise. Thirdly, a total relaxation of the nervous system.

It is not necessary to be much acquainted with the animal œconomy to know that these three causes may produce all kinds of languishing diseases, and experience proves that they daily produce them. The first accidents that result from masturbation are, besides those which I have just recited, a considerable diminution of the powers, paleness in a greater or less degree, sometimes a slight jaundice, which however is continual : often pimples, which go away only to make place for others, and which continually re-appear all over the face, but particularly on the forehead, upon the temples, and near the nose ;

remar-

remarkable leanness; surprizing sensations at the change of the seasons, particularly in cold weather: a languor in the eyes, a weakness of sight, a considerable decay of all the faculties, particularly the memory. A patient wrote to me, 'that he was very sensible how much that vile manœuvre had diminished the strength of his faculties, and particularly his memory\*.' I hope I shall be pardoned for inserting here some fragments of letters, which being united will form a pretty complete picture of the physical disorders produced by masturbation, and which the language wherein I wrote, prevented my availing myself of in the first edition of this work.

'I had the misfortune like many other young people (he wrote to me when he was at the age of maturity) to give way to a habit as pernicious to the body as it is to the soul; age, with the assistance of reason, has for some time corrected this shocking inclination; but the evil is done. To an extraordinary affection and sensibility of the nervous system, and to accidents which it occasions, is united a weakness, an uneasiness, a weariness, and distress, each of which seems to strive most to disturb me. I am exhausted by an almost incessant flux of semen: my face has nearly a cadaverous appearance, it is so pale and fallow. Weakness has rendered every kind of motion difficult to me: my legs are so feeble that I can scarce stand upright, and I dare not venture to go out of my chamber. My digestion is so bad

D 2

that

\* Dated Sept. 15, 1755.

\* that I void my nutriment three or four hours af-  
 \* ter having taken it, just as much in its natural  
 \* state as if my stomach had the instant before re-  
 \* ceived it. My breast is oppressed with phlegm,  
 \* which greatly afflicts me, and expectoration entirely  
 \* exhausts me. This is a picture in miniature of my  
 \* miseries, which are farther increased by the shock-  
 \* ing certainty by which I know, that every succeed-  
 \* ing day will be more disagreeable than the former.  
 \* In a word, I don't believe that any human crea-  
 \* ture was ever afflicted with so many ills as my-  
 \* self. Without the peculiar aid of providence, I  
 \* should find it very difficult to bear up under such a  
 \* heavy burthen.'

I shuddered when I read in another of my patients  
 letters these shocking words, which make me recal  
 to mind those of Onania. 'If religion did not  
 \* restrain me, I should before now have put an  
 \* end to my life, which is the more insupportable,  
 \* as it is thus miserable entirely through my own  
 \* fault.' Nothing can be worse than anguish; pain  
 is nothing in comparifon to it, and when it is unit-  
 ed to a multitude of other ills, it is not surprifing  
 that a patient should solicit death as his greatest blef-  
 sing, looking upon life as a real ill, if so shocking  
 a state can be called life.

*Vivere quum nequeam, fit mihi posse mori ;  
 Dulce mori miseris, sed mors optata recedit.*

The following description is more concise, and  
 not so dreadful. 'I had the misfortune in my juve-  
 \* nile days, being then between eight and ten years  
 of

' of age, to contract this pernicious habit, which  
 ' soon destroyed my constitution; but within these  
 ' few years I am afflicted in a most extraordinary  
 ' manner; my nerves are extremely weak, my  
 ' hands, devoid of strength, are incessantly trem-  
 ' bling, and in a perpetual perspiration; I have  
 ' violent qualms of stomach, pains in my arms and  
 ' legs, which sometimes communicates to my reins  
 ' and breast: I am troubled with coughing; my eyes  
 ' are sunk and always weak; I have a violent appe-  
 ' tite, and yet I greatly fall away, and always look ill  
 ' in the face.' In the section upon treating this dis-  
 order, the proper remedies are pointed out. I shall  
 not enter into a detail of the first by reason of its  
 length.

A third patient wrote to me, ' Nature opened  
 ' my eyes with respect to the cause of my languid  
 ' state, and the danger of the abyss in which I  
 ' was plunging myself, as well by the pimples or  
 ' blisters which arose upon the part which was the in-  
 ' strument of my crime, as by the weakness that I  
 ' felt in the very act of committing it, and which  
 ' left no reason to doubt of the cause.'

I could in this place subjoin a great number  
 of accounts from patients, for whom I had been  
 consulted since the publication of the second edi-  
 tion of this work; but as they would be only useless  
 repetitions, I shall confine myself to two or three of  
 the most recent.

A man, in the prime of life, wrote to me two  
 days ago, ' In my early youth I contracted an in-  
 ' famous habit, which destroyed my health; my  
 ' head is confused, and subject to frequent swim-

‘ mings, which makes me apprehensive of the apo-  
 ‘ plexy, for which reason I was blooded; but this  
 ‘ was discovered to be a wrong measure. I have an  
 ‘ oppression at my breast, which occasions a confined  
 ‘ respiration; I have frequent pains at my stomach,  
 ‘ and by turns my whole body is affected; my sleep  
 ‘ at night is disturbed and uneasy, and does not re-  
 ‘ cruit my spirits. I have frequent itchings; I am  
 ‘ pale; I have pains in my eyes, which are weak;  
 ‘ my skin is of a yellow tinge, and my breath disa-  
 ‘ greeable, &c.’

Another writes to me, ‘ I cannot walk two hun-  
 ‘ dred paces without resting; I am extremely weak;  
 ‘ I have continual pains in all parts of my body,  
 ‘ but particularly my shoulders; I suffer greatly  
 ‘ with pains in my breast; I retain my appetite, but  
 ‘ this is a misfortune, as I no sooner eat any thing;  
 ‘ but I have pains in my stomach, and I give up all  
 ‘ I have eat. If I read a page or two my eyes water,  
 ‘ and are very sore; involuntary sighs frequently e-  
 ‘ scape from me. *Filo xyliino flaccidius veretrum, omnif-*  
 ‘ *que erectionis impotens, semen quidem, manu sollicitatem,*  
 ‘ *effluere sinit, nequaquam vero ejaculat, adeo cæterum*  
 ‘ *imminutum & retractum ut oculi de sexu vix judicare*  
 ‘ *sint.*’ The detail and success of treating this patient  
 is in the sequel of this work; I shall recite them,  
 as this was the most enfeebled and docile patient I  
 ever met with.

A third, who had given himself up to this horrible  
 manœuvre at twelve years of age, appeared to be  
 more troubled in his intellectual faculties than in his  
 corporeal health. ‘ I feel my heat sensibly diminish,  
 ‘ my senses are greatly blunted, the fire of my ima-  
 gination

‘gination greatly decreased, the sensation of my  
 ‘existence not so quick; all that appears before me  
 ‘is like a dream; I have more difficulty to conceive  
 ‘and less presence of mind; in a word, I find my-  
 ‘self perishing, though I can still sleep, have not  
 ‘lost my appetite, and look tolerably well in the  
 ‘face.’

The hypochondria is no uncommon attendant; and if those who are afflicted with it give themselves up to this practice, it completes all the accidents that flow from this disorder, and renders the patient totally incurable. I have seen most tormenting uneasiness, agitations, and anxieties, which were the consequences of these united causes; and repeated observations have convinced me, that in the hypochondria, which is sometimes accompanied with delirious fits and phrenzy, masturbation always forwards these fits. The brain, being weakened by this two-fold cause, is successively deprived of all its faculties; and the patients, at length, fall into a state of imbecility without any other than frantic intervals. The Memoirs of the curious in Nature speak of a melancholy man, who, according to the advice of Horace, endeavoured sometimes to elevate his spirits by wine, and having too much addicted himself to another kind of pleasure in the honeymoon of a second marriage, fell into such a terrible state of insanity, that he was obliged to be chained down\*.

Jakin has transmitted to us in his commentaries upon Rhazes, the history of a melancholy man, who  
 by

\* De cur. 2. ann. iv. ob. 166. p. 327.



by excesses of the same kind brought on him a consumption attended with insanity, which put an end to his life in a very few days \*.

We know the epileptical paroxysms, when accompanied with an effusion of the seminal liquor, exhaust more, and occasion a greater degree of stupefaction than the others. Coition brings on these fits, in those who are subject to them; and to this cause M. Van Swieten attributes the great oppression which the patients suffer, if the fits are frequent †. M. Didier knew a merchant at Montpellier, who never made any sacrifices to Venus without having immediately after a fit of epilepsy ‡.

Galen relates a similar observation ||; Henry Van Heers testifies the same thing §, and I have had occasion to be convinced of it. M. Van Swieten knew a person who was troubled with the epilepsy, who had a fit upon his wedding night \*\*. M. Hoffman knew a very lascivious woman, who usually had a fit of epilepsy after each act of venery. What M. Boerhaave says in his treatise upon nervous disorders may be here properly introduced: ‘that in the heat of venery all the nerves are affected, sometimes, even mortally.’ He cites an example of a woman, who every time she performed the act of coition, fell into a pretty long syncope; and another of a man, who died the very first time of coition; the spasm was so violent

\* Schenckius, l. i. ob. 2. De mania, p. 152.

† Sect. 1077. t. iii. p. 429.

‡ Quest. Medic. an epilepsiæ mercurius vitæ.

|| De locis affectis, l. v. c. 6.

§ Observationes medicæ oppido, raræ, obs. 18.

\*\* Sect. 1075. t. iii. p. 412.

violent, that it brought on a general\* palsy; and I find in that excellent performance wherewith M. de Sauvages has lately enriched the *materia medica*, a very singular, and perhaps unparalelled observation of a man, who, in the midst of the act, was seized with a spasm (and the disorder continued twelve years) whereby his body became stiff, and he lost all sensation and memory. *It a ut illum præ oneris impotentia in alteram lecti partem excutere cogeret uxor, & evacuatio spermatis lenta flacci doque veretro demum succedebat, remittente corporis rigiditate †.* I know a variety of facts that are analogous: M. de Haller has mentioned several in his remarks upon Boerhaave's institutes ‡, and many others may be found in the commentators.

It has already been observed, that masturbation brought on the epilepsy, and this happens more frequently than is imagined; is it wonderful that these acts should bring on the fits, as I have seen more than once in those who were subject to them? or is it astonishing, that it should render this disorder incurable?

This total stiffness of the whole body, which M. Boerhaave speaks of, is one of the most uncommon symptoms: I never observed it but once, whilst the last edition of this work was at press, but then it was in the highest degree. This disorder began by a stiffness of the neck and the spine, which successively communicated itself to all the members, and I saw this unfortunate young man some time before his death,

\* De morb. ner, p. 462.

† Nosologia methodica, seu classes morborum.

‡ Ad. § 658. n. f. t. v. p. 445.

death, when he could bear no other posture than lying on his belly in bed, incapable of moving either his hands or feet, or indeed of any other kind of motion; unable to take any other sort of aliment, than such as was put into his mouth. He existed some months in this dreadful situation, and died, or rather went out like the snuff of a candle, without being sensible of pain.

I have since seen another example of this general and mortal stiffness, which deserves notice. I was called upon, Feb. 10, 1760, to pay a visit in the country to a man about forty years of age, who had been of a very strong and robust constitution; but who had been guilty of great excesses with women and wine, and who had frequently exerted himself in what may be stiled remarkable feats of that kind. His disorder had begun some months before by weakness in his legs, which made him stagger as he walked, just as if he had been intoxicated; he even sometimes fell as he was walking upon even ground: he could not come down stairs without much difficulty, and scarce had courage to come any more out of his bed-chamber. His hands trembled very much; he could not write a few words without much inconvenience, which were then very ill written, but he could dictate easily: though his tongue had never been extremely voluble, it was more than usually inclined to taciturnity. He still preserved his memory; and there were no other grounds to imagine the faculties were impaired, but his being less attentive to the game of draughts, and his countenance being a good deal altered. His appetite remained, but he could not turn himself in his bed without some difficulty.

It appeared to me that the original cause of the disorder was too free an use of women and wine; and I thought that the feats which he had often performed might be the cause of the muscles being more particularly affected. The season was not very favourable for taking of medicines, but it was necessary, however, to stop the progress of the disorder; I advised him to rub his body with flannel and strengthening unctiōn; I intended to increase the application, and to add the use of the cold bath in the beginning of the summer: the tremor of his hands began to diminish at the end of a few weeks. A consultation was held in the month of April: the patient's disorder was imputed to his having wrote for some months, two years before, in a room that was newly white-washed: he used lukewarm baths, greasy unctiōns, and powders that were said to be diaphoretics and antispasmodics; but he found no alteration. In a second consultation, which was held in the month of June, it was determined that he should go to Leuk in Valais, in order to take the waters of that place: upon his return his trembling and stiffness were increased. Since when (Sept. 1760) till the month of January 1764, I have seen him only three or four times. In 1762, upon the faith of some advertisement, he sent to Frankfort for the remedies mentioned in Onania; but they had no effect. He took some others the year following from a foreign physician, with as little success. The disorder has from the beginning been but slow in its progress, though it has daily increased; and some months before his death, he could not support himself upon his legs; nor could he, without assistance,  
move

move either his hand or arm; the impediment of his tongue increased, and he so far lost his voice, that it was with much difficulty he could be understood; the extending muscles of the head lost their power, and it was continually reclined upon his breast; he had an incessant pain in his reins; his rest and appetite successively diminished; in the last moments of his life it was with much difficulty that he could swallow: from Christmas he was troubled with an oppression, which was attended with an irregular fever: his eyes deadened in a very particular manner. In the month of January, when I saw him again, he passed the whole day and part of the night upon a settee, leaning backward, with his legs extended upon a chair, his head falling every moment upon his breast, having a person standing constantly by him, who was continually employed in raising his head, serving him with food, giving him snuff, wiping his nose, and in giving attention to all that he said. The last days of his life he was reduced to the necessity of pronouncing each letter separately, which were written down as he uttered them. Finding that I gave him no sort of hope of recovery, and that I administered nothing but some lenitives to assuage the violence of the fever, instigated by the desire of life, he sent one of his friends whom he confided in to me, in order to impart the cause to which he attributed all his misfortune, in acknowledging that it was masturbation: that it was several years since he had begun this infamous practice; that he had continued it as long as he was able, and that he had felt his disorders increase in proportion as he had abandoned himself to it. This acknowledgment he

he himself confirmed to me some days after, and this was what had already induced him to make use of the remedies recommended in Onania.

Excess of amorous pleasures does not only produce languishing disorders, but it sometimes brings on acute diseases, and it always impedes the cure of those which are derived from another source; it easily produces that malignity, which in my opinion, is nothing but a defect in the natural powers. Hippocrates has already left us, in his history of epidemical disorders, the observation of a young man who, after having committed venereal and bacchanalian excesses, was seized with a fever accompanied with the most disagreeable and irregular symptoms, and which at length proved mortal\*.

All that M. Hoffman says upon this head is worthy of being recited. After speaking of the danger of amorous pleasures for those who labour under wounds, he considers those risques which persons run in addicting themselves to them, who are troubled with a fever; and he begins by quoting an observation of Fabricius de Hilden, who says, that a man having had connection with a woman the tenth day of a pleurisy, which had terminated the seventh by abundant perspiration, he was seized with a violent fever and immoderate trembling, and died on the thirteenth day. He afterwards relates an account of a man of seventy years of age, of a gouty disposition, much addicted to women and wine, who fancying himself cured of a pleurisy, was immediately after coition seized with a violent trembling all over

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his

\* Epid. I. 3. § æg. Foëf. p. 1117.

his body, extreme flushings in his face, with all the symptoms of the disorder which he thought he had got rid of, but which returned with much more violence than at first, and he was in much greater danger. He talks of a man who never gave way to venereal excesses without having an intermitting fever for several days after. He concludes with an observation of Bartholin, who says, a young bridegroom was seized the day after his nuptials, by reason of his conjugal excesses, with a violent fever, and a great dejection of spirits, accompanied with faintings, risings in the stomach, immoderate thirst, light-headedness, and inability to sleep, and much uneasiness. He was cured by repose and strengthening medicines\*.

M. Chesneau saw a young married couple, who were the very first week of their nuptials seized with a violent incessant fever, accompanied with flushings in their faces, which were considerably bloated, and one of them had a violent pain at the crupper. They both died at the end of a few days †.

M. Vandermonde describes a fever that was produced by the same cause, which was also of long duration, and attended with the most alarming accidents; but its issue was more fortunate than that of Hippocrates's patient. I shall not here relate the description which he gives of it, as it is somewhat long, but advise those who practise physic to peruse it in the work itself, which is every-where now to be met with: I shall hereafter mention the manner  
of

\* De morb. ex nim. vener. §. 20, 21.

† Nic. Chesneau, observ. medic. lib. quinque, l. v. obs. 36, 37.

of treating it. M. de Sauvages describes this disorder under the name of *the burning fever of the emaciated*; their pulse are alternatively strong and full, and weak and small, their urine is red, their skin dry and hot, and they have a great thirst upon them: they have a nausea, and cannot sleep\*.

In 1761 and 1762, I saw two young men, very strong, healthy, and vigorous, who were seized, one on the morrow, and the other on the second night of their nuptials, with a violent fever, without any shivering, their pulse being quick and hard; they were light-headed, and had some slight convulsive motions, attended with insupportable uneasiness, and a great dryness of their skin: the second was very thirsty, and urined with much difficulty. I at first thought that the excessive use of wine might have been partly the cause of these accidents, but I was fully dissuaded from this opinion, at least with regard to the second. They were both of them cured in two days, a circumstance, which joined to the epocha of the disorder, and its diagnostics, removed all kind of doubt with respect to its cause.

Melancholy observations have taught me, that acute disorders in those who addict themselves to masturbation, were very fatal: their stages are very irregular, their symptoms capricious, and their periods uncertain: the constitution furnishes no assistance; art must supply every thing; and as it never produces any perfect crisis, so when after much difficulty the disorder is surmounted, the patient still remains rather in a languishing state than upon the mending.

\* Nosolog. i. ii. p. 262.



mending hand; when he requires the same attention as before to be assiduously paid him, to prevent any chronic disorder coming upon him; and I find that Fonseca has already given cautions upon this head. Several young people, says he, who are even robust, after having committed excesses with women, are seized the very same night, either with an acute fever, which terminates their days, or else they are afflicted with such dreadful disorders as are with the utmost difficulty cured: for when the body is weakened by venereal excesses, if it at the same time labours under any acute disorder, there is no cure for it\*.

A youth, who had not yet attained his sixteenth year, devoted himself with such fury to masturbation, that at length, instead of sperm, he brought forth nothing but blood, the emission whereof was soon followed with excessive pain, and an inflammation of all the organs of generation. Being by accident in the country, I was consulted thereupon; I ordered very emollient cataplasms, which produced the effect that I expected; but I have since learned that he died soon after of the small-pox; and I do not doubt that the shocks, which he gave to his constitution by his infamous rage, greatly contributed to render that disorder mortal. What instruction for youth!

All those who have frequent occasion to treat of venereal cases know that to those patients, whose constitutions have been much battered, they are frequently fatal. I have seen the most shocking spectacles of this sort.

#### S E C T I O N

\* De sanitate tuenda, p. 110.

## SECTION V.

*The effects of Masturbation in Women.*

ALL the foregoing observations, except that of Mr. Stehelin, seem to relate principally to the men. This subject would be treated in a very imperfect manner, if I did not acquaint the fair sex, that, in pursuing the same career in these infamous practices, they expose themselves to the same dangers: that all the disorders which I have been describing, women have frequently brought upon themselves; and that fresh victims of the female sex every day sacrifice themselves to this destructive phrenzy. The English Onania is replete with confessions, that cannot be read without horror and compassion: the disorder seems even to make greater progress with women than with men. Besides all those symptoms which I have already described, women are more particularly exposed to hysterical fits, or shocking vapours; to incurable jaundices; to violent cramps in the stomach and back; to acute pains in the nose; to the *flour albus*, the accretion whereof is a continual source of the most smarting pain; to descents and ulcerations of the matrix, and to all the infirmities which these two disorders bring on; to the extension and darting of the clitoris; to the *furor uterinus*, which at once deprives them of decency and reason, and puts them upon a level with the most lascivious

lascivious brutes, till a desperate death snatches them from pain and infamy.

The physiognomy, that faithful mirrour of the state of soul and body, gives the first indications of the internal disorder. The complexion and plumpness, which jointly confer a youthful look, and which is the sole substitute of beauty, for without this even beauty produces no other effect than cold admiration; this complexion and plumpness are, I say, the first things that disappear; then a leanness succeeds, and the skin becomes rough, and tinged of a lead colour; the eyes lose their brilliance and deaden, and by their languour express that of the whole frame; the lips lose their vermilion hue, the teeth their whiteness; and, in a word, it is no uncommon thing for the whole body to receive such a shock, as for the the shape to be intirely distorted. The rachitis, commonly called the rickets, is not a disorder, as Boerhaave represents, that never afflicts any when they are past three years old. We often see young people of both sexes, but particularly females, who, after being well made at the age of eight, ten, twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen years, gradually become crooked by the bending of the spine; and this disorder frequently gets to a great head. This is not the place for entering into the particulars of this disorder, or for enumerating the causes that occasion it. Hippocrates has already specified two\*. I may perhaps have occasion, in some future work, to communicate what I have acquired by frequent observations upon this subject; but what I have here to say, is, that

\* Aphor. §. vi. 46.

that masturbation is amongst the foremost of its causes.

M. Hoffman has already said, that young people who addicted themselves to amorous pleasures before they had attained their full growth, would fall away and diminish instead of increase in their growing \*; and it is plain that the same cause that may prevent growth, should by a stronger reason distort it, and produce irregularities in its gradations, which contribute to the disorder I have been speaking of.

A common symptom in both sexes, and which I rank under this article, as it is more frequent among women, is the indifference which this infamous practice leaves for the lawful pleasures of Hymen, even when their inclinations and powers still remain; an indifference which does not only induce many to embrace a life of celibacy, but even accompanies the nuptial bed. In the collection of Dr. Bekkers, a female acknowledges, that this practice had gained so complete a dominion over her senses, that she detested the lawful means of assuaging the lust of the flesh. I know a man, who was initiated into these abominations by his preceptor, and who had the same disgust upon his early entrance into the marriage state; and the anguish of this situation joined to his exhausted condition, the consequence of his operations, threw him into a profound melancholy, which however yielded to the power of nervous and strengthening remedies.

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\* De ætate conjugio opportuna, §. x. supplement. p. 340. This whole dissertation deserves reading, though it might be better penned.

Before I proceed farther, permit me to intreat fathers and mothers to reflect upon the source from whence this last patient derived his misfortunes, as there are more examples of the kind than this one. If they may be deceived in the choice of those to whom they intrust the important charge of forming the mind and heart of their pupils; what is there not to fear from those who, being only appointed to display their corporeal talents, are examined less critically with respect to their morals, and from servants, who are frequently hired without its being known whether they have any morals at all? The child whom I spoke of, from M. Rast, was instructed in this evil, as we have seen, by a servant maid; the English collection is replete with such examples; and I could produce but too great a number of young plants who have been lost by the very gardener who was intrusted with their rearing. There are in this kind of culture, gardeners of both sexes. But I shall be asked where is the remedy to this evil? The answer is within my sphere, and I shall give it in a concise manner. Be particularly careful in the choice of a preceptor, watch over him and his pupils with that vigilance which an attentive and an enlightened father of a family exerts to know what is done in the darkest recesses of his house: use that vigilance which discovers the coppice where the deer has taken shelter, when it has escaped all other eyes: this is always possible when it is earnestly pursued.

*Docuit enim fabula dominum videre plurimum in rebus suis.*

Phæd.

Never

Never leave young people alone with their masters, if these are suspected; and prevent their having any correspondence with the servants.

Not long since a young woman about eighteen years old, who had enjoyed a good state of health, was seized with an astonishing weakness: her powers daily diminished; in the day-time she was constantly overcome with drowsiness, and was at night unable to sleep; she lost her appetite, and a dropical swelling spread all over her body: she consulted a skilful surgeon, who, after he found that her courses were regular, suspected masturbation. The effect of the first question which he put to her confirmed the justness of his suspicion, and the patient's acknowledging it convinced him: he represented to her the danger of such a practice, a cessation of which, and some medicines, in a few days stopt the progress of the disorder, and produced even some favourable change.

Besides masturbation, or manual pollution, there is another kind of pollution, which may be called *clitorical*, the known origin of which is to be traced so far back as the time of the second Sappho;

*Lesbides infamem quæ me fecistis amatæ :*

and which was so much too common among the Roman women, at the time when all morality was lost, that it was more than once the subject for the epigrammatists and satyrists of that age.

*Lenonium ancillas posita Laufella corona.*

*Provocat, & tollit pendentis præmia coxæ.*

*Ms.*

*Ipsa Medullina frictum crisantis adorat.*

*Palnam inter dominas virtus natalibus æquat\*.*

Nature has been pleased to give some women a femi-  
resemblance to man: this has, upon slight inquiry,  
given rise to the chimera, which has prevailed for  
some centuries, of hermaphrodites. The supernatu-  
ral size of a part which is naturally very small, and  
whereupon M. Tronchin has given a learned disserta-  
tion, produces all the miracle, and the shameful a-  
buse of this part all the evil. Some women, who  
were thus imperfect; glorying, perhaps, in this kind  
of resemblance, seized upon the functions of  
virility †. The danger of this kind of pollution is  
not, however, less than that of the other sorts of mas-  
turbation: the effects are equally shocking; all these  
paths lead to emaciation, languor, and death. The  
last species deserves the greater attention, as it is  
frequently practised at present, and it would be easy  
to find more than one Laufella, or a single Medullina,  
who, like those Roman females, so much esteem the  
gifts of nature, as to think they ought to abolish the  
arbitrary distinction of birth.

Women have been known to love girls with as  
much fondness as ever did the most passionate of men,  
and conceive the most poignant jealousy when they  
were addressed by the male sex upon the score of  
love.

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\* Juv. Sat. 6. v. 321.

† *Illas dixit gratia Tribades, Gallis dicuntur Ri-  
baudes: menstrum quotidie nascens, & cui eo confiden-  
tius sese tradunt puellæ, quod abest fecunditas, & ut  
dixit Juvenalis, Quod abortivo non est opus.*

It is time to conclude these shocking details, I am weary of detecting the turpitude and misery of humanity. I shall not in this place collect any more facts, those which remain will be more properly ranked in the future sections, and I shall enter upon an examination of the causes, after one general observation; which is, that young people, born with a tender constitution, have many more disorders to combat, than those who are born vigorous, for the very same crimes. None are exempt from punishment, but it is not equally inflicted upon all. Those particularly who have reason to apprehend any hereditary disorders, either from their father or mother's side; such as are threatened with the gout, the stone, hectic complaints, the evil, are troubled with a cough, an asthma, spitting of blood, megrims, epilepsy, or are inclined to that kind of rickets which I have mentioned above; all such unhappy people, I say, should be perfectly persuaded, that every act of this kind of debauchery strikes deep at their constitution, inevitably hastens the disorders they fear, will render the fits infinitely more disagreeable, and will, in the very flower of their youth, bring on all the infirmities of the most languishing old age.

*Tartareas vivum constat inire vis.*



## P A R T II.

*The Causes.*

## SECTION VI.

*The Importance of the seminal liquor.*

**I**N what manner does too great an emission of semen produce those disorders which I have been describing? This is what I am now going to examine. These causes may be reduced to two: a privation of this liquor, and the circumstances which accompany emission. To enter into anatomical disquisitions of the organs which separate it; to frame conjectures more or less probable of the manner in which this secretion is made, or to make observations upon its sensible qualities, would be introducing subjects into this work no way proper. It is only necessary to prove its utility, by the testimony of the most eminent physicians, some of which I have already given, and to determine what are its effects upon the body. The following section is designed to

exa-

examine the effects which must produce circumstances which accompany emission.

Hippocrates thought it was extracted from all the body, and particularly the head. ‘The seed of  
‘of man,’ says he, ‘arises from all the humours of  
‘his body, and is the most valuable part of them.’  
What evinces this, is the weakness which those are  
sensible of, who lose any, however small the quantity  
by carnal intercourse. Veins and nerves from every  
part of the body discharge themselves into the genital  
parts; when these find themselves replete and heated,  
they feel a titillation, which is communicated into  
all parts of the body, and carries with it an impression  
of heat and pleasure; the humours are put into a kind  
of fermentation, whereby is separated all that is most  
precious and balsamic; and this part, thus separated  
from the rest, is conveyed by the spinal marrow to the  
organs of generation\*. Galen is of this opinion: ‘This  
humour, says he, ‘is nothing but the most subtle of  
all the others, it has veins and nerves, which convey  
it from all parts of the body to the genitals†.’ ‘When  
a person loses his seed,’ he says in another place, ‘he  
loses at the same time the vital spirit: so that it is not  
astonishing that too frequent coition should enervate,  
as the body is thereby deprived of the purest of its  
humours‡.’

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\* De senitura, Foëf. p. 231.

† De spermate, l. i. c. i. t. 8. p. 135.

‡ De femine, l. i. c. xxv. t. i. p. 1281.

The same author has, in his Philosophical History, preserved for us the opinions of the different ancient philosophers upon this subject; which I shall, with permission, relate here. Aristotle, whose physical works will be held in esteem as long as the value of observations, and the merit and difficulty of pursuing them are known, calls it the excrement of the last aliment (which, in less obscure terms, implies, that part of our aliments which has arrived at the highest perfection) that has the faculty of reproducing bodies like unto that which produced it. Pythagoras says, it is the flower of the purest blood. Alcmaeon, his disciple, who was a celebrated naturalist and physician, one of the first who was acquainted with the great utility of dissecting animals, and he amongst the Pagan philosophers who seemed to have the justest notions of the nature of the soul: Alcmaeon, I say, looked upon it as a portion of the brain; and it is not above two or three years since a celebrated physician adopted and amplified this system; he pointed out the passages, by which the brain is conveyed to the testicles, which he looks upon as ganglions, and not as glands; and from the dissipation of the brain he explains all the phænomena of venereal drainings.

Plato considered this liquor as ‘a running of the spinal marrow.’ Democritus was of the same opinion as Hippocrates and Galen. Epicurus, that respectable man, who knew better than any one that man could be happy only by pleasure, but who at the same time limited this pleasure by such a rule as a Christian hero would not disapprove of: Epicurus,  
whose

whose doctrine has been so shockingly distorted and blackened by the Stoics, that those who were not acquainted with it but through this channel, have suffered themselves to be imposed upon, and looked (as M. Fenelon says) upon a man for a debauchee, whose continence was exemplary, whose morals were always consistent, and (I may add) whose principles are the severest censure upon the dogmas of his pretended modern disciples, who knowing nothing of him but his name, shamefully prostitute it to maintain infamous systems, which he held in abhorrence; and the judicious among them who are sticklers for truth, should not allow his memory to be dishonoured, if it be possible that such abandoned people can dishonour any one; Epicurus, I say, looked upon the seed as part of the soul and body, and upon this opinion he founded his precepts, which enjoined its preservation.

Though some of the sentiments differ in some respect, they nevertheless all evince what a high value was put upon this precious humour.

It has been asked, is it analogous to any other humour? Is it the same as that liquid, which under the name of animal spirits, runs through the nerves, and concurs in all the functions that are any wise important of the animal machine, and the depravity whereof produces innumerable disorders, which are as frequent as they are capricious? To answer this question peremptorily, an intimate acquaintance with the nature of these two humours is requisite. We are very distant from such knowledge, and can, therefore, only frame ingenious and probable conjectures.

‘ We can easily comprehend,’ says M. Hoffman, ‘ how there is so close a connection between the brain and testicles ; because these two organs secern from the blood the most subtle and exquisite lymph, which is destined to give strength and motion to the parts, and to assist even the functions of the soul. So it is probable, that too great a dissipation of these liquors may destroy the powers of the soul, and the body\*. The seminal liquid,’ says he in another place, ‘ is distributed in the same manner as the animal spirits of the brain, into all the nerves of the body: it seems to be of the same nature ; wherefore in proportion as the more is dissipated, the less is secerned from these spirits.’ M. de Gorter is of the same opinion ; ‘ the sperm is the most perfect and important of the animal liquors, and the most elaborate, being the result of all digestions ; its intimate connexion with the animal spirits evinces, that like them it derives its origin from the most perfect humours†.’ In a word, it appears by these testimonies, and by a variety of others, which it would be needless to quote, that it is a most important liquor, which may be called the Essential Oil of the animal liquors ; or, to speak with more precision, leaves the other humours weak, and in some degree vapid.

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\* Ibid. cap. cii. p. 293.

† De Perspiratione insensibili, l. 17. § 9. p. 219.  
—In 1720, Dr. G. A. Jaques supported a thesis upon the following question at Paris, An humorum præstantior semen? and, according to custom, replied in the affirmative.

It may be asked, of whatever importance this liquor may be, as it is secreted from the others, and is deposited in its own reservoirs, of what use can it be to the body? It is allowed that too great an evacuation of the humours that actually circulate in the vessels, and which thereby produce nutrition; such as the blood, the serosity of the lymph, &c. must weaken; but it is more difficult to comprehend how a humour, which no longer circulates, and is abstracted, can produce this effect; I reply, without hesitation, that similar examples, and which are too frequent not to be generally known, ought to have obviated this objection. We have all seen the evacuation of milk (to confine myself to this humour only) though in moderate quantities, and of no long duration, weakens to that degree, as to throw the person into that state of body wherein a nurse of a weak constitution usually finds herself, and which is the lot even of the strongest, after a certain period. The reason is evident, by emptying too often the reservoirs which are destined to receive any liquor, the humours are inclined, by a necessary consequence of the laws of the machine, to flow thither in greater abundance: this secretion becomes immoderate, all the others are thereby injured, particularly nutrition, which is only a kind of secretion: and the animal faculties are enfeebled, and languish. But, in the second place, there is another to be given with regard to the semen, which does not extend to the milk: this latter is a liquor simply nutritious, too great a secretion whereof is of no other injury, but as it diminishes too great a quantity of the humours: the semen is an active liquor, the presence of which pro-

duces effects necessary to the play of the organs, which ceases upon its evacuation; for which reason it is a liquor, the superfluous emission whereof is doubly injurious. To explain myself still clearer; there are humours, such as perspiration, which quit the body the moment they are separated from the blood and expelled from the circulating vessels. There are others, such as urine, which after this separation and this expulsion, are retained for a certain time in reservoirs destined for that purpose, and from whence they do not issue, till they are collected in a sufficient quantity to excite an irritation upon these reservoirs, which mechanically causes them to empty. There are a third sort, which are secreted and retained in the manner of the second, in reservoirs not with the design of being completely evacuated; but to acquire in those reservoirs a degree of perfection which qualifies them for fresh functions, when they return into the mass of humours. Such is amongst others, the genital liquor. Being separated in the testicles, it passes from thence by a pretty long canal into the *vesiculae seminales*, from whence it is continually reformed by the absorbent vessels, and by degrees restored to the total mass of humours. This is a fact that is demonstrated by many testimonies; a single one will be sufficient. In a healthy man the secretion of this liquor is constantly made in the testicles: it repairs to the reservoirs, the limits of which are very confined, and cannot perhaps contain all that is secreted in a day; nevertheless, there are continent men who do not evacuate any for whole years. What would become of it, if it did not continually return into the vessels of circulation? A return which  
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is very much facilitated by the structure of all the organs, which assist in secretion of this humour, in conveying it into the proper channel, and in its preservation. The veins are there much more considerable than the arteries, and this in a proportion that is not found so great elsewhere \*. So it is probable that this return is not only made in the *vesiculæ seminales*, but that it previously took place in the testicles, in the epididimes, which form a kind of primary reservoir adjoining to the testicles, and in the *vasa deferentia*, which is the canal whereby the seed is conveyed from the testicles to the *vesiculæ seminales*.

Galen knew that the humours were enriched by the retained semen, though he was ignorant of its mechanism: 'Every part is full of it,' says he, 'with those who refrain from any commerce with women; but those who frequently give way to this intercourse are quite deficient of it.' He afterwards takes great pains to discover how a small quantity of this liquor can communicate so much strength to the body, and at length determines 'it has excellent virtue, and that therefore it may very speedily communicate some of its power to all parts of the body †.' He afterwards proves by several

\* I adopt, or seem here to adopt, the common system that veins in general absorb. According to the system of Dr. Hunter, who imagines that absorption is not made by any other than the lymphatic veins, the genital parts are equally fit for a very great absorption, as the vessels of this kind are there very numerous.

† De semine, b. i. c. 34. t. i. p. 1279.



several examples, that a small cause often produces great effects, and finally concludes, ‘ is it then surprizing that the testicles should furnish a liquor proper to circulate fresh vigour all over the body? The brain produces many sensations and motions, and the heart gives the arteries the power of beating.’ I shall dismiss this section with the words of one of the greatest men of the present age upon this subject. ‘ The semen is kept in the *vesiculæ seminales*, until the man makes use of it, or nocturnal emissions deprive him of it. During all this time, the quantity which is there detained, excites the animal to the act of venery; but the greatest part of this seed, which is the most volatile and odoriferous, as well as the strongest, is absorbed into the blood, and it there produces upon its return very surprizing changes; it makes the beard, hair, and nails, to grow: it changes the voice and manners; for age does not produce these changes in animals, it is the seed only that operates in this manner, and they are never met with in eunuchs\*.’ How does the semen produce these effects? This is one of those problems, the solution of which is not perhaps as yet very well understood: what may be said, however, with great probability, is, that this liquor is a stimulus or provocative, which irritates the parts that

\* Haller, Prim. lin. phys. § 790. Wharion de glandulis, Russel de œconomia naturæ in glandul morb. p. 92. Skmeider de regressu seminis ad massam sanguineam, the Supplement to the acts of the learned of Leiptic, vol. v. p. 202. and a variety of other physiological writers, may be consulted upon this subject.

that are touched by it: its strong odour, and the evident irritation which it gives to the organs of generation, remove all doubt upon this head; and we comprehend that these sharp particles, being continually absorbed and mixed again with the humours, they slightly, but continually stimulate, the vessels, which are thereby contracted with the greater force, and act upon the fluids with more facility; the circulation is more animated; nutrition more regular; and all the other functions are performed in greater perfection: when this aid is wanting, many functions are not performed, which is the case with the eunuchs\*, and those that are performed are not complete.

A natural question occurs in this place; whence arises that eunuchs are not subject to the same disorders as those who addict themselves to venereal debauches? It is scarce possible to answer this question with precision, till we come to the conclusion of the following section,

\* Those who are desirous of reading a very excellent production upon those imperfect men, should peruse Witnof de castratis.

## S E C T I O N

## SECTION VII.

*An Examination of the Circumstances which accompany Emission.*

MANY evacuations are performed imperceptibly; all the others take place in a state of perfect health, with such facility, as to have no influence over the rest of the machine; the slightest motion in the organ, which incloses the matter, is sufficient for its expulsion. This is not the case in evacuating the seed. A general motion, a convulsion of all the parts, an increased quickness in the circulation of all the humours, are necessary to displace and give it vent. Will it be thought too rash to say, that this necessary concurrence of the whole machine, the instant of its evacuation, may be considered as an evident proof of its influence upon the body. 'Coition,' says Democritus, 'it is a kind of epilepsy.' M. de Haller says, 'it is a very violent action, which borders upon convulsion, and which thereby surprizingly weakens and prejudices the whole nervous system.' According to my preceding observation, and some of those which I have quoted, emission is accompanied with real convulsions, a kind of epilepsy; and the same observations furnish evident proofs of the influence which these violent motions had upon the health of the unhappy object who was the subject of them. The immediate weakness which follows the act, has appeared to several

several persons, and not without reason, as a proof that it could not be solely the privation of semen which occasioned it; but what demonstrably proves how much the spasm must weaken, is the feeble state of all the patients, who are afflicted with convulsive fits; the weakness which follows epileptic fits is frequently very great.

The effect which coition had upon the Anisnan of a city in Switzerland, the history of which Platerus has handed down to us, could be attributed to nothing but the spasmus. He entered upon his second marriage in a very advanced age, and at the time he was endeavouring to consummate his nuptials, he was seized with so violent a suffocation, that he was obliged to discontinue. The like accident happened to him every time he made the same attempt. He applied to a variety of quacks. One assured him, after he had taken several remedies, that he had nothing farther to apprehend. He ventured on a fresh essay, upon the faith of his *Æsculapius*; the event was immediately the same as before, but being resolved to go through with the operation, he died in the very act, in the arms of his wife \*.

The violent palpitations, which sometimes accompany coition, are also convulsive symptoms. Hippocrates speaks of a young man who was afflicted with incessant palpitations, occasioned by bacchanalian and veneral excesses †; and Dolaëus saw one who was seized in the very act itself with so violent a palpitation, that he would have been stifled, had he persisted

\* Felic. Plateri, *Observat. lib. prim. suffocatio ex congressu*, p. 174.

† *Epidem. l. iii. §. 7. æg. 17. Foëf. p. 1117.*

ed in the operation \* Other facts, similar to these, are to be met with in Hoffman.

The observation upon the child, as quoted above, is another proof that has not escaped the sagacity of Mr. Rast, with regard to the influence of the convulsive cause; as at that age he could scarce evacuate any thing but a humour from the prostatae, and not real semen.

These remarks have been quoted by the greatest part of the authors who have written upon this subject. Galen seems previously to have made them. 'Voluptuousness itself,' says he, 'weakens the vital powers.' Mr. Fleming has not omitted this cause in his elegant poem, upon the disorders of the nerves.

*Quin etiam nervos frangit quaecumque voluptas †.*

Sanctorious lays it down as a positive maxim, that the motions weaken more than the emission of the seed; and it is very surprizing that M. Gortar, his commentator, has endeavoured to prove the contrary. The reason which he gives for asserting that these motions do not weaken more than any other motions whatever, as they are convulsive, are no way conclusive. One example, supposing that he can quote one, does not establish an invariable rule. Lister, Noguez, and Quinsy, who wrote commentaries upon the same work before him, are not of this opinion; and they attribute part of the danger to the weakness which the convulsions leave. 'Coition,' says Noguez, 'is a convulsion; it disposes the nerves to

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\* Encyclop. Medic. l. ii. c. 6. p. 147.

† Neuropathia, l. i. v. 375.

‘ convulsive motions, and they are occasioned by the  
‘ slightest causes \*.

J. A. Borelli, one of the first physiologists, did not consider them in the same light as M. Gorter; he is very explicit upon this head: ‘ This act is accom-  
‘ panied with a kind of convulsive affection, which  
‘ seizes the brain, and all the nervous system †.’

M. Senac is very positive, in attributing the weakness which succeeds coition to the nerves. The most probable cause of the syncope which arises when an abscess breaks in upon the inside of the abdomen, is, says he, ‘ the action of the nerves, which come into  
‘ play. This is confirmed by the dejection or syn-  
‘ cope, which follows the effusion of sperm, for this  
‘ fainting can only be imputed to the nerves ‡.’

M. Lewis § attributes more to this cause than to the other, as does Sanctorius.

When a convulsion comes on, the nervous parts become more extended, or rather are put into extraordinary action, the consequence whereof is an excessive relaxation. Every organ that is carried above its proper pitch, falls beneath it, wherefore the functions that depend thereon are necessarily ill performed; and as the nerves have an influence over them all, there are none which are not disordered, when they are weakened.

The weakening of the nervous system is heightened by the increase of the quantity of blood in the

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peri-

\* Sect. 6. aph. 10.

† De motu animal. l. ii. 12. prop. 107.

‡ See a treatise upon the heart, l. iv. c. 12. §. 3e

p. 539.

§ Aphor. iv. p. 6.

pericranium during the act of coition; this increase is clearly demonstrated, and has frequently produced even apoplexies; various examples of this kind may be found in the commentators, and Hoffman relates that of a soldier, who giving way furiously to this debauchery, died of an apoplexy, in the very act of coition; the skull was found full of blood. This increase of blood explains how these excesses produce insanity\*. This quantity of blood distending the nerves, weakens them; and they are less able to resist impressions, whereby they are enfeebled.

When we consider the effects of these two causes, the evacuation of the seed, and the convulsive motions, the disorders which necessarily result in the animal œconomy are easily explained. They may be divided under three different heads; depraved digestions, weakness of the brain, and of the nervous system, and irregular perspiration. We shall find that there is no chronic disorder which may not be deduced from this triple cause.

The relaxation which these excesses occasion, disorder the functions of all the organs, according to an author who has written the best treatise upon the diæteticæ. Digestion, concoction, perspiration, and the other evacuations, are no longer performed as they ought to be; hence arises a sensible diminution of the powers of the memory, and even of the understanding: the sight is hereby clouded; all kinds of gout and rheumatism; weakness in the back, and consumptions, arise from the same cause: the organs of generation are hereby enfeebled, bloody urine, loss of appetite, head-achs, and a great number of other disorders

\* De morb. anism. vener. §. 17.

disorders, which it would be needless to enumerate in this place, are its offspring: in a word, nothing shortens the duration of life so much as an abuse of amorous pleasure\*.

I. The stomach is the first part that is sensible of all the causes that occasion weakness; because its functions require the greatest perfection of the organs. The greatest part of the others are equally passive as active: the stomach is almost totally active, so that when its powers diminish, its functions are disordered; this just observation, joined to the following, and the variety of first impressions (frequently disagreeable) which are produced upon this viscera by what is swallowed, accounts for the frequency, the extraordinariness, and the stubbornness of the disorders to which it is incident. It receives a greater number of nerves than any other part of the body, and therefore distributes a greater quantity of animal spirits. What weakens the action of the one, and diminishes the quantity, or changes the quality of the other, must consequently diminish the powers of the viscera, more than those of any other: and this happens in venereal excesses. By reason of the importance of the function for which it is destined, whenever it is any way impeded, all the rest must suffer.

*Hujus enim validus firmat tenor omnia membra;*  
*At contra ejusdem franguntur cuncta dolore †.*

When the digestion is imperfect, the humours imbibe a crude quality, which renders them unfit for  
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\* Lynch's guide to health, p. 306.

† Q. Seranus Sam.



their various destinations; and which particularly prevents nutrition, upon which the reparation of all the powers depends. To be convinced of the general influence of the stomach, it is only necessary to observe the state of a person who labours under a difficult digestion; the powers are lost in a few minutes; a general uneasiness makes the weakness more insupportable; the organs of sense are benumbed, the faculties of the soul are exercised very imperfectly; the memory, and particularly the imagination, seems to be annihilated; in a word, nothing makes a sensible man so much resemble an idiot, as the difficulty of digestion.

M. Payva, a Portuguese physician, has made a fine observation, that throws great light upon the prodigious weak state which the stomach falls into by excesses of this kind. ‘When carnal desires,’ says he ‘have risen to their greatest height in young people, they feel a kind of agreeable sensation at the orifice of the stomach; but if they satisfy those desires with too much impetuosity, and beyond their strength, they feel in the same place a very disagreeable and painful sensation, which they cannot express; and they dearly pay for the excesses they commit by the emaciations, marasmus’s, &c. with which they become afflicted\*.

Areteus

\* In tentigine ardentissima juvenum inest quid grati in ore ventriculi; in concubitus si ruant salacissimi, & ultra vires tendant opus, tunc in ore ventriculi manet illud ingratiſſimum, amarumque quod exprimere nequent: pœnas & luunt, & pœnitentia dolent; hinc macies, marasmus, &c. G. R. De Payva de affectu atrabilario mirachiali, &c. p. 17.

Areteus was already acquainted with this truth\*, and Dr. Boerhaave makes use of the same expressions as Dr. Payva; but adds, that this painful sensation subsides in proportion as they recover their strength: this opinion is confirmed by him in another place, in subjoining a practical rule that is very useful; which is, that when any one is seized with epileptical fits, after venereal excesses, the stomachic nerves should be fortified †.

II. The weakness of the nervous system, which subjects the body to all paralytical and spasmodic accidents, is occasioned, as I have already said, by the convulsive motions that accompany emission; secondly, by a vicious digestion. Whenever this is faulty, the nerves are thereby affected, and the more so, as the fluid which penetrates them is the last work of concoction, and to produce which it should be perfect; whenever it is otherwise, it is the animal fluid, which of all others is the most sensibly affected by it, and that upon which the crudity of humours has the greatest influence. In fine, what increases this weakening, is the evacuation of a humour analogous to the animal spirits, and which in proportion to this analogy, cannot be evacuated without diminishing the strength of the nervous system; and which, notwithstanding the modest doubts of some great men who dare not support any physical opinion where the facts do not immediately offer themselves to their senses, and the objections of some subordi-

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\* De Morb. chronic. l. ii. c. 6. stomachus delectationis tristitiæque princeps est.

† De Morb. nervor. p. 807.

nate or systematic physiologists, I attribute to the strength of these spirits. Moreover, abstracted from the damage which results from this evacuation, with respect to the quantity of animal spirits, it is prejudicial, inasmuch as it deprives the vessels of that gentle stimulation, which is produced by the absorbed semen, and which contributes so much to concoction. It is therefore prejudicial, as well by subtracting part of the animal spirits, or at least of a very precious humour, and by diminishing the concoction, without which these spirits are only improperly and insufficiently prepared.

There is a vicious concatenation between the disorders of the stomach and those of the nerves. The first gives rise to the latter, and these being once formed highly contribute to encrease the first: if daily experience did not evince it, an anatomical inspection of the stomach only would be sufficient testimony. The quantity of nerves that there distribute themselves, demonstrate how far they are necessary to assist its functions, and how much these functions must thereby be disordered, when they are not in a good state.

III. Lastly, perspiration is not so duly performed: Sanctorius has even determined how much it would thereby be diminished; and this evacuation, which is the most important of any, cannot be suppressed without soon producing a variety of different symptoms.

We may easily believe, that there is no disorder which may not be produced by this triple cause. I shall not enter into an explanation of all the particular symptoms; [such a detail would swell too  
much

much so small a work, and would be no way interesting to any but physicians, to whom it is superfluous. Dr. Gorter's opinion hereupon may be seen\*.

Dr. Clifton Wintringham has given a succinct account of the dangers of this evacuation, with regard to those who are troubled with the gout; and his explanation is worthy of being perused †.

The late Dr. Gunzius, by whose death, in the flower of his age, the profession of physic sustained a great loss, has given a very ingenious mechanical explanation of the inconveniencies arising from these excesses with regard to perspiration. He speaks in this place of a man who had drawn upon himself a perpetual cough, a symptom which I observed in a young man who fell a victim to onanism. He came to Montpellier to complete his studies: he pursued this infamous practice to such excess, that he threw himself into a hectic fever; and I recollect, that his cough was so strong and continual, that he was thereby quite troublesome to his neighbours: he was frequently bled, doubtless with a design of diminishing his sufferings. A consultation of physicians ordered him to return into his own province (which, if I am not mistaken, was Dauphiny) and then take turtle broth, by which they promised him a complete cure. He died two hours after.

What is the least to be comprehended, or rather what is quite inconceivable, is the prodigious weaken-  
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\* De Perspirat, c. 17. §. 8. 12.

† Vide the works of the late Clifton Wintringham vol. ii. p. 85.

ing of the faculties of the soul. The solution of this question must arise from another which we are incapable of solving; that is, the influence of the two substances one upon the other; and all we can have recourse to, is the observation of the phenomena. We are equally ignorant of the nature of spirit, and the nature of matter; but we know that these two parts of man are so intimately united, that all the change which one undergoes, is felt by the other: a circulation more or less heavy, a few ounces, more or less, of aliment; the same quantity of one aliment before another; a dish of coffee instead of a glass of wine; sleep more or less interrupted; too strong or too weak perspiration; change our whole manner of seeing and judging of objects: the revolutions of our machine from one hour to another make us feel and think quite differently; and as they prompt us, vice and virtue change their nature, and fresh principles take place: so true are those lines of the greatest modern satyrift; which may be thus Englished. ‘ All things according to our intellects, change their ranks and order: thus nature and caprice, not merit, ascertain the value of things——a strange disorder in the brain of man \*.’

Lucretius has given us a very just picture of this intimate connexion.

—*Gigni pariter cum corpore, & una  
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere mentem:  
Nam velut infirmo pueri, teneroque vagantur  
Corpore; sic animi sequitur sententia tenuis.*

*Inde*

\* Reguier, satyre 5.

*Inde ubi robustis adolevit viribus ætas,  
 Consilium quoque majus, & auctior est animi vis:  
 Post ubi jam validis quassatu'st viribus ævi  
 Corpus, & obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,  
 Clauditat ingenium, delirat linguaque, mensque,  
 Omnia deficient, atque uno tempore desunt.  
 Quin etiam morbis in corporis avius errat  
 Sæpe animus, dementit enim, deliraque fatur\*.*

This observation equally points out to us, that of all disorders there are none which more quickly affect the soul than those of the nervous system. Those who are troubled with epileptic fits, which in a few years bring on imbecility, are shocking examples of the truth of this observation, which at the same time teaches us that it is not at all surprizing that motions, which as we have before observed, are always in some degree epileptical, should produce this weakness of the brain, and thereby of the faculties.

The weakness of the brain, and of the nervous system, is succeeded by that of the senses; which is natural. Sanctorius, Hoffman, and some others, have endeavoured to explain why the sight should particularly suffer; but their reasons, though founded in truth, do not appear to me sufficient. The principal ones alledged, with regard to this organ, are the multitude of parts which compose the eye, and which being susceptible of different aliments, it is infinitely more subject to disorders than the others. The nerves, secondly, serve here for several uses, and are very numerous. In a word, the conflux of humours upon this part, during the time of the  
act,

\* De natura rerum, l. 4. v. 446.

act, a conflux, the scintillation whereof, which we perceive at that time in the eyes of animals, immediately produces a weakness in the vessels, and afterwards a stoppage, which is a prelude to the loss of sight.

It is easy to reply to the question above proposed, why are eunuchs, who have no semen, not exposed to the disorders which we have been describing?

There are two very different reasons. The first is, that if they are unsusceptible of the advantages which are produced by the absorption of this liquor, on the other hand, they do not lose that precious part of the blood which is destined for seed. They are not subject to those alterations which are occasioned by the prepared semen, and which are specified above; nor can they be exposed to those disorders which arise from the privation of this humour unprepared. I might, if I were allowed to use metaphysical terms, distinguish the seed, by *semen in potentia*, which is that part of the precious humours secreted by the testicles; and by *semen in actu*. If the first is not separated, the machine will be deficient of those succours which it derives from the prepared semen, without being susceptible of the changes which thereon depend; but this will no way impoverish it; for if it acquires nothing, it loses nothing; it remains in a state of infancy. When the semen is secreted and evacuated, then a privation, a real impoverishment, ensues. The second reason is, that eunuchs are not subject to spasms, to which I attribute a great part of the disorders that follow these excesses.

The accidents to which women are liable are accounted for upon the same principles as those of men.

men. The humour which they lose being of more or less value, and not so elaborate as the sperm of man, its loss does not perhaps weaken so soon; but when they are guilty of excesses, their nervous system being weaker than ours, and naturally more subject to spasms, the accidents which arise therefrom are more violent. Sudden excesses bring on disorders analagous to those of the young man, which I mentioned (p. 33.) and I was an eye-witness of a shocking spectacle of this kind. In 1746, a young woman, about twenty-three years of age, challenged six Spanish dragoons, and sustained their attacks for a whole night, in a house near the gates of the city of Montpellier: she was the next day brought into the city almost dead, and she expired at night, bathed in her own blood, which gushed from the matrix. It would have been curious to have ascertained whether this hemorrhage was the effect of some wound, or whether it was occasioned by the dilatation of the vessels, produced by the repeated action of that organ.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Causes of Danger peculiar to Masturbation.*

IT has been already observed, that masturbation was more pernicious than excesses committed with women. Those who make a particular providence interpose on all occasions must be of opinion, that



that the reason is the special will of God to punish this crime. Being persuaded that bodies have, ever since their creation, been subjected to laws which necessarily regulate all their operations, and the œconomy of which has never been changed by divine influence, but in a very small number of select cases: I would not have recourse to miraculous interpositions, except where we find a direct opposition to physical causes. This is not the case here: every thing may be clearly explained by the mechanical laws of the body, and by those which unite it to the soul. This disposition of flying to supernatural causes was attacked by Hippocrates, who, speaking of a disorder which the Scythians attributed to a peculiar punishment from God, makes this beautiful reflection: ‘ It is true, that the disorder comes from God, but it comes in the same manner as all others do, no one comes more particularly from the Omnipotent than others, because they are all a necessary sequel to the laws of nature, which rule all things \*.’

Sanctorius furnishes us in his Observations with the primary cause of this peculiar danger. ‘ Moderate coition,’ says he, ‘ is useful when nature solicits for it; when it is solicited by the imagination, it weakens all the faculties, and particularly the memory †.’ This is easily explained. Nature in a state of health does not inspire desires, but when the *vesiculæ seminales* are replete with a quantity of liquor, which has acquired such a degree of thickness as to render its return into the mass of blood difficult; and in these circumstances, when an evacuation follows, we

\* De arte, locis et aquis. Foëf. p. 293.

† Sect. 6. aphor. 35.

we may be thereby sensibly weakened. But such is the organization of the genital parts, that their action and the desires which succeed are put into play, not only by the presence of a superabundant seminal humour, but also by the imagination, which having great influence upon these parts, may, by being occupied with desires, put them into such a situation as serves reciprocally to excite them; and desire leads to the act, which is the more pernicious in proportion as it is unnecessary. This organ of convenience is like all the others, which are never properly actuated, but when nature stimulates them. Hunger and thirst indicate the want of food and drink: if a greater quantity of either is taken than these sensations require, the surplus prejudices and weakens the body. The necessity of going to stool and voiding urine is signified by certain physical conditions; but a bad habit may so far pervert the constitution of the organs, that the necessity of these evacuations may no longer depend upon the quantity of matter to be evacuated. We subject ourselves to want without being in want; and such is the case of masturbators. It is imagination, habit, and not nature, that importune them. They drain nature both of that which is necessary, and also of that which she herself would have taken care to dispose of. At length, in consequence of that law of animal œconomy, whereby humours are attracted by irritation, there is a continual conflux of humours upon these parts, and what Hippocrates formerly observed occurs, ‘when a man practises coition, the seminal vessels are dilated, and attract the semen\*.’

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\* De natura pueri, text. 22. Foës. p. 242.

It may be observed here, that Onanism is particularly dangerous to children before they attain the age of puberty: it fortunately is not customary to meet with monsters of the two sexes, who abuse one another before that time; but there are too many, even at this period, who abuse themselves: various circumstances estrange criminal correspondence, or at least moderate it: there are no obstacles to a solitary debauch, which is unlimited.

The empire which this odious practice gains over the senses, is a second cause, and which is well depicted in the English Onania (says this author\*).  
 ‘ For no sooner has this uncleanness got the master  
 ‘ over the heart, but forthwith it pursues the man e-  
 ‘ very where, and keeps its possession of him at all  
 ‘ times and all places. Upon the most serious occa-  
 ‘ sions, and in the very acts of religion, he ever and  
 ‘ anon finds himself transported with lustful concep-  
 ‘ tions and desires, which incessantly follow him and  
 ‘ take up his thoughts.’ Nothing so much weakens  
 as that continual bent of the mind, ever occupied  
 with the same object. The masturbator, entirely de-  
 voted to his filthy meditations, is subject to the same  
 disorders as the man of letters, who fixes his atten-  
 tion upon a single question; and this excess is almost  
 constantly prejudicial. That part of the brain, which  
 is then occupied, makes an effort similar to that of a  
 muscle, which has been for a long time greatly ex-  
 tended;

\* P. 17. There is an excellent passage upon the force and danger of voluptuous habits, in the treatise lately published by M. Pujalti, professor at Padua, and long since celebrated by his excellent performances. *De vicis febricitantium*, p. 60.

tended; the consequences of which are such a continued motion in the part as cannot be stopt, or such a fixed attention, that the idea cannot be changed; this is the case with masturbators; or else an incapacity to act at all. Although exhausted by perpetual fatigue, they are seized with all the disorders incident to the brain, melancholy, catalepsy, epilepsy, imbecility, the loss of sensation, weakness of the nervous system, and a variety of similar disorders \*. A great number of young people are hereby greatly prejudiced, even when their faculties are not entirely destroyed, by their use being prevented. In whatever vocation a person is engaged, some degree of attention is required, which this pernicious practice renders him incapable of. Amongst even those who follow no particular business (and this class is but too numerous) there are some who are unqualified. A man that appears distracted, embarrassed, and stupid, will make but a very disagreeable idler. I could enumerate those, whom this incapacity of fixing to any particular thing, joined to the decay of their faculties, had incapacitated to make a decent appearance in society. Shocking state! which places man beneath the brute creation; and which more justly entitles him to the contempt than pity of his fellow creatures.

From these two primary causes there necessarily results a third; this is the frequency of the acts themselves: as soon as custom has obtained any degree of strength, the soul and body both concur in soliciting this crime; the soul, beset with unclean thoughts,

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\* Vide Gaubii institutiones pathologicae, §. 529.

excites lascivious emotions; and if it be diverted for some moments by other ideas, the sharp humours, which irritate the organs of generation, soon draw it back to its slough. The truth of these observations would be sufficient to stop young people in this pernicious progress, if they could foresee, that in this respect one false step brings on another; that they cannot resist temptation; that in proportion as the motives of seduction increase, reason, which should keep them within bounds, is weakened; and, in a word, they find themselves plunged in a sea of misery, without perhaps the hopes of a single plank to escape upon. If sometimes early infirmities give them notice, if the danger terrifies them for some moments, rage precipitates them afresh. We may say,

*Virtutem videant, intabescantque relicta.* Perf.

The danger is, nevertheless, near, and the favourable time for repentance is but short.

. . . . . *Cinis & manes & fabula fiet :*  
*Vivi memor lethi: fugit hora: hoc quod loquor inde est.*  
 Perf.

Whilst I was studying philosophy at Geneva, a time which will be ever dear to me the rest of my days, one of my fellow students had arrived at such a horrid pitch in the practice of these abominations, that he was incapable of abstaining from them, even at the time of his receiving his lessons: he did not long wait his chastisement: he died miserably of a consumption at the end of two years. We find a similar  
 case.

case in *Onania* \*. The ingenious author, who has given an extract of the Latin edition of this work, in the excellent Latin journal which appeared at Berne about four years ago, relates, as pertinent to this observation, that a whole college, by this manœuvre, sometimes diverted the tediousness of metaphysical scholastic lessons, which were delivered by a drowsy old professor, and which otherwise would have lulled them to sleep †; but this story does not so much evince the truth of what I advance, as the scandalous dissolution into which youth may be led.

The same author has just printed in a work (which I have not the advantage of being able to read, but which an excellent judge ranks in the same class with the best productions of this age) what follows. Some years since a discovery was made in a city, that a whole society of young fellows, of about fourteen or fifteen years of age, had united for the practice of this vice, and a whole school is still infected with it ‡.

A young prince's health became daily more impaired, without any one being able to discover the cause. His surgeon suspected him, watched him, and surprized him whilst he was committing the flagrant crime. He acknowledged, that one of his valet de chambres had instructed him, and that he had frequently

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\* P. 126.

† Excerptium totius Italicæ et Helveticæ litteraturæ pro ann. 1759. v. 1. p. 93.

‡ Of Experience, written in German by M. Zimmermann, t. 2. p. 400. I was favoured with this passage by a friend, who translated it for me. I shall, with the greater part of the remainder, illustrate a work which will speedily be published.

quently been guilty of it. The habit was so strong upon him, that the most prevailing circumstances, urged with the greatest rhetoric, could not induce him to quit the abominable practice. His illness daily increased, his faculties gradually diminished, and he could be saved no other way than by being watched day and night for upwards of eight months.

A patient, in one of his letters, paints to me in lively colours, the difficulty he had to obtain this victory. ‘Many efforts are necessary,’ (these are his words) ‘to conquer a habit which every moment recalls to our imagination. I own to you, not without blushing, the sight of any female object whatever creates desires in me. Indeed, I have no occasion for these auxiliaries; my filthy soul is but too much disposed to represent incessantly to my fancy objects of concupiscence. I am no longer troubled with the passion, it is true: I at the same time call to mind all your advice: I combat—but the conflict exhausts me. If you could find some means of diverting my thoughts from these objects, I believe my cure would be at hand.’

It has already been observed, in an extract from *Onania*, that frequent reiteration had in some women caused the *furor uterinus*. When a person has habituated himself to confine his thoughts to one idea, he becomes incapable of any others; its empire is fixed, its reign is despotic! Those organs, which are incessantly irritated, contract a morbid disposition, which becomes a continual stimulus always present, independent of any external cause.

There are disorders in the urianary parts, which excite a continual desire of urining: frequent irritation

tion of the organs of generation produce a similar disorder in those parts. It is not in the least astonishing, if the concurrence of these two causes, moral and physical, should, when united, occasion this shocking disorder. These considerations should surely terrify such persons who are still possessed of some vestiges of reason and shame.

A fourth cause why masturbators are debilitated is, that, independent even of the emissions of seed, the frequency of erection, though imperfect, with which they are afflicted, greatly weakens them. Every part that is in a state of tension, exhausts the powers, and they have none to lose; the spirits are conveyed thither in greater quantities; they are dissipated, and this occasions weakness: they are wanting in the performance of their functions, which is thereby only imperfectly done: the concurrence of these two causes is attended with the most dangerous consequences. Another accident to which this fourth cause renders masturbators more liable, is a kind of palsy in the organs of generation, from whence arises impotency, through a defect of erection, and a simple gonorrhœa, because the relaxed parts suffer the real semen to escape as soon as secreted, together with an efflux of that humour which the *prostatæ* separate: and, in a word, all the internal membrane of the urethra acquires a catarrhus disposition, which excites a running similar to the *fluor albus* in women. This is a disposition (to make an observation *en passant*) not so scarce as is generally believed, which is not confined to the membrane which covers the nostrils, the breast, and the lungs, but often attacks the crude viscera: it is mistaken, because it is not suspected, and ill-treated, because



because it is mistaken. I might easily refer to commentators, to produce examples of this disorder being treated for another.

A skilful surgeon told me one day of a man, who by a very singular taste being fond of Venusses of the very lowest class, with whom his intercourse was chiefly at the corner of streets, standing upright, fell into a state of emaciation, accompanied with most violent pains in the reins, and an atrophy or exsiccation of the thighs and legs, together with a palsy in those parts, which seemed to be occasioned by the attitude in which he committed his filthy debauches. He died, after having kept his bed six months, in a situation which equally inspired pity and horror. Does not this observation furnish a fifth cause of the dangers usually peculiar to masturbation? When the powers are destroyed two ways at once, the weakness is greatly encreased. A person who is standing upright or sitting, must to support himself in those situations, exert a great number of muscles, and this action dissipates the animal spirits. Weak people, who cannot stand upright an instant without being weary, and patients who cannot be seated without being liable to the same inconvenience, evidently prove it. To lie or be extended does not require the use of these powers. Hence it is plain, that the same act in one or other of these attitudes will occasion more weakness in the first than in the last case. And Sanctorius had already pointed out the danger of this attitude: *Usus coitus stando, lædit; nam musculos et eorum utilem perspirationem diminuit.*

Other observations, well supported, furnish a sixth cause, which may not appear of any force; and yet  
learned

learned physicians will not be inclined to pronounce them of no importance. All living bodies transpire; every instant half the pores of the skin exhale a very subtle humour, that is more important than all the rest of our evacuations. At the same time another kind of pores receive part of the fluids which surround us, and communicate them to the vessels. These are invisible torrents, to avail myself of the happy expression of M. Senac, which issue from our bodies, and there find admittance\*. It is evident, that in some cases this inspiration is very considerable. Strong people perspire more; weak people, who have scarce any proper atmosphere, inspire more than the others: and this perspiration of healthy people contains something nutritious and strengthening, which being inspired by another, invigorates him. These observations explain how the young female who lay with David increased his strength; how the same attempt has succeeded with other old men, who have been advised thereto; why it weakens the young, who loses without receiving, or rather who receives weak exhalations, corrupt and putrid, which are detrimental to her health. This perspiration is perhaps more active and more spiritual than at any other time: it is a real loss which is sustained, and which takes place in whatever manner the sperm is emitted,

as

\* This truth is demonstrated in the quotation I make, l. 3. c. 3. § 7. from the treatise upon the heart; a work that must have been considered as perfect, if its illustrious author had not acquainted us in the second edition, that he could render it still more perfect. A great man may surpass even himself, and see a point of perfection invisible to others.

as it depends upon the agitation which attends it. In coition it is reciprocal, and the one inspires what the other perspires. This exchange is put out of all doubt, by certain observations. I saw not long since, a man who was not afflicted with any kind of gonorrhœa, or any cutaneous venereal symptoms, communicate the venereal disorder to a woman, who at the same instant gave him the itch in exchange. In this case the loss is compensated by the gain. In that of masturbation, the masturbator loses, and receives nothing.

We may discover, in observing the effect of the passions, a seventh difference between those who addict themselves to women and masturbators; a difference that is totally to the disadvantage of the latter. That joy which the heart is sensible of, and which should be nicely distinguished from that voluptuousness solely corporeal, which man enjoys in common with animals, and from which it is completely distinct; this joy aids digestion, animates circulation, accelerates all the functions, restores strength, and supports it. If this is found united with the pleasures of love, it contributes to repair, and even to restore what they stole by force; and observation proves it. Sanctorius has remarked it. His words are: ‘ After excessive coition with a woman that is  
 ‘ beloved, a man is not sensible of the lassitude  
 ‘ which should follow this excess, because the joy  
 ‘ which the soul feels increases the strength of the  
 ‘ heart, favours the functions, and repairs what was  
 ‘ lost.’ Upon this principle, Venette (in whose work we find a good chapter upon the dangers attendant  
 on amorous pleasure pursued to excess) maintains,  
 that

that having correspondence with a handsome woman does not exhaust so much as with an ugly woman. 'Beauty has charms which dilate our hearts, and multiply its spirits. We should believe with St. Chrysolom, that when we excite ourselves against the laws of nature, the crime is much greater on that side than on the other,' And can it be questioned, that nature allots more joys to those pleasures procured in her proper channels, than in those which are repugnant to her?

The eighth and last cause of the increase of dangers flowing from masturbation, is the shocking remorse with which it must be followed, when illness has opened the criminal's eyes to his crimes and his dangers.

*Miseri quorum gaudia crimen habent.*

'The sting of pleasures, which remorse succeeds.'

And if any are in this situation, they certainly are masturbators. When the mask is dropt, and the real picture of their conduct appears in its most hideous colours, they find themselves guilty of a crime, the punishment of which with instant death divine justice did not think preper to defer: a crime esteemed enormous among even the pagans themselves.

*Hoc nihil esse putas: scelus est, mihi, crede, sed ingens  
Quantum vix animus concipis ipse tuo.*

MART.

The shame which succeeds is an infinite addition to their misery. To such a degree has dissipation in  
some

some places arose, that debauchery with women is looked upon only as a habit: the most criminal in this respect make no mystery of it, and imagine it draws upon them no sort of contempt. Where is the masturbator who dares acknowledge his infamy? And should not this necessity of hiding the deeds in mystic obscurity be a conviction of the criminality of these acts? How many are there that have perished because they did not dare reveal the cause of their illness? We read in several letters in *Onania*, ‘ I would rather die than appear before you after such an acknowledgment.’ We are much more inclined, and indeed ought to be, to apologize for him, who, seduced by that inclination which nature has engraved in all our hearts, and which is instrumental in preserving our species, as he is no farther culpable than as he gives too unbounded a scope to his inclinations; such a one, I say, is more justifiable than him who sins by violating all laws, trampling upon all the sentiments and designs of nature. Conscious how horrible he must appear to society when discovered, he is incessantly tortured with the idea. In a letter which one of these criminals wrote to me, and which I quoted above, I find this passage: ‘ Me thinks that every one reads in my countenance the infamous cause of my disorder; and this idea makes all company insupportable to me.’ They are seized with melancholy and despair, examples of which have already been given in the fourth section of this work: and they are subject to all the disorders which are brought on by intense melancholy, and with this additional aggravation, that they have no grounds for justification, no prospect of consolation. And what are  
are

are the causes of this melancholy? The relaxation of the fibres, a diminution of the circulation, imperfect digestion, want of nutrition, obstructions occasioned by these impediments, which seem to be the immediate effects of melancholy; the shedding of humours, which is the necessary consequence of obstruction: 'the strainers of the liver ferment, says M. de Senac, and the bile spreads itself all over the body;' spasms, convulsions, palsies, pains, and insupportable anguish, with all the accidents that may flow from these disorders.

It were needless to expatiate more upon the dangers peculiar to masturbation; they are but too real, and too well demonstrated. I shall now enter upon the methods of cure.

## P A R T III.

*Of the Cure.*

## S E C T I O N IX.

*Methods of Cure proposed by other Physicians.*

**T**HERE are some disorders in which the success of remedies are almost certain. Those which are the consequence of venereal drainings, and more particularly masturbation, are not comprized in this class: and the prognostics which may be made upon them, when they are arrived at a certain height, are very dreadful. Hippocrates has pronounced them mortal: 'This is a wretched disorder,' says M. Boerhaave, 'I have often met with it, but never could cure it\*.' M. Van Swieten treated the patient he mentions for three years without success. I have seen several die miserably of this disorder; other patients I could give no sort of ease to. These examples should not however deter us; others have

\* Vide lessons upon his Institutions, §. 776.

have been more lucky. Some are to be met with in the collection of Onania, amongst the physicians observations; and I have had some in the course of my own practice.

In the same passage, wherein Hippocrates gives a description of the disorder, as I have above related, he also points out the cure. ‘ When a patient is in  
 ‘ this situation, says he, make him use fomentations  
 ‘ all over his body, then give him an emetic; repeat  
 ‘ it, in order to purge his head; then a purgative.  
 ‘ The cure should be begun in spring. After the  
 ‘ purgatives, give him scummed or asses milk; then  
 ‘ cow milk for forty days. Whilst he drinks the  
 ‘ milk he should eat no meat, and at night he  
 ‘ should take water-gruel. After leaving off milk, he  
 ‘ should eat the most tender meats, beginning with a  
 ‘ a small quantity only; by this means he will re-  
 ‘ gain his flesh. For a whole twelvemonth he should  
 ‘ avoid every kind of debauchery, all venereal prac-  
 ‘ tice, and every other immoderate exercise; and in  
 ‘ his walks he should equally avoid cold, and being  
 ‘ in the sun.’

We find that Hippocrates begins the cure by an emetic and a cathartic; his authority is sufficient for a rule, and yet this rule in a great number of cases would be prejudicial: it is easy to avoid this difficulty, by observing that he orders the purgative only with the design to remove the flux, which he imagines will fall from the head upon the spine; and he, in another place, ranks such as are ill after venereal excesses in the list of those to whom no purgative should be given; ‘ because not only that they can  
 ‘ do them no good, but, on the contrary, they may



‘do them harm\*.’ So that this last rule should be considered as general; the first is liable to exception, and even an exception which is founded upon such theory as is now pronounced erroneous, and therefore should be of no weight.

We find in the dissertation of Hoffman, which I have already often quoted, two observations, which should make us very circumspect in the use of emetics: I shall give them both. A man above fifty years of age, who was much addicted to women, became languid, emaciated, and consumptive; his sight was greatly prejudiced, and at length he could perceive objects only as through a cloud: at this crisis he took an emetic, to prevent a fever of which he was apprehensive, from having eat much of smoked pork; his head swelled, and he became totally blind. A common prostitute whose sight was greatly clouded every time she had any correspondence with a man, having taken an emetic, lost her sight entirely †.

M. Boerhaave seems to have been more inclinable to point out the difficulties of cure, than the means to obtain it. ‘There are small hopes of cure; milk  
‘passes through the body too easily: exercise on  
‘horse-back is no sort of benefit to patients of this  
‘kind: and they complain that these remedies weaken  
‘them; exercise, in fact, increases the running of the  
‘semen, in their fallacious dreams, and at the same  
‘time deprives them of their strength. At the return  
‘of day, they quit their beds bathed in sweat, and  
‘weakened by sleep itself: they cannot bear aro-  
‘matics,

\* De ratione victus in morbis acutis. Foëf. p. 405,  
406.

† De morbis a nimia vener. §. 24 and 26.

‘ matics, the effects of which are also dangerous.  
 ‘ The only resource, in this case, is good aliment,  
 ‘ and moderate exercise of the body, bathing of the  
 ‘ feet, and frictions performed with precaution \*.’

Amongst the consultations of this great man; which Mr. Haller has subjoined to the edition he has produced, there is one for a man who had rendered himself quite an idiot, by indulging in amorous pleasures. ‘ A man thirty years of age has so much  
 ‘ weakened the organs of generation, that the sperm  
 ‘ runs every time he has the least erection †, for he  
 ‘ never has any perfect; and the seed does not gush  
 ‘ out with force, but drips drop by drop, which  
 ‘ renders him impotent: his memory, reins, and legs,  
 ‘ are totally weakened.’

M. Boerhaave replied: ‘ These disorders are al-  
 ‘ ways extremely difficult to cure: they seldom make  
 ‘ their appearance till such time as the body is so  
 ‘ weakened that remedies can be no longer efficaci-  
 ‘ ous. The effects of the following may be tried.  
 ‘ First, a light dry regimen, consisting of birds, beef,  
 ‘ mutton, veal, kid, roasted rather than boiled; a  
 ‘ small quantity of good beer; a little wine of the  
 ‘ strengthening sort. Secondly, much exercise, gra-  
 ‘ dually increased till the patient becomes fatigued,  
 ‘ and always before breakfast. Thirdly, frictions  
 ‘ with a flannel perfumed with the smoke of incense,  
 ‘ upon the reins, the abdomen, the pubis, the but-  
 ‘ tocks,

I 3

\* Inst. de Med. t. vii. p. 215.

† This is a very common symptom with persons who are drained, and it continues to keep up the draining: the least excitement produces some small erection, which is followed by a running.

‘ tocks, the scrotum, regularly night and morning.  
 ‘ Fourthly, half a dram of the following opiate should  
 ‘ be taken every two hours the day through.

‘ *R̄. Terræ japon. dr. IV. opoponac. dr. V. cort.*  
 ‘ *peruv. dr. VI. conf. rosar. rubr. unc. I. oliban. dr.*  
 ‘ *II. succ. acac. unc. ſſ. ſyrup. Kerm. q. ſ. ſ. l. a cond.*  
 ‘ half an ounce of medical wine is alſo to be drank.

‘ *R̄. Rad. cariophyll. mont. Pæn. mar. aa. unc. I.*  
 ‘ *cort. rad. cappar. tamarisc. aa. unc. I. ſſ. lign. agal-*  
 ‘ *loch. veri unc. I. vin. gall. alb. libr. VI. ſ. l. a. vin.*  
 ‘ *med.*’

I hope, adds M. Boerhaave, he will be cured, after having taken theſe preſcriptions for two months. But he would not uſe them, and he died at the end of a few weeks of a malignant dyſentery. What effect would the remedy have produced? This cannot be gueſſed at: M. Zimmermann has wrote to me that he had uſed it to a patient for two months without any ſucceſs.

Mr. Hoffman points out the precautions, and the methods that ſhould be purſued. ‘ All remedies  
 ‘ ſhould be avoided that are not fit for weak per-  
 ‘ ſons, and which may weaken a body already ener-  
 ‘ vated; ſuch are all aſtringents, thoſe that are too  
 ‘ cooling, ſaturnine, nitrous, and acid, and particu-  
 ‘ larly narcotics; they are all prejudicial in caſes of  
 ‘ this nature, notwithstanding which they are very  
 ‘ frequently uſed in them.

‘ The object in view is to reſtore ſtrength, and to  
 ‘ give the fibres that tone which they have loſt.  
 ‘ Warm volatile medicines, aromatics, ſuch as have  
 ‘ a ſtrong

‘ a strong and agreeable smell, are not fit in this  
 ‘ case; but mild aliments, such as are proper to re-  
 ‘ pair that nutritive gelatinous substance, which im-  
 ‘ moderate evacuations have destroyed, as beef, veal,  
 ‘ and chicken-broth, with a little wine, lemon juice,  
 ‘ salt, nutmeg, and cloves, mixed therein. All re-  
 ‘ medies that promote perspiration, and animate the  
 ‘ languid tone of the fibres, will be of farther assist-  
 ‘ ance.’

In another consultation which was held for a masturbator, he was ordered to take every morning, a measure of asses milk mixed with a third of Selter water.

It would be useless to quote the precepts or observations of other authors. I shall confine myself to a case of some consequence, as I find it in a thesis of M. Wefzpremi, which comprizes fourteen observations, which are all interesting\*.

W. Conybeare, thirty years of age, had his eyesight so obscured for six years together, without any  
 visible

\* This is the seventh observation. The thesis, which is very worthy of being read, is to be met with (among a great number of other small productions, almost all excellent in their way, and which are no where else to be found) in that excellent collection of practical theses, which Mr. Haller, who promotes the advancement of medicine, with equal zeal and judgment, has taken the trouble to publish, under the title of *Disputationes and morborum historiarum & curationem facientes*, Laufann. 1758. The name of the author is a voucher for the merit of the work, which will soon be one of the chief authorities of practical libraries. The piece which I quote is that of *Stephani Wefzpremi observationes medicæ trajecti*, 1756. Vide vol. vi. p. 804.

visible defect in his eyes, that every object appeared to him as if a thick cloud intervened. He had been successively in the three most celebrated London hospitals (namely St. Thomas's, St. Bartholomew's, and St. George's), at length, he repaired two years ago to our hospital. He had every where underwent a mercurial salivation, after the other remedies had been tried, in order to be cured of this kind of gutta serena. The physicians were tired, and the patient entirely discouraged. Upon interrogating him very particularly in private, upon the subject of his disorder, he told me that from time to time he felt a pain along the spine, especially when he bent his body to take up any thing; that his legs were so feeble, he could scarce hold himself upright for a minute together, without support, else his legs trembled; and he had a vertigo attended with a dimness of sight; that his memory was so weak, that he sometimes appeared stupid; and I observed that he was greatly emaciated. These disorders made me suspect that his gutta serena might be no other than a symptom of a disorder still more disagreeable; and the patient was afflicted with a real dorsal consumption.

I earnestly intreated him to tell me, if he had never polluted himself with the abominable crime of Onan, which entirely destroys the balsamic parts of the nervous fluid. After a long pause, he blushing owned it. I ordered him to take at night two mercurial pills, each of which consisted of six grains of *mercuriis dulcis*, and the next day an ounce of purging salt, and to repeat this four times in a fortnight. At the end of this period, I prescribed to him the diet which Hippocrates orders in a similar case, consisting

fasting solely of milk, for forty days. During which time he underwent three or four frictions a week upon going to rest. After this course, he returned from the country, in much better health than when he set out. I then prescribed to him the cold bath for three weeks; he used it fasting, at eight in the morning every other day. He took for two months, twice a day, the mineral electuary, and the volatile juleps; he also continued his frictions, and bathed his feet. By these means his health was so well restored, that he was willing to resume again his trade, which was that of a baker; but I advised him to pursue another calling, lest the inspiration which arises from dough, upon its hardening, should form upon his lungs and stomach, which were still weak, a paste, the effects whereof might be dangerous.

M. Stehelin assisted the patient whom I mentioned, sect. 2. p. 26. by strengthening baths, the tincture of Mars, and the aperitive broths.

The principal remedies mentioned in Onania are secrets which the author has not thought proper to divulge. We find in general, and the observation is of consequence, he uses no kind of evacuants; and that strengtheners only form the basis of his prescriptions, under the name of strengthening tincture, and prolific powder. They operate without producing any visible effect; but according to the terms of the author, they enrich, comfort, and nourish the parts of generation in both sexes; they give them new vigour; they promote the generation of seed; having been experienced to be a very great restorer of nature, even when feeble, decayed, and almost spent\*.

In

\* Onania, p. 177.

In a word, like all this author's secrets, they perform every thing that is desired. There is a third unknown remedy under the name of restoring drink, which is also very efficacious; and, indeed, if one should give credit to all the testimonies that are produced in favour of these remedies, they, doubtless have great virtue. Besides these three arcana, he gives some prescriptions; one of these is a drink composed of amber, aromatics, and some other remedies of the same class; a second is a liniment composed of essential oils, balsams, and acrid tinctures: each of these compositions appear to me too stimulating; and as they are not supported by any experiments, I shall not particularize them: he specifies two others, which seem to be more applicable.

## DECOCTION.

℞ *Flor. siccat. lamii. \* mpl. VI. radic. cy. per. & galang. aa. unc. II. rad. bistort. unc. I. rad. osmund. regal. unc. II. flor. ros. rubr. mpl. IV. Ichthyocoll. unc. II.*

*Scissa. tuf. mixt. cum aque quart VIII. ad. quartæ part. evaporat. coquant.* A quart of which is to be taken every day.

## INJECTION.

\* He does not describe the species, it can be no other than *lamium album*, white archangel, or *lamium maculatum*. The quart measure is equal to the Paris pint.

## I N J E C T I O N.

℞ Saccari Saturni, vitriol alb. alum. rup. aa. dr. I.  
 aq. chalyb. fabror. pint. I. ꝯ. per dies decem igne arenæ  
 digerantur: add. spir. vin. campbr. cochl. III.

In a book lately published, under the title of a Summary of Practical Medicine, by M. Lieutaud, physician to the princes royal of France, are some very sensible strictures upon the disorder in question. M. Lieutaud, who has gained great reputation as an anatomist and physiologist, does, by this production, claim a place amongst the first class of practitioners. Those chapters which relate to the dorsal consumption are under the title of *calor morbosus*, morbid heat; a disorder (by the bye) that is frequent, though it had never been written upon, and is often badly treated, as I have before had reason to complain. M. Lieutaud has displayed its first symptoms, its nature, and the proper method of treating it under the heads of *vires exhaustæ*, the draining, and *anæmia*, which may be translated a deficiency of blood. This is a very interesting chapter, and is entirely original.

Mr. Lewis's performance, a copy of which I could not procure before my first edition went to press, is more copious than any other production upon the cure. I had the pleasure to find we entirely agreed with regard to our opinions, and that we prescribed the same remedies, particularly the quinquina and cold bath,



bath, which is a conformity that appears to me much in favour of the methods we have both pursued. I shall in this place quote only the two aphorisms which comprize the substance of his doctrine; I shall avail myself in the next section of some explanatory passages which he subjoins, to support my own practice.

‘ The cure of this disease depends as much on  
 ‘ knowing what to avoid, as what to do, without a  
 ‘ nice regularity of the non-naturals therefrom, me-  
 ‘ dicine will have little or no effect. Thus the salu-  
 ‘ brity of the air is of great importance. The diet  
 ‘ should be analeptic and cooling; sleep little, and in  
 ‘ due season; moderate exercise must be used; espe-  
 ‘ cially riding on horseback; the secretions of the  
 ‘ body are to be regulated, if out of order; and  
 ‘ the patient should be entertained with cheerful  
 ‘ company, and mirthful diversion \*.

‘ All the medicines that are necessary are derived  
 ‘ from two classes, balsamics and astringents †.’

He recommends strenuously, instead of tea, which is almost constantly hurtful to the nerves, a tea made of balm and mint, in every dish of which should be put a tea-spoonful of the balsamic mixture of cream and yolks of eggs, with two or three drops of oil of cinnamon; which make an agreeable beverage, and is highly grateful to the stomach, as I have myself had occasion to observe. This is really a balsamic and strengthening remedy; but it may be useful to observe, that Mr. Lewis mentions among astringents  
 those

\* A Practical Essay, p. 20.

† Ibid. §. 10. p. 27, also Robuison consompt, p. 98.

those remedies which are extracted from lead \*; and I think it my duty to acquaint the reader, that notwithstanding his authority, and that of some very able physicians, the internal use of preparations extracted from lead are real poison, according to the unanimous opinion of almost all physicians; and the audacious imprudence of quacks furnishes too many occasions for observing similar accidents. If the use of it be continued like some other poisons, let at least the administration of it be reserved for those who are acquainted with its virtues and dangerous effects; and the writer of every physical work intended for the public perusal should be very cautious how he recommends it.

I shall conclude this section with M. Stork's method of healing these disorders, which is very simple and very efficacious. By comparing the different methods, we shall find that they are all founded upon the same principles; that the same objects is always in view; and that the remedies prescribed have a great affinity with each other; and this conformity is an elogium upon the general method pursued, and must necessarily inspire confidence. 'We begin,' says M. Stork, 'by feeding them with nutritious  
' broths. Water-gruel, rice, or barley, boiled in  
' broth or milk, and milk alone, are very essential;  
' care should be taken not to load the stomach with  
' them, but let them be frequently taken. If the  
' stomach should be so weakened, as it sometimes  
' happens, when the disorder has made great pro-  
' gress, that it cannot retain this sort of food with-

K

' out

\* Ibid. p. 26. 28.

‘ out being greatly oppressed, the patient should have  
 ‘ a wet nurse, and suck her breast: this has been some-  
 ‘ times attended with success in the most dangerous  
 ‘ cases. The relaxed fibres are in some measure re-  
 ‘ stored to their tone by the use of wine impregnated  
 ‘ with steel, *quinquina*, and cinnamon. As soon as  
 ‘ the patient has got strength enough to walk, it is  
 ‘ very beneficial for him to go into a pure air in a  
 ‘ hilly country.’

## S E C T I O N X.

### *The practice of the Author.*

**T**HE cause of some disorders is very difficult to trace; their indication is therefore not easily determined, and the manner of treating them not readily ascertained: they are nevertheless easily cured, when these things are settled; but this is not the case with the dorsal consumption. The cause is known! it is, as Mr. Lewis expresses it, ‘ a particular species  
 ‘ of consumption, the first immediate cause whereof  
 ‘ is a general weakness of the nerves;’ the indication is easily determined, nor can the manner of treating it admit of any debate: but frequently the best methods prove unsuccessful; for this reason it should be more minutely described. A general relaxation of the fibres, a weakness of the nervous system, an ex-  
 fication

fication of the fluids, are the causes of the disorder. It depends upon a weakness in all these parts; their strength should be restored to them: this is the only indication. There are subdivisions drawn from different weakened parts; but as the same remedies are proper for all, it would be useless to enumerate them here; this has already been done in the course of the work.

Those who are intirely ignorant of physick, and yet who talk more about it than those who are acquainted with it, will imagine it is very easy to fulfil this indication; and that with good aliments and cordials, with which our shops are well stored, it is no way difficult to administer strengthening medicines: but fatal experience has, on the contrary, manifested to the greatest physicians, that nothing is more difficult.

‘It is very easy,’ says M. Gorter. ‘to diminish the natural powers, but there is hardly any remedies proper for restoring them\*.’ This is easily comprehended, when we consider that aliments and remedies are nothing more than instraments which nature uses to support herself, repair her losses, and remove those irregularities which happen in the body. And what is nature? ‘The aggregate powers of the body, harmoniously distributed.’ It is the vital strength properly communicated to the different parts. When the powers are exhausted, nature is then defective; the working architect no longer performs his functions; give him all the materials you please, he is incapable of using them. You may bury him with

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\* De Perspir. insens. p. 504.

the edifice, under the stone, wood, and mortar, without his repairing a single inch of the fabric. It is the same with disorders incident to the loss of strength; aliments do not restore it, and remedies are of no efficacy. I have met with stomachs so weak, that they made no more alteration upon aliments than a wooden vessel; sometimes they make their way, according to the laws of specific gravitation; and when a new dose irritates by its weight the stomach, they are successively voided, by a slight effort, much separated from each other. At other times, by making a long stay, they corrupt, and are discharged upwards in the same form, as if they had been left to spoil in a silver or china bowl. What can be expected from aliments in cases of this sort?

The draining is not equally great in every one; there are some whose powers are only weakened, without being totally destroyed: These patients have some resource left in aliments, and even in remedies. The remains of nature draw some part from the first; and the latter should be such as are recommended to animate this principle of vital action which is extinguishing; these are foreign succours, with which the architect is assisted, that he may pursue his work, in exhausting as little as possible of his strength; it is like spurring a weak horse to make him exert himself to get out of a bad road. But what skill and prudence are necessary to judge, with the cast of an eye, of the depth of the slough, the strength of the beast, and then to form the comparison! If the task is above his strength, spurring, it is true, will urge him to make an effort; but if this effort cannot free him  
from

from the bad, and put him into a good road, it will only totally exhaust him.

The weakness which is produced by masturbation, starts a difficulty in the choice of strengthening remedies, which does not occur in other cases; such remedies as by irritating stimulates lasciviousness should be the most sedulously avoided. It is a law in animal mechanics (so different from inanimate mechanics, and so little subject to the same rules) that when motions are increased, the increase is more considerable in those parts which are the most susceptible of it; and these among masturbators are the parts of generation; therefore the effects of irritating remedies are the most sensibly felt in these parts, and therefore circumspection is required with regard to the means that are used, to prevent the dangerous consequences of these effects. What may these consequences be? This I shall consider, after having specified the regimen to be followed; and here I have made the usual divisions of the six non-naturals, air, aliment, sleep, exercise, natural evacuations, and passions.

### A I R.

Air has an influence over us, as water hath upon fishes, and still much greater. Those who are acquainted with the extent of this first influence, who are not ignorant a good angler does not only know the river, but even the very spot of that river, where a particular fish was caught,

———*Lupus hic, Tiberinus, an alto  
Captus hiet? pontesue inter jaclatus, an amnis  
Ostia sub Tusci?*

Such, I say, will be sensible how important it is for patients to desire one air sooner than another. Those who have once in their life entered a chamber, which is inhabited, without being aired; those who have passed over marshes in times of excessive heat; who have inhabited low grounds surrounded on all sides with eminences; those who have quitted a populous city, and retired into the country, who have respired the air at the rising of the sun, at noon day before or after rain; every such person, I say, can comprehend what influence the air has upon our health.

*Temperie caeli corpusque animusque juvatur.*

OVID.

Weak people have more occasion for pure air than others; this is a remedy, and perhaps the only one, which operates without the assistance of nature, or employing her powers; and therefore particular attention should be paid to it. A general atonia (or dry and temperate air) is the most agreeable; a moist or too warm air is pernicious. I know a patient of this kind, who is totally exhausted by great heat, and whose health in summer varies according to the heat or coldness of the days. A sharp air is not necessarily so dangerous as the opposite; heat relaxes still more the fibres that are relaxed, and dissolves the humours already too much melted; cold, on the contrary, rectifies these two ills. When the Caribbeans  
are

are seized with a palsy, after these violent convulsive cholics to which they are subject, and when they cannot be conveyed to the hot baths in the northern parts of Jamaica, they are however sent into some place that is colder than their own country; and this change of air only is always favourable to them. It is another essential quality of air, not to be filled with noxious particles, nor should it, by having long remained in populous places, have lost that vivifying quality wherein consists all its efficacy, and which may be called vital spirit, equally essential to plants as animals: such is the air we respire in a fine country that is well strewed with herbs, trees, and shrubs. Areteus \* says, the patient should reside near fields, fountains, and brooks; the exhalations which thence arise, and the gaiety which these objects inspire, fortify the soul, animate the powers, and restore health. The air of a city is incessantly inspired and expired, continually filled with a multitude of vapours and infectious exhalations, unites the two defects, namely, having too little of this vital spirit, and having too many noxious particles: that of the country possesses the two opposite qualities; this is a virgin air, an air impregnated with every thing the most volatile and agreeable, the most cordial in plants, with the vapour of the earth, and is of itself very salubrious. But it would be needless to fix upon a residence in a good air, if the patient did not respire it: the air of chambers, if it is not continually renewed, is nearly the same every where: it can scarce be called

\* De Curat. acutor. l. ii. c. 3. p. 102.



called changing of air, to go from a close chamber in the city to a close chamber in the country. The full salubrity of a healthful atmosphere is not enjoyed but in the open fields. If either by infirmities or weakness, a person cannot go thither, the air of his chamber should be renewed several times a day, not only by opening two or three doors and windows, which makes but little change, but by making a torrent of fresh air rush through it, by opening two or three doors and windows in opposite situations at once. There is no disorder but what requires this precaution; but at the same time care should be taken that the patient does not receive too great an impression, which is very easily done.

It is also of very great consequence to respire the morning air; those who deprive themselves of it, to remain in a stifled atmosphere between four curtains, voluntarily renounce the most strengthening of all remedies. The coolness of the night has restored all its vivifying principle; and the dew which by degrees evaporates, after having imbibed all the balm of those flowers upon which it rested, renders it really medicinal. We then swim in the midst of an essence of plants, which we continually inspire, the good effects whereof can be by nothing else supplied. The agreeable state of the body, accompanied with coolness, strength, and appetite, which we are sensible of for the rest of the day, is a stronger proof which every one must be susceptible of, than any I could add. I have very lately seen its effects upon some valetudinarians, who were particularly of a hypochondriac disposition; they experienced in the most evident manner, that when they sucked in the

the air at sun rising, they found themselves much gayer the rest of the day, and those who conversed with them for that time could not be mistaken with respect to the hour of their rising. It is evident how necessary this effect is for patients afflicted with a dorsal consumption, who are so often low spirited. When they recover their gaiety, it is indisputably certain they are in the right road to general health.

## A L I M E N T S.

The choice of aliments should be directed by these two rules; first, to take no aliments but such as comprize much nourishment in a small bulk, and which are easily digested. This is the aphorism of Sanctorius; *Coitus immoderatus postulat cibos paucos & boni nutrimenti*\*. Avoid all those that are acrid. It is necessary to restore to the stomach all its powers; and nothing destroys more the strength of the animal fibres than forced extension; so that if the stomach is dilated by the quantity of aliments, it must be daily weakened; besides, if it is too full, weak people are uneasy, oppressed, feeble, and melancholy, whereby all their ills are increased. These two inconveniencies are prevented by choosing fresh aliments, as I have specified, and by taking only a little at a time and frequently. It is necessary that  
they

\* Sect. iv. aph. 22.

they should yield whatever is nutritious in them. The stomach is unable to digest what is difficultly digested: its extreme languid action would be totally destroyed by aliments either too hard, or liable to diminish its strength.

Upon these two principles a catalogue may be formed of those which are proper in this case, and of such as should be excluded. In the last class are all those meats which are hard, and difficult to be digested, as all kinds of pork, that of old beasts, those hardened with art, either by being salted or smoaked; a preparation which renders them acrid: all meat that is too fat; all other greasy meats whatever, which relax the fibres of the stomach, diminish the action already too feeble of the digestive moisture, remain undigested, promote obstructions, and by their stay acquire an acrid quality, which, by continual irritation, occasions uneasiness, pains, want of rest, anguish, and fevers. In a word, there is nothing which persons troubled with indigestion should abstain so much from as every thing greasy. Paste that has not been fermented, especially when hardened with grease, is another kind of aliment much too strong for a bad stomach. Pet herbs inflate and distend, and thereby confine the circulation in the adjacent parts; they are therefore equally obnoxious, as are in general all kinds of cabbages, husky vegetables, and those which have an acrid taste and smell, which last quality renders them pernicious, independent of their windy tendency.

Those fruits which are the most salutary in inflammatory fevers and obstructions, particularly those

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of the liver, and various other disorders, are improper in this case; they weaken, relax, and enervate the powers of the stomach; they increase the dissipation of the blood, already too aqueous; when badly digested they ferment in the stomach, and this fermentations unfolds a surprizing quantity of air, which produces enormous distentions, that entirely interrupt the course of circulation. I saw a woman, twenty-four hours after being brought to bed, and having a very good time, who having eat too much red fruit, was so violently afflicted in this manner, that her belly was so much stretched as to become livid; she was insensible, and her pulse was scarce perceptible. Fruit also leaves in the first passages an acid principle, liable to produce many fatal accidents: the patient should therefore entirely abstain from them. Raw garden stuff, vinegar, and verjuice, are attended with the same inconveniencies, and should therefore be excluded.

Though this is a long catalogue of forbidden aliments, that of allowed aliments is still longer. I include all young meats that have had good pasturage, and been well fed, particularly veal, young mutton, young beef, fowls, pigeons, Indian fowl, young partridges. Larks, thrushes, quails, and other game, without being absolutely forbidden, are nevertheless so improper as not to be allowed every day. Fish is in the same predicament.

It is necessary not only to be careful in the choice of meats, but they should also be properly prepared. The best method is to roast them by a slow fire, to preserve their gravy, and not dry them up, or to boil them gently in their own juice. Those that are  
boiled

boiled in much water communicate all that is nutritious in them to the broth, and are no longer nourishing ; they frequently become nothing more than fleshy fibres, devoid of juice, and filled with water, insipid to the taste, and hard to be digested by the stomach. It is common to find weak people imagine high dishes will not hurt them, though they cannot eat of them without finding that their stomachs suffer. The more tender meat is, the less capable it is of undergoing this preparation, which should be reserved with regard to the patients, in order to extract from hard meats all that is nutritious in them.

Notwithstanding the greatest care is taken in the preparations of meats, there are persons who cannot digest them ; so that the juice only can be given them, and this should be extracted after the meat is half dressed ; but as it would easily corrupt, a little bread and some lemon juice should be added, or else a little wine : such a mixture is the most nutritious aliment that can be given. Boiled lobsters dissolved in broth heightens the taste, and renders it, perhaps, still more strengthening ; but this ingredient is attended with two inconveniencies ; the first is, that it is somewhat heating, and the second is, that it may render the broth more liable to speedy corruption ; so that it is necessary to be cautious in these respects. Bread and vegetables have not the advantage of uniting much nutriment in a small quantity ; but their use, particularly bread, is absolutely necessary to prevent not only the distaste which a continual regimen of animal diet only must create, but also the putrefaction which must ensue, if not mixt with vegetables.

Without

Without this precaution, the first passages would soon be stopped with a spontaneous alcali, and all the disorders that must ensue. I have seen the greatest accidents arise from this regimen to persons of a weak constitution, to whom it was prescribed. One of the first symptoms is thirst: they are compelled to drink, and liquids weaken them; besides, it mixes with difficulty with the humours, because this mixture depends upon the action of the vessels, which is very languid; and if it unluckily happens, as is frequently the case with persons who take little exercise, that the motions of the reins diminishes, liquids pass into the cellular texture, form œdemas immediately, and at length every kind of dropfy.

These dangers are prevented by mingling a vegetable with an animal regimen. The best herbs are tender roots, the herb succory, artichoke stalks, and asparagus. There are others, which though very tender, are prejudicial, because they are too cooling, and thereby deaden the strength of the stomach.

Meally grain, prepared and dressed in cream, with meat broth, make an aliment that is not to be rejected; it comprizes all that is nutritious of the two classes, and the mixture prevents the ill effects of either aliment singly; the broth prevents the meal from turning sour, and the meal prevents the broth from rotting. We may easily find by perusing commentators with some degree of attention, that distempers are more malignant in the north of Europe than in the middle part; does not this arise from the eating of more meat and less vegetables?

What I said with respect to fruit does not imply, that when the stomach still retains some strength,

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that the patient may not from time to time use it in small quantities, when it is thorough ripe; those that are the most watery are the most exceptionable.

Eggs are a nutriment in some degree of an animal kind, and very essential; they are great strengtheners, and easily digested, provided they are quite or almost raw; for as soon as the white is hardened, they will not dissolve, but become heavy, hard to digest, and will not separate; they are then proper aliment for those stomachs that are too quick in digesting, and not those which do not digest. The best way of eating them is to swallow them as they come from the hen, without any dressing, or to eat them in the shell, after dipping them three or four times in boiling water; or dilute them in warm broth, without boiling.

In fine, the last kind of aliment is milk; it includes all desirable qualities without any of the inconveniencies that are to be feared. It is the most simple, the most easily assimilated, and repairs the quickest; being entirely prepared by nature, there is no danger of spoiling it by artificial preparation; it nourishes like the gravy of meat, and is not susceptible of putrefaction; it prevents thirst, and supplies the place of both aliment and drink; it promotes all kinds of functions; it prompts easy sleep; in a word, it is fit to fulfil all the indications which appear in this case: and Mr. Lewis has found it produce the most desirable effects\*. Why then is it not always used, and substituted in the place of all other aliments? For a reason that is peculiar to itself, which  
often

\* P. 27.

often changes the nature of its effect, and whereby the effect is very different from what was desired, and there was reason to expect.

This reason is the kind of dissolution to which it is liable. If quick digestion is wanting, if it remains too long upon the stomach, or, if without remaining too long there, it meets with things that tend to hasten its dissolution, it undergoes the same changes that we find it does before your eyes; the buttery, the cheesy, and the watery parts separate; the scummed milk frequently occasions a diarrhoea, else it passes by the urinary passages, or by perspiration, without affording any nourishment: the other parts, if they remain in the stomach, soon affect it, by occasioning uneasiness, wind, nausea, and cholics; if the patient does not find himself directly incommoded, it is because they pass into the intestines, where, it is true they may remain a certain time without doing any sensible injury, but there they acquire a particular acrimony, and at the end of a certain time they produce accidents, which delay has not rendered less dangerous; and it may be laid down as an invariable rule, which should make us very circumspect how we order milk in heavy cases, that if it be an aliment of very easy digestion, it is also that whose indigestion is most fatal. We have already seen above the difficulties which Dr. Boerhaave met with in using it; but however great they may be, the advantages that may be derived from it are sufficient to excite us to discover every possible means of surmounting them; and happily there are some. They may be ranged under two classes; a proper attention to regimen and remedies.



dies. I shall examine the latter under one of the succeeding heads.

An attention to regimen consists, first, in the choice of milk; let the milk that is fixed upon be of whatever nature, the female that produces it should be healthy and well fed. In the next place, whilst it is taken, all aliments that may sour it, should be avoided; such are all kinds of fruits, whether raw or dressed, and in general every thing of an acid nature. Thirdly, it should be taken at periods distant from those of other aliments: it does not like any kind of mixture. Fourthly, little should be taken at a time. Fifthly, the stomach, abdomen, and legs should be kept extremely warm. And particularly, sixthly, (for without this precaution all the others are fruitless) great moderation should be used with respect to the quantity of aliments, even the properest. Whilst the patient is taking milk, the stomach should have no operations to perform; the least surcharge, the slightest indigestion, leaves a principle of corruption, which immediately corrupts the milk, and from one of the most wholesome aliments it may be rendered a poison sometimes violent, and at least very pernicious.

What milk should be preferred? To answer this question, I shall not enter into an examination of the different sorts of milk; this would be extending my work beyond its limits; there are several guides in this respect, and perhaps none better than a dissertation, at present very scarce, written by the late Mr. d'Apples, Doctor of Physick, and Greek and Moral Professor in that Academy\*. At this time,  
hardly

\* ΓΑΛΑΚΤΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ tentamen, &c. Basle 1707.

hardly any other was used except that of women, asses, goats, and cows. Each has its respective qualities; it is by comparison of these qualities and indications which the disorder points out, that should determine the election. There are a few cases in which cow-milk should not be preferred. Woman's is looked upon as the most strengthening, according to the greatest masters; but this opinion is supported upon a false basis, which is her great use of meats, without considering, that at the same time the preference is given to that of a robust countrywoman, who does not eat any, or at least very little, and who lives wholly upon bread and vegetables. I nevertheless think that it might be tried with success; the great cures that it has performed remove all doubt of its efficacy; but it is attended with an inconvenience peculiar to itself, that is, that it should be taken immediately from the nipple that produces it; this is a precaution, the necessity of which Galen was not unacquainted with, and in rallying those who will not conform to it, he sends them 'ass-like to drink asses milk;' but would not the vase excite desires which should be abolished, and might not the adventure which Capivaccio has handed down to us, be once more rehearsed? A prince had two nurses ordered him; their milk produced so good an effect, that he enabled them to furnish him some fresh at the end of a few months, if he had occasion for it.

It is thought that asses milk is the most analagous to that of a woman; but give me leave to say, that this is an assertion founded rather upon opinion than experience. It is the most serous, and consequently

the most relaxing; it is a fatal error to think that it is the most strengthening. Daily observations demonstrate the contrary, and evince, not only that it is not the most efficacious, but that it is perhaps the least. I have not always found it attended with good effects; I am not the only one. Mr. De Haller writes, 'it appears to me, that this asses milk seldom produces what is required.' Inutility is a great defect in remedy, from which the heaviest disorders are expected to be cured. Mr. Hoffman prescribed it in such cases as were at once attended with draining and lust\*.

Before I dismiss the subject of aliments, I should introduce Horace's advice; which is, to avoid mixtures:

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*nam variæ res*

*Ut noceant homini crenas, memor illius esca,*  
*Quæ simplex olim sederit; at simul assis*  
*Miscueris elixa, simul conchyliæ turdis,*  
*Dulcia se in bilem vertent, stomachoque tumultum*  
*Lenta feret pituita.*

We are sensible, without dwelling upon this advice, how impossible it is that very different aliments should at the same time undergo perfect digestion. This mixture is one of the means of destroying the health of the most vigorous, and of killing those of  
weak

\* Ibid. §. 32.

weak constitutions; it cannot, therefore, be too carefully avoided.

There is another thing to be attended to, which is equally necessary, and almost totally neglected: this is regular mastication: without this assistance the most vigorous stomachs will not be long before they sensibly decay, and without which those that are weak perform the most imperfect digestion. Much observation is necessary to form a judgment how very important it is to health to chew carefully. I have seen the most obstinate disorders of the stomach, and the most inveterate languors dissipated by paying due attention to this circumstance. On the other hand, I have seen persons in good health become infirm when their teeth failed, and they could no longer perform perfect mastication, and did not recover their health till they had lost their teeth, and the gums had acquired such a degree of hardness as supplied their functions.

Such minute details, so many precautions and exceptions makes Mr. Procope say, 'that to live according to those rules is to live miserably indeed!' But can health be rated too high? the sacrifices that are made to it are well recompensed by the pleasure of enjoying it, by the relish it gives us for every moment of life. 'Without health,' says Hippocrates, 'we can enjoy no fortune; honours riches, and all other advantages are useless\*.' Besides, these sacrifices are much smaller than is imagined. I could cite several witnesses to prove, that after a few days they found no difficulty to refrain from variety and  
high

\* De Diæt. acut. l. 3. c. 12. Foëf. 369.

high dishes, and follow a simple regimen. This is pointed out by nature, and it pleases those organs that are well disposed. A healthy palate, endowed with its greatest sensibility, can relish no other than simple meats. Compositions and seasoning are insupportable to it, and it finds in those aliments the the least favoured, a flavour that escapes blunt organs: so that those who with reason return to simplicity for health, though they may perhaps have some displeasure to it, may assure themselves, that in proportion as they recover their health, they will find in those aliments such delectable flavours as they did not suspect. A nice ear will distinguish a slight difference between two sounds, which would escape an ear that was less sensible; it is the same with the nerves and organs of taste; when they are exquisite they are sensible of the smallest variety of flavours; water-drinkers find, in some water, a flavour that flatters their palates as much as the most exquisite Falerne wine, and other waters are as insipid to them as the wine of Brie. In fine, if there are no hopes of pursuing with pleasure a regimen (though it is easy to bring one's self to that which I have pointed out) the satisfaction of thinking that by submitting thereto one does one's duty, would be a very urgent consideration, a very flattering recompence, for those who know the value of bodily ease.

Drink is almost as important a part of the regimen as aliment.

Such liquors should be avoided, as tend to increase weakness and relaxation, diminish the small digestive powers that remain, communicate acrimony to the humours, and put the nervous system in motion,

tion, which disposition is already too great. All warm waters have the first defect; tea combines them all; coffee has the two last; so that they should be strictly refrained from. The author of a work (which is above all eulogium, and the continuation of which is waited for with the greatest impatience by those who are interested in the progress of medicine) has described the dangers of those liquors in a manner that is sufficient to disgust even those who drink them with the highest pleasure\*.

Spirituos liquors, which might at first sight appear proper, as they operate directly contrary to warm water, and of which they diminish the bad effects when a small quantity is infused, are attended with other great inconveniences sufficient to make them be rejected, or at least confined to a very scarce use. They operate too violently, and pass too quickly; they irritate more than they strengthen; and the weakness which succeeds them is greater than before they were taken: they moreover communicate a hardness of the papillæ of the stomach, which deprives them of that degree of sensibility which is necessary to have an appetite; and they carry away from the digestive liquors, that degree of fluidity which they require to promote that sensation: wherefore drinkers of spirituos liquors are entirely unacquainted

\* M. Thiery, the anonymous author of experimental medicine, p. 335.

When an author publishes so valuable a work as this, he should never think that he could long remain concealed, nor fear to be discovered. The period of its being complete will be a remarkable epocha in medical history.

quainted with it. 'Such persons,' (says the illustrious author whom I have just quoted) 'as daily drink strong liquors after their meals, in order to remove a vicious digestion, could not do better, if they proposed the reverse, and to destroy the digestive powers.'

The best drink is pure spring water, mixed with an equal quantity of wine that is neither sparkling nor sour: the first sensibly irritates the nervous system, occasions a temporary rarefaction of the humours, the effect of which is a distention of the vessels, that afterwards become more relaxed, and an increase of the dissolution of the humours: the second weakens digestion, irritates, occasions too much urine, which drains the patient. The best wines are those that have less spirit and salt, and more earth and oil; these are what are called pithy wines; such are some of the red Burgundies, some of the wines of Rhône and Neufchâtel, and a very little of the wines of this country; the old white wines of Graves and Pontac of good growths; Spanish, Portuguese, and Canary wines; and in those places where Tokai can be procured, it will be found superior to any wine in the world, as well for salubrity as taste. For common use, there is none preferable to that of Neufchâtel.

In such places where good water cannot be had, it may be corrected by being filtrated, by sleeping iron in it, or by the infusion of some agreeable aromatics, such as cinnamon, aniseed, and lemon peel.

Common beer is improper. Mum, which is properly an extract from grain, equally nutritious and strengthening, may be of good service: enriched  
with

with spirits, it animates as much as wine, and is still more nourishing, and may serve both for liquors and aliment.

Chocolate may be reckoned among the useful drinks, though it may more properly be classed with aliments. In cocoa there is a very nutritive substance, and by mixing with it sugar and aromatics, its oily or noxious qualities are corrected. ‘Chocolate made with milk (says Mr. Lewis) in such quantity as to pass easy off the stomach, is an excellent breakfast for a tabid constitution. I knew a child, twelve years old, in the last stage of a consumption, when given over by a physician, recovered by her mother’s giving her chocolate only, in small quantities often repeated. Indeed, it is an aliment that for weak constitutions cannot be too much recommended\*.’ There are some to whom it would be very prejudicial.

There is one general precaution, which is, to refrain from all liquors in great quantities; they weaken digestion by relaxing the stomach, drowning the digestive juices, and by precipitating the aliments before they are digested: they relax all the parts, dissolve the humours, excite making water, or draining sweats. I have seen disorders occasioned by weakness considerably diminished without any remedy but the mere retrenching of the quantity of liquor the patient usually drank.

## S L E E P.

\* Vide Tab dorsa, §. 5.



## S L E E P.

What may be said upon sleep is reduced to three articles; its length, the time of taking it, and the necessary precautions to enjoy it with tranquillity.

Seven, or at most eight hours sleep are sufficient for adult people; it is dangerous to sleep more, or continue longer in bed, for too much repose produces the same disorders as too much sleep. If any might be allowed to go beyond this time, it would be those who take a great deal of exercise of a violent kind in the day-time; but these are not the people who addict themselves to it: on the contrary, the most sedentary people are the fondest of their bed. Therefore this term should never be prolonged, without a person is come to that pitch of weakness that he has not strength sufficient to remain long up; and in this case, he should keep out of bed as long as he could, 'The less we sleep,' says Mr. Lewis, 'rest is the sweeter and the more strengthening.'

It is demonstrable that night air is less salutary than that of the day, and that weak patients are more susceptible of its influence at night than in the morning; we should therefore consecrate that time to rest, when we are confined to a small part of the atmosphere, and which we equally tend to corrupt; that time when the air is the least salutary, and when unwholesome air would be the most obnoxious to us; we should therefore go to bed early, and rise soon in the morning:

ing : this precept is so well known, that it may be looked upon as trifling to repeat it; but it is so much neglected, and its importance (which is infinitely greater than is imagined) seems to be so little considered, that it is very allowable to suppose it unknown, and to recal it by insisting on its consequences, particularly to valetudinarians. ‘ If (says Mr. Lewis) ‘ he lies down at ten o’clock, which ‘ hour he should never exceed, he ought to rise in ‘ the summer at four or five; in the winter at six or ‘ seven. It is absolutely necessary,’ he adds, ‘ to ‘ forbid a patient afflicted with the disease I am pre- ‘ scribing to, an indulgence in bed in the morning.’ He would have him even accustom himself to rise immediately after his first sleep, and assures us, that though this practice may be irksome at first, custom will make it familiar and agreeable \*. There are many examples to prove the salubrity of this advice. Many valetudinarians, who find themselves very well upon waking from their first sound and quiet sleep, are very uneasy if they fall asleep again; and they are sure to pass the day well, if whatever hour it may be, they rise after their first sleep, and to pass it disagreeably, if they take a second.

A person can never sleep sound, but when he is quite free from all causes of irritation; they should therefore be prevented: there are three important precautions to be observed; first, not to be in too warm an air, and to be neither too much nor too little covered; secondly, to prevent the feet being cold in bed, which is a common case with weak people, and

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which

\* P. 23.

which is pernicious to them for several reasons. Hippocrates's rule in this place should be observed \*, 'sleep in a cool place, and take care to be well covered;' and thirdly, it is of still greater consequence to have the stomach not full; nothing in the world more disturbs sleep, or renders it more uneasy, painful, and burthensome, than difficult digestion at night. A depression of spirits, weakness, distaste, weariness, an incapacity of thinking or application the next day, are its inevitable consequences.

——— *Vides ut pallidus omnis  
Cœnâ desurgat dubiâ? quin corpus onustum  
Hesternis vitiis animum quoque degravat unâ  
Atque affigit humo divinæ particulum auræ.*

HOR.

On the contrary, nothing contributes more to promote gentle, easy, and uninterrupted sleep, than a light supper, being a good restorative. Freshness, agility, and gaiety, the next day, are its necessary consequences.

*Alter, ubi dicto citus curata sopori  
Membra dedit, vigetis præscripta ad munia surgit.*

Ibid.

The time of sleep, says Mr. Lewis with great reason, is that of nutrition and not of digestion; he is also very rigorous in his prescriptions to his patients with

\* Epidem. l. 6. sect. 4. aph. 14. Foëf. 1180.

with regard to supper; he forbids, very justly, all kinds of meat at night; he allows them nothing but a little milk and some slices of bread, which they must take two hours before going to rest, that the first digestion may be over before they go to sleep. The inhabitants of the Atlantic Islands, who were unacquainted with all animal diet, and who never eat aught that had been endued with life, were famous for uninterrupted sleep, and were ignorant of what it was to dream.

## E X E R C I S E.

Exercise is absolutely necessary: to weak persons it is disagreeable, and if they have a melancholy turn, it is very difficult to make them use any; nothing, however, conduces so much to increase all the disorders that arise from weakness as inactivity; the fibres of the stomach, of the intestines, and the vessels, are relaxed; the humours stagnate in all parts, because the solids are incapable of impressing the necessary motion; hence arise stases, stoppages in the throat, obstruction, overflowings; concoction, nutrition, and the functions, are not performed; the blood remains aqueous, the powers diminish, and all the symptoms of the disorder increase. Exercise prevents all these ills by increasing the strength of the circulation; all the functions are performed as if real strength assisted, and this regularity in the functions soon communicates strength itself; so that the effect of exercise is

to substitute strength, and to restore it. Another advantage that arises from it, independent of the increase of circulation, is, that it makes us constantly enjoy a new air. A person who remains in the same place soon spoils that which surrounds him; and it becomes obnoxious to him; a person in action continually diversifies it. Exercise frequently supplies the place of the remedies; but all the remedies in the world cannot supply the place of exercise.

The fatigue that attends the first on-set is a shoal which the feeble courage of many patients is lost upon; but if they had resolution to surmount this first obstacle, they would soon be sensible that the first steps are only disagreeable. I have been myself astonished to find what a degree of strength those attained by exercise who had been daunted. I have seen people, who were fatigued in walking round a garden, be able, in a few weeks, to walk two leagues, and find themselves very well upon their return.

The exercise to be recommended is not only that on foot; riding on horseback is much preferable for those persons who are extremely weak, or for those whose viscera of the abdomen or stomach are any ways hurt; in case of still greater weakness, a carriage is to be preferred, provided it does not go too gently. When the season will not allow going out, exercise should be taken in the house, or by some occupation that is laborious, or by some play, such as shuttlecock, which exercises all the body equally.

The recovery of appetite, sleep, and gaiety, are the usual consequences of exercise; but it should be cautiously observed, to take no great exercise immediately after eating, and not to eat whilst the patient  
is

is still warm with exercise ; this should be taken before a meal, and some intermediate time precede eating.

## E V A C U A T I O N.

Evacuations are disturbed with the other functions, and their irregularity increases the disorders of the whole body : it is necessary to attend to this complaint, in order to remove it in time. The evacuations which require our principal care, are stools, perspiration, and spittle. The best method of supporting them, or of restoring them to their proper state, is to observe the precepts which I have laid down upon the other objects of regimen ; these things being punctually followed, evacuations (the irregularity of which form the barometer of the best or worst state of digestion) will be pretty regularly performed. That which is the most important to assist is perspiration, which is easily disturbed in weak people. It is favoured by rubbing the skin very regularly with a flannel or flesh brush ; when perspiration is become very languid, the most certain method of restoring it is to cover the whole body immediately with flannel. Too many cloaths should be avoided, lest the patient should sweat, which is always prejudicial to perspiration ; the strainers being forced, are more enfeebled, and afterwards perform their functions worse : too little cloathing is as much to be avoided, as all cutaneous evacuation is thereby prevented. The parts which every one, and particularly weak people, should keep

the warmest, are the feet; this precaution, which is so easy, would not be neglected, if it was known how much the preservation of the whole machine depends upon it. The feet being frequently cold, tend to bring on the most fatal chronic disorders: there are many people who are by this means soon afflicted with dangerous complaints, but particularly those who are troubled with disorders in the stomach, cholics, or obstructions, are the most liable to these effects. The sacrificing priests, who constantly walked bare-footed upon the pavement of the temple, were frequently afflicted with violent cholics.

The saliva sometimes separates very plentifully with weak people: the relaxation of the salivary organs prompts them to this copious secretion: if the patients are incessantly spitting two evils result therefrom; one is, that they drain themselves by this evacuation, the other is, that this humour, which is so necessary in the work of digestion, without which it is only imperfectly performed, is wanting therein, and becomes thereby painful and bad. I have sufficiently pointed out the dangers resulting from bad digestion, to render it useless to dwell upon those of evacuation, which conspire thereto: for this reason, Mr. Lewis forbids all his patients to smoke, fumigation, among other inconveniencies, exciting a great salivation by the irritation which it produces upon the glands that supply this function.

Might not inspiration, which is communicated from one person to another, and which I have spoken of above, here be called in as a means of cure? Cattivaccio thought it necessary to make his patient lie between his two nurses, and it is very probable, that

that the inspiration of their expiration contributed as much as the milk to restore his powers. Elidæus, a cotemporary of Capivaccio, and preceptor to Forestus, who has handed down to us this observation \*, advised a young man, who was in a marasmus, asses milk, and to lye with his nurse, who was very healthy and in her prime; this advice succeeded very well, and the application was not discontinued, till such time as the patient owned that he could no longer resist the desire of abusing those powers which he had recovered. The remedy might be preserved, and the danger prevented, by avoiding a mixture of sexes.

## P A S S I O N S.

We have above seen the strict union there is between the body and soul; it is evident how much the well-being of the first depends upon the latter: we have seen the fatal effects of melancholy; so that it is almost needless to add, that disagreeable sensations of the soul cannot be too much avoided, and that it is of the utmost importance to procure none but agreeable ones in all disorders, and especially those which, like the *tabes dorsalis*, incline of themselves to melancholy, and a melancholy which, by a vicious rotation, greatly increases. One of the difficulties

\* Observat. & Curat. l. 1. observ. 10. t. 1. p. 122.



culties of treating this kind of patients is, that they yield to this symptom of their disorder, and cannot be brought to make any efforts to surmount it; but on the other hand, let us not be deluded with the belief that a patient can be gay at will: it is as difficult to command a laugh, as it is to avoid it when we are inclined to it; and we can no more prevent being dull, than we can a fit of the ague or the tooth-ach. All that can be required of patients is, that they should take remedies that are antidotes to melancholy in the same manner as they do others. Company in this case is less efficacious (as we find, that for particular reasons it displeases them) than the variety of situations. A continual change of objects forms a succession of ideas which diverts them, and this is essential. Nothing is more pernicious to people inclinable to be devoted to a single idea, than idleness and inactivity: this is particularly pernicious to our patients, and they cannot too assiduously avoid laziness and solitude. Rural exercises and agriculture are more particularly diverting than any others. Mr. Lewis thinks, that if it were possible, they should avoid the sight of women:

*Nam non ulla magis vires industria firmat  
Quam venerem et cæci stimulos avertere humoris.*

VIRG.

That patients should never be left entirely alone; that they should not be allowed to meditate, to read, or any way occupy the mind; these, says he, are so many causes of draining the spirits, which retards the cure. They should be forbid to read for any length  
of

of time, as it weakens the sight, and all reading that requires application, particularly, and with great caution, all such books as may recal those ideas to their imagination, the remembrance of which should be entirely obliterated: but there are some books, which, without exciting too much attention, or representing any dangerous images, may afford an agreeable diversion, and prevent the dreadful effects of idle weariness.

## R E M E D I E S.

I shall follow the same order as in the preceding article. I shall point out the remedies which should be avoided, before I set down those that should be used. I have already specified the first class of those that should be excluded; these are such as are of an irritating quality, hot, and volatile. There is another class, which is very opposite and equally dangerous, namely, evacuents. I have already observed, that sweats, salivations, and a copious discharge of urine, drained the patient. I shall make no repetition with regard to evacuations; it is plain, that all remedies which excite them should be excluded. Phlebotomy, and the evacuations of the first passages, remain to be considered. The indication being to restore the powers, in order to judge if they are proper, it is only necessary to know if these evacuations fulfil the intent: I shall be concise. There are two cases in which phlebotomy restores the powers,

ers, in other cases it destroys them; either in a plethora, which is not the case of consumptive people, or when the blood has acquired an inflammatory density, which rendering it improper for its destined use, destroys the powers; this is a disorder incident to vigorous persons who have rigid fibres and a strong circulation; our patients are precisely in the opposite state: bleeding must therefore necessarily be prejudicial to them. ‘Every drop of blood,’ (says Mr. Gilchrist) ‘is precious to consumptive people; the  
 ‘assimilating strength which repairs it is destroyed,  
 ‘and they have only what is necessary to support a  
 ‘very feeble circulation\*.’ Mr. Lobb, who has very happily applied the effect of evacuations, is positive, ‘that in bodies which have only a necessary quantity of blood, if it be diminished by bleeding or other evacuations, the powers are diminished, the functions are disturbed, and several disorders are produced †.’ The manner in which bleeding is treated by M. Senac more certainly excludes it in this case: ‘If the dense or red matter be wanting, bleeding is useless or pernicious; it should  
 ‘be forbidden to all bodies that are extenuated, who  
 ‘have only a small quantity of blood, or of thin  
 ‘consistence, as upon its issuing from the vessels it  
 ‘will scarce colour linen or water ‡.’ Such, we find, is the state of the blood of masturbators; and it is in general of weak people or valetudinarians. Let those who endeavour to cure them by phlebotomy compare

\* On sea voyages, p. 117.

† A letter, shewing what is the proper preparations for inoculation, §. 4.

‡ *Traité du cœur*, l. 4. c. 1. §. 2. t. 11. p. 236.

pare their method with this precept, founded upon the most enlightened theory, and the most numerous and best digested practical observations; these are the basis of the work from whence I extract them, and let them judge of the success which they have reason to expect.

Such remedies as evacuate the first passages, fortify while they remain in those parts where there is so considerable a collection of matter, that its bulk constrains the functions of all the viscera, or when there is in the first intestines putrid matter, which usually occasions great weakness; in these cases, evacuents may be used, if there is no contra-indication, if there is no other method of discharging the first passages, or if there is reason to apprehend they will not be speedily evacuated. These three conditions are seldom met with in consumptive people, with whom weakness, and the atonia of the first passages, are contrary indications, which constantly appear against purgatives or emetics. The use of strengthening remedies, that are not astringent, may be frequently used to promote successive evacuations: oysters of various sorts are efficacious, as by giving the organs fresh play, the double advantage arises of digesting what is digestive, and of evacuating what is superfluous. A speedy evacuation is seldom wanting: this is, however, sometimes the case in violent disorders; the acrimony of the matter, which is increased by heat, and the prodigious re-action of the fibres, may occasion violent symptoms, which never occur in languid disorders, in which what are properly called evacuents are, by reason of the return of the disorder, seldom or ever so requisite, and are,

as I have said, a contra-indication. The atonia and its activity are the causes of the gathering when it takes place; if it is carried off by a purgative, the effect is dissipated, but the cause which produced it is greatly increased; there is the existing complaint, and that which the remedy produced, both to be removed; and if this is not speedily done, fresh complaints arise faster than before. If purgatives are again used the evil is once more increased; moreover the intestines contract a spasm, which prevents their performing their functions; and the patient at length can have no evacuations but what are produced by art. In a word, purgatives to weak people who have any stoppages in the first passages only diminish the effect by increasing the cause; they are eased for a moment by increasing the disorder. This method is, nevertheless, but too much followed; patients are fond of it, as it appears more speedy, and really, provided the powers are not too much diminished, they find ease for a few days: it is true the complaint returns, but the physician rather chooses to attribute it to the insufficiency of the remedy, than to its operations; besides, patients are desirous of speedy relief, and few doctors choose to oppose them in this respect: it is nevertheless of great consequence in physic, as well as morality, to know how to sacrifice the present for the future; by neglecting this rule, the world is over-run with unhappy objects and valetudinarians. It were to be wished that the excellent passage in M. Gaubius's pathology, which relates to evils incident to the use of purgatives, was adopted by many physicians and patients\*.

It

\* Sect. 484.

It will be asked, are there no cases in which emetics and purgatives may be allowed to the patients I am speaking of? Doubtless there are some, but they are very scarce, and great care should be taken lest those symptoms, which seem to require evacuations, do not arise from a cause which should be treated in a very different manner. I shall not enumerate those distinctions, it would be improper here; I shall content myself with giving warning, that evacuations should be very seldom used in this disorder. Mr. Lewis is of opinion that a gentle emetic may be an useful preparative for the first passages to receive the other remedies; but he would not have it carried farther; I have found by several cases that it might, and should be dispensed with; and I have quoted two observations above of M. Hoffman, who proves all the danger of this remedy. Common sense alone without experience, tells us, that a remedy which causes convulsions, can be but of little service in disorders which are the effect of repeated convulsions.

The cause must be removed to eradicate the disorder; if it be daily diminished, the effect will certainly subside, without a relapse. If the effect only is attacked, the labour of each day is not only useless on the following, but almost constantly prejudicial.

After having pointed out what should be avoided—what is to be done? I have already described the qualities of the remedies—they should fortify without irritating. There are some which may fulfil both these indications; the catalogue is however not very numerous, and the two most efficacious are doubtless bark (quinquina) and the cold bath. The

first of these remedies has for more than a century been considered, independent of its febrifugal virtue, as one of the most powerful strengtheners and calm-ers. The most celebrated modern physicians consider it is a specific in nervous disorders. We find it is included in M. Boerhaave's prescription quoted above; and M. Vandermonde used it with great success, in treating a young man whose amorous debauches had brought him into a very lamentable state\*. Mr. Lewis prefers it to all other remedies; and M. Stehelin, in his letter, which I have had frequent occasion to mention, says, he thinks it the most efficacious of any.

Twenty successive ages of reason and experience have demonstrated that the cold bath has not the same virtues. Dr. Baynard has proved the use of them, particularly in disorders occasioned by masturbation and venereal excesses, especially in a case where independent of impotence and a simple gonorrhœa, the patient was so very weak, increased indeed by phlebotomy, and purgatives, that he was considered as incurable †.

Mr. Lewis again does not hesitate pronouncing them efficacious; he says, 'that of all remedies, whether external or internal, there is none can equal  
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\* Vide a collection of periodical observations upon medicine, &c. vol. vi. p. 156. In the second volume of this same work, we meet with the description of a disorder produced by the same cause, which merits being perused.

† ΨΥΧΡΟΛΥΣΙΑ, or the history of cold bathing, p. 254, 281.

\* the virtue of the cold bath;—it cools the body  
 ‘ more, strengthens the nerves better, and promotes  
 ‘ perspiration more effectually than any medicine  
 ‘ taken down the throat can do; and will do as much  
 ‘ service in the *tabes dorsalis* prudently used, as every  
 ‘ thing else put together \*.’ It should also be ob-  
 served of the cold bath, as I have already remarked  
 of the air, that it has a peculiar advantage, by its  
 action depending less upon re-action (that is, upon  
 natural powers) than that of the other remedies;  
 these act upon scarce any thing but the vital parts,  
 whereas the cold bath gives a spring even to the inani-  
 mate fibres.

The use of bark and the cold bath together is point-  
 ed out by the nature of their virtues; they produce  
 the same effects; and being combined will cure disor-  
 ders, which every other remedy would only have in-  
 creased. Being strengthening, sedative, and febrif-  
 ugal, they re-invigorate, diminish the feverish and  
 nervous heat, and calm the irregular motions produced  
 by the spasmodic disposition of the nervous system;  
 they fortify a weak stomach, and quickly dissipate its  
 attendant pains. They restore appetite, they facilitate  
 digestion and nutrition; they promote all the func-  
 tions, and particularly perspiration, which renders them  
 so efficacious in all catarrhus and cutaneous disor-  
 ders. In a word, they remove all disorders occasion-  
 ed by weakness, provided the patient is not afflicted  
 with indissoluble obstructions, inflammations, nor in-  
 ternal ulcerous abscesses, which conditions almost ne-

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cessarily



cessarily exclude the cold bath, but which frequently allow of the quinquina.

Some years ago I saw a foreigner, of about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, who from his earliest infancy was tormented with violent head-achs which were almost continual, considering the frequency and length of the fits, which were always attended with a total loss of appetite. The disorder was considerably increased by phlebotomy, evacuents, and purgative waters, hot baths, broths, and innumerable other remedies. I ordered him the cold bath, and the quinquina: his fits became more moderate and less frequent; the patient at the end of a month thought himself almost radically cured; a discontinuance of the remedies and bad weather brought on again the fits, but they were infinitely less violent than before; the following spring he again took the remedies, and the disorder became so slight that he thought he had no farther occasion for any; and I am convinced that the continuation of the same application, once or twice repeated, will radically cure him.

A man about twenty-eight years of age, who had for several years been tortured with an intermitting gout, which constantly afflicted his head, and occasioned dreadful disorders in his face, consulted several physicians, and tried remedies of various kinds, and latterly a medical wine, composed of the most penetrating aromatics infused in Spanish wine; they all, but particularly the last, had increased the disorder: blisters were applied to his legs, which occasioned violent symptoms; at this crisis I was called in. I advised a strong decoction of quinquina and camo-  
mille

mile flowers, which he continued taking for six weeks, and which restored him to a better state of health than he had enjoyed for several years. It would be needless to cite a great number of examples, upon every thing foreign to the present subject, in order to evince the strengthening virtue of the remedies, which has been for a long while so clearly proved, the use of which is evidently pointed out by every symptom of this disorder, and its utility is confirmed by the most happy success.

When I use the quinquina in a liquid form, I order a decoction of half an ounce with two ounces of water, or, according to the indication, red wine, boiled for about two hours in a close vessel, three ounces of which are to be taken three times a day. The cold bath is to be used at night, when the digestion of the dinner is entirely finished, as it contributes to promote sound sleep. I have seen a young masturbator who passed his nights restless and uneasy, and who in the morning was bathed in colliquative sweats; the night after he had bathed six times he slept five hours, and rose in the morning without sweating, and much better.

Steel is a third remedy, that is so much used in all weak cases, as to render it unnecessary to insist upon its efficacy as a fortifier; as it is no way irritating, it is very proper for our patients. It may be either given in substance or by infusion; but the best preparation is the martial water, as nature makes it, and particularly that of Spa, which is one of the most powerful strengtheners known, and a strengthener, that so far from irritating, softens all the superfluous acrimony of the humours. Gums, myrrh, bitters,

and the most gentle aromatics, are also useful. Circumstances must determine the choice of these different remedies. Those which I first specified deserve in general the preference; but some cases may be met with that require others; nervous remedies in general may be given, carefully observing in choosing them those precautions which I pointed out above. It is a nervous disorder, and should be treated as such; this has frequently been done, and success has followed, without the cause being known; it is true, as incontrovertible demonstration has proved to me, that the ignorance of this cause, whereby these necessary cautions have been omitted, has frequently rendered the best seeming remedies fruitless, without the physician being able to discover the reason of his ill success.

I ordered the young man, whose case is described in a fragment of his letters (p. 25.) pills chiefly composed of myrrh, and a decoction with the quinquina, which had the most happy effect \*. He wrote to me sixteen days after having begun to take the remedies, 'I daily perceive the great good they do me: my head-achs are neither so frequent nor violent, I am no longer afflicted with them, but when I apply myself too much; my stomach is better and I have very seldom any pains in my limbs.' At the end of

\* ℞. Myrrh. elect. unc. ꝑ. gum. galban. extr. trifol. fibr. terr. Japon. aa. dr. II. Sir. cort. aur. q. s. F. pil. gr. III. seven, an hour after breakfast, dinner, and supper, with three ounces of broth. ℞. Cort. Peruv. unc. II. cort. rad. capp. unc. I. cinnam. acut. dr. II. limat. mart. in nodul. lax. unc. ꝑ. cum. aq. jont. lib. II. ꝑ. l. a f. decoct.

of a month he was perfectly cured; but he has not nor ever will have the same strength, which he would have enjoyed, had he not addicted himself to this crime. The check which is given to the body at the time of its growth, is attended with such consequences as never can be removed. May this truth be as much imprinted in the minds of youth, as it has lately been declaimed with vehemence. ‘Youth,’ says M. Linnæus, ‘is the important period for framing a robust constitution. Nothing is so much to be dreaded, as the premature or excessive indulgence of amorous pleasure; hence arise weakness of sight, vertigoes, loss of appetite, and mental decay. A body that is enervated in youth never recovers itself; old age and infirmity speedily come on, and the thread of life is shortened \*.’ Sixteen hundred years before, that great naturalist Plutarch, in his excellent work upon the education of children, recommended the formation of their constitution as a very essential object. ‘No care,’ said he, ‘should be neglected that may contribute to the elegance and strength of the body (the excesses which I treat of are equally destructive to both): for adds he, the foundation of a happy old age is a good constitution in youth; temperance and moderation at that age are passports to happy grey hairs †.’

To the preceding observation, the success of which appears to be owing to the quinquina, I shall subjoin another,

\* This passage is taken from a dissertation of that illustrious naturalist ‘Upon the foundation of health.’ Vide the Danish Mercury for July 1758, p. 95.

† *De puerorum instit.* ch. 10.

another, wherein the cold bath was the principal remedy. A young man of a bilious temperament, initiated into vice at ten years of age, had from that time been always weak, languid, and in a state of cachochymy: he had been afflicted with some bilious disorders, of which he had with great difficulty been cured: he was extremely thin, pale, weak, and melancholy. I ordered him the cold bath, and a powder composed of cream of tartar, steel dust, and a very little cinnamon, which he took three times a day. In six weeks he acquired a greater degree of strength than he had ever before experienced.

One great advantage derived from the Spa waters and quinquina is, that they carry off the milk. Spa water has this excellence in common with some other waters. We find above that M. Hoffman ordered asses milk, with a third of Selter water. M. De la Mettrie has transmitted to us a fine observation of Dr. Boerhaave. ‘That amiable duke (such is the literal translation) had put himself out of the marriage state; I replaced him in it by the use of Spa water and milk\*.

The weakness of the stomach which makes digestion slow, acids, the little motion of the bile, and stoppages in the viscera of the abdomen, are the principal causes which prevent the digestion of milk, and which forbid its use. The waters which remove all these complaints must necessarily facilitate digestion; and

\* See the Supplement to the work of *Penelope*, ch. p. 1. 35. *Amabilis ille dux se posuerat extra. matrimonium; ego illum reposui intra.*

and quinquina, which fulfills the same indications, must unite very well with milk. These remedies may be either used before, in order to prepare the passages, which is almost always necessary, or at the same time.

I restored a foreigner to his perfect health, in 1753, who had so exhausted himself with a courtesan, that he was incapable of any act of virility; his stomach was also very weak, and the want of nutrition and sleep had reduced him to a very meagre state. At six in the morning he took six ounces of the decoction of quinquina, to which was added a spoonful of canary wine; an hour after he took ten ounces of fresh goat's milk, to which was added a little sugar, and an ounce of orange flower water. He dined upon a cold roast fowl, and a glass of the best Burgundy wine, with as much water; at six at night he took a second dose of quinquina, and half an hour after he went into a cold bath, where he remained ten minutes, and upon his coming out he went to bed. At eight o'clock he again took the same quantity of milk; he rose and sat from nine till ten. Such was the effect of the remedies, that at the end of eight days upon my coming into the room, he cried out to me with much joy, that he had recovered 'the external sign of virility,' to make use of M. Buffon's expression; and at the end of a month he had almost entirely recovered his primitive strength.

Some absorbent powders, a few spoons-full of mint water, with sometimes the addition of only a little sugar; some pills extracted from quinquina may also contribute to prevent the degeneration of the milk. That gum which has lately been introduced into some parts of

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England under the name of *gummi rubrum Gambiense* (and upon which is written a little dissertation in the observations and enquiries of the new Medical Society\*) may also be used. It fortifies and softens; these are the two great indications of the disorders in question.

In fine, if notwithstanding all possible care, it is impossible to retain the milk, butter-milk may be tried: I advised it with success to a young man, whose hypocondriac disposition made me fear giving him milk alone. Bilious patients like it very well, and find it agree with them; it should always have the preference to milk, whenever the patient has a great heat, a small fever, or inclinable to the St. Anthony's fire, and it is particularly efficacious, when a violent fever is produced by venereal excesses, such as that of which Raphael died. Notwithstanding the patients weakness, strengthening remedies would be prejudicial; phlebotomy is dangerous: the famous Johnson, who died with the title of baron Ziechendorf, about eighty years ago, had at that time forbid it in this case †. Medicines that are too refreshing do not succeed, as is proved by M. Vandermonde, and as I have myself seen; but butter-milk succeeds very well, provided it is not too greasy: it calms, dilates, softens, refreshes, nourishes and strengthens, which is of great consequence in this case wherein the powers are lost, with incomprehensible

\* Vol. i. p. 36.

† *In febre ex venere cavenduma vena sectione. Syntagma, l. i. tit. 2. c. 1.*

sible quickness. M. Gilchrist, who does not consider milk as of any great consequence, highly praises butter-milk in the same disorder\*.

Since the publication of the last edition of this work, four years ago, I have been consulted by several persons who were enervated; some have been entirely cured; many have received great benefit; others have had no relief; and when the disorder has got to a certain pitch, all that can be expected, is to stop by medicine its progress. I am ignorant of some patients that I have cured.

Milk was the principal aliment in almost all the cure: quinquina, steel, and the martial waters, with the cold bath, were the remedies. Some patients I confined intirely to milk, others took it once or twice a day,

The patient, whose disorder I particularized in the fifth section, and where I promised to give the method of treating it, lived for three months upon nothing but milk, bread well baked, and a new laid egg or two each day, with water fresh from the fountain. He drank milk four times a day; twice hot from the cow without bread, and twice warmed with bread. The remedy was an opiate composed of quinquina, preserved orange peel, and syrurp of mint. His breast was covered with an aromatic plaister, his body was rubbed all over with a flannel every morning; he took as much exercise as he could on foot and on horseback, and he was a good deal in the open air. His weakness and the disorder in the stomach

\* On sea voyages, p. 119.



mach did not prevent his using the cold bath at this period. The success of remedies was so great, that he recovered his strength, and the disorder in his stomach was removed: at the end of a month he could walk a league on foot; his vomiting intirely ceased, the pain in his breast was considerably diminished, and he has for these three years been in a tolerable state of health; he returned by degrees to his usual aliment, having taken an antipathy to milk.

The genital parts are those which recover their strength the most slowly; frequently they never recover it, though the parts of the body seem to have recovered theirs; one may literally prophesy in this case, that the part which has suffered is that which shall die.

I have always found it easier to cure those who have exhausted themselves by great excesses in a short time, than those who have drained themselves by degrees and less frequent pollutions, but which began very early, prevented their growth, and hindered them from acquiring their full strength. The first may be looked upon as having a violent disorder that has consumed all their powers; but the organs having acquired the summit of their perfection, though they have greatly suffered, the cessation of the cause, time, regimen, and remedies, may recover them. The second never let their constitution form, how then can they restore it? Art must operate in maturity, what they prevented nature's performing in infancy and youth: this expectation must certainly be chimerical; and daily observations have proved to me, that young people who in their infancy devoted themselves to this uncleanness, at the time that the marks  
of

of puberty began to appear, which epocha is the crisis of nature, when all its powers are required; observation has proved to me, I say, that these young people cannot hope ever to become vigorous and robust; and they may consider themselves very happy, when they enjoy a middling state of health, free from capital disorders and acute pains.

Neither can those who do not repent till late, at an age when the machine preserves itself after being well constructed, but when it is very difficult to repair it, have any great hopes: a man that is past forty scarce ever grows young again.

When I prescribe the quinquia to be taken in wine, I do not order a milk diet only; but the remedy should be taken in the morning, and the milk at night. I have met with some patients who have required this order to be changed, as the wine taken in a morning constantly made them vomit.

When I use mineral waters, I order some bottles of pure water to be taken, before milk is mixed with it.

When the disorder is inveterate, it generally degenerates into a cacochymy, which must be removed before we endeavour to restore the patient's strength; in this case the evacuents are sometimes indispensably necessary, and operate very efficaciously. The strengthening and nutritious remedies, and the milk prescribed in these circumstances, bring on a slow fever, and the patient loses his strength in proportion as he uses them.

When such violent weakness as to endanger the patient's life is occasioned by sudden excesses, recourse must be had to actual cordials; Spanish wine and bread must be given, succulent broths, with fresh

eggs; the patient must be put to bed, and flannels steeped in wine heated with treacle must be applied to his breast.

In case venereal excesses have occasioned a violent fever, the patient should not be bled till such time as there is an indication, by the fullness and hardness of the pulse; and it were better the patient should lose a little blood at twice, than much at once. The white decoction with barley-water and a little milk; some pinches of nitre; lotions with the decoctions of good-man's flowers, and a lukewarm bath for the feet; and for nourishment, veal broth, with meal, are the remedies really indicated, and which have met with speedy success in such cases as I used them.

The symptoms seldom require to be treated in a particular manner, but give way to the general method. External strengtheners may, however in some cases, be added to internal strengtheners, when it is designed to strengthen any particular part; and I have frequently advised, with success, epithems, or aromatic plaisters upon the breast; and it is not unnecessary to wrap the testicles in fine flannel steeped in some strong fortifying liquor, and to support them by the use of a bandage.

What M. Gorter says will not be improperly placed here. 'I have sometimes cured the *gutta serena* occasioned by venereal excesses, in using internal strengtheners, and nasal cephalic powders, which, by the slight irritation they produce, dispose a greater flow of animal spirits upon the optic nerve\*.'

It would be needless to expatiate more upon the cure; however extensive my animadversions might be,

\* De Perspir. insensib. p. 514, 515.

be, they could never serve as a sufficient guide to patients, without the assistance of a physician, and to the gentlemen of the faculty they would be superfluous. I have been somewhat more particular with regard to the regimen, because when the disorder has not made any great progress, and the cause ceasing, this alone may operate a cure, and every one may follow it without danger. Nothing farther is necessary to conclude this part, but the preservative cure. I have been sensible that this part was wanting to the first edition of this work, and that it was an essential omission. I have been made acquainted with this in a very polite manner, by a person who has by his productions obtained a considerable rank in the Republic of Letters, and who is still more respectable by his talents, his knowledge, and his personal qualifications, than by his name, or the employments he fills in one of the principal cities of Switzerland. M. Itelin, secretary of state of Basle, will I hope allow me to make use of his name upon this occasion. I shall quote a fragment of his letter with the greater pleasure, as he so precisely points out what is necessary. ‘ I could wish,’ says he, ‘ to see a production of  
 ‘ yours, wherein were explained the most certain and  
 ‘ least dangerous methods, whereby parents during  
 ‘ the time of education, and youth when they be-  
 ‘ come masters of their own conduct, might preserve  
 ‘ themselves from the violence of desires, which hur-  
 ‘ ries them to excesses; whence arise these horrid dis-  
 ‘ orders, or such others as interrupt their own and  
 ‘ the happiness of society. I doubt not but there is  
 ‘ some particular diet which would promote conti-  
 ‘ nence; and I imagine that a work which pointed it

‘ out, joined to a description of those disorders incident to impurity, would be worth all the moral treatises written upon the subject.’

He is certainly very right; nothing can be more interesting than the addition he desires; and at the same time nothing can be more difficult than to separate it from the other parts of education, as well moral as physical. To treat this subject in the abstract, a great number of principles should be established, which would swell too much the size of this little work, and which are besides quite foreign to it. Some general precepts, separated from the principles and necessary divisions, would not only be of very little use, but might even tend to dangerous consequences: for these reasons it were better to incorporate this treatise with a more extensive one upon the means of forming a good constitution, and giving to youth a steady health: a subject which, though treated by eminent men, is not yet exhausted, but so far from it, that a multitude of important things may be added, as well as upon the disorders incident to that time of life. I shall therefore commit a kind of violence upon my inclination by suppressing it here. All that can with propriety be said in this place is, that idleness and inactivity, lying too long a bed, over soft beds, succulent aromatics, salt and vinous diet, suspicious friends, licentious productions, being the causes which most immediately produce these excesses, they should sedulously be avoided. Diet is particularly important, and sufficient attention is not paid to it. Those who are intrusted with bringing up youth, should have constantly in view that excellent observation of St. Jerome. ‘ The forges of Vulcan, and the volcanoes  
‘ of

‘ of Vefuvius and mount Olympus, do not flame  
 ‘ with greater violence, than young people pampered  
 ‘ with succulent food and rich wine.’ Menjot, who  
 was one of Lewis the XIVth’s phyficians, from the  
 middle to the end of the laft century, mentions fome  
 females who, by drinking Hippocras wine to excefs,  
 were thrown into venereal ecftafies. The ufe of  
 wine and high food is the more dangerous, as by  
 increafing luft they diminifh reafon, which fhould op-  
 pofe it.

‘ Wine and meats ftupify the foul,’ fays Plutarch,  
 in his treatife upon the ufe of meats, a work that  
 fhould be univerfally read. The earlieft phyficians  
 were already acquainted with the influence of regimen  
 upon the manners; they had an idea of medical  
 morality; and Galen has left us a little work, which  
 is perhaps the beft production of the fort extant.  
 After reading it, we muft be convinced of the fincerity  
 of his promife. ‘ Let thofe who deny that the  
 ‘ difference in aliments renders fome temperate, and  
 ‘ others diffolute; fome chafte, and others inconti-  
 ‘ nent; fome courageous, and others cowardly;  
 ‘ fome gentle, and others quarrelfome; fome modeft,  
 ‘ and others prefumptuous; let thofe, I fay, who  
 ‘ deny this truth come to me, let them follow my  
 ‘ advice as to eating and drinking, and I promife them  
 ‘ they will obtain great infight into moral philofophy;  
 ‘ they will find the powers of their foul increafe;  
 ‘ they will acquire more genius, a ftronger me-  
 ‘ mory, and greater prudence, as well as diligence.  
 ‘ I will point out to them what liquors, what tempera-  
 ‘ ment of air, what countries they fhall avoid or

‘choose \*.’ Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch, so early left us excellent observations upon this important subject; and among the works which remain of the Pythagorean Porphyry, that zealous anti-christian of the third century, there is one upon ‘the abstinence from meat,’ wherein he upbraids Firmus Castricius, to whom it is dedicated, with having quitted the vegetable diet, though he acknowledged it was the properest for preserving health, and facilitating the study of philosophy; and he adds, since you have eat meat, experience has taught you that your acknowledgment was well founded. There are some excellent things in this piece.

The most efficacious and only infallible preservative is indispensably that which is pointed out by the great man, who was the best acquainted with his fellow creatures, and their ways; who not only saw what they were, but what they had been, what they should be, and what they might hereafter become; who the most sincerely loved them; who had made the greatest efforts in their favour; who let himself be sacrificed for them, and who was the most cruelly persecuted by them. ‘Watch carefully over the  
 ‘young man; leave him not alone, neither night  
 ‘nor day; lie at least in his chamber. From the  
 ‘time that he has contracted this habit, which is the  
 ‘most fatal that a young man can be addicted to, he  
 ‘will carry with him to the grave its shocking effects  
 ‘—his body and heart will always be enervated.’ I  
 refer

\* Quod animi mores corporis temperamenta sequantur, c. ix. Charterius, t. v. p. 457.

refer the reader to the work itself for all that is excellent upon this head\*.

A description of the danger to a person who is addicted to the evil, is perhaps the most powerful motive of correction. It is a dreadful portrait, sufficient to make him retreat with horror: let us examine some of its principal features. The whole mass fallen to decay; all the bodily senses and all the faculties of the soul weakened; the loss of imagination and memory; imbecility, contempt, shame, ignominy, its constant attendants; all the functions disturbed, suspended, and painful; continued disorders, disagreeable, capricious, and disgusting; violent pains ever renewing; all the disorders of old age in the prime of youth; an incapacity for all the functions for which man was created; the humiliating character of being an useless load upon earth; the mortification to which it is daily exposed; a distaste for all decent pleasures; lassitude, an aversion for others, and at length for self; life appears horrible; the dread which every moment starts at suicide; anguish worse than pain; remorse, which daily increases; and which doubtless gains fresh strength, when the soul is no longer weakened by its union with the body, and serve perhaps for an eternal punishment—a fire that is never extinguished. This is a sketch of the fate reserved for those who act as if they did not fear it.

Before I dismiss the article of treating the disorders, I should acquaint patients (and this advice equally relates to all those who are afflicted with  
chronic

\* See a treatise upon Education, vol. ii. p. 232.  
vol. iii. p. 255.



chronic disorders, particularly when attended with weakness) that they should not expect that disorders can be removed in a few days, which are produced by the errors of years. They should prepare themselves for the tediousness of a long cure, and scrupulously pursue the regimen prescribed; if it should sometimes appear trifling, it is because they are unacquainted with the importance of apparent trifles; and they should incessantly consider, that the tediousness of the most rigid cure is much inferior to that of disease, though never so slight. May I be allowed to say, that if, on the one hand, we find curable disorders that are not removed by being badly treated; on the other hand, we also find a great number of complaints, which the untractableness of the patients renders incurable, notwithstanding the best advice of physicians. Hippocrates, in order to secure success, required the patient, the physicians, and the assistants, equally to do their duty; if this concurrence more frequently took place, its happy effects would be more common. Aretæus says, ‘let the patient have courage, and conspire with the physician against this disorder\*.’ I have seen the most stubborn distempers give way to the establishment of this harmony; and very recent observations have demonstrated to me, that the severity even of cancerous disorders would yield to prescriptions, ordered perhaps with some prudence, but followed particularly with a docility and regularity whose success forms its elogium.

\* De diut morb. l. i. proëm. p. 27.

## P A R T IV.

*Analogous Disorders.*

## S E C T I O N XI.

*Nocturnal Pollutions.*

I HAVE pointed out the dangers of too copious an evacuation of semen by venereal excesses and masturbation; and I said in the beginning of this work, that it was also lost by nocturnal emissions in lascivious dreams, and by that running which is known under the name of a simple gonorrhœa. I shall briefly examine these two complaints.

The soul and body are united by such laws, that even when the senses are fettered by sleep, the soul is occupied with ideas, which were transmitted to it in the day-time.

*Res, quæ in vita usurpant homines, cogitant, curant, vident,  
Quæque aiunt vigilantes agitantque, ea si cui in somno  
accidunt,*

*Minus mirum est.*

Acc.

Another

Another law of this union is, that without interrupting the confinement of the other senses, or to speak without any equivocation, without making them sensible to external impressions, the soul can in sleep create the necessary motions, to execute desires which are suggested by the ideas that employ it.

Occupied with ideas relative to amorous pleasures, abandoned to lascivious dreams, the objects which are painted to the fancy produce the same motions in the organs of generation as they would have done whilst awake; and the act is physically consummated, if it be consummated in the imagination. We know what happened to Horace, at one of the stages upon his journey to Brundisium:

*Hic ego mendacem stultissimus usque puellam  
Ad mediam noctem expecto; somnus tamen aufert  
Intentum veneri: tum immundo somnia visu  
Nocturnam vestem maculant, ventremque supinam.*

Those organs being in their turn the first irritated, weaken nothing but the imagination, and renew dreams, which terminate as the former. These principles may serve to explain the different species of pollution.

The first is occasioned by a superabundance of semen, which is the case with people in the vigour of their age, who are sanguine, robust, and chaste. The heat of the bed rarefying the humours, and the seminal liquor being more susceptible of rarefaction than any other, the irritated vesiculæ prompt the imagination, which being devoid of the assistance that  
would

would display the illusion, yields itself up entirely to it; and the idea of coition produces the last effect, ejection. In this case the evacuation is not a disorder, it is rather a favourable crisis; it is an emotion that carries off a humour which is too abundant and too much compressed, and which might be detrimental: and though some physicians, who will not credit any thing but what they have seen, deny it, this liquor may nevertheless, by its superfluity, produce disorders different from a priapism, or the furor uterinus.

May I be allowed a short digression upon this question? it is not foreign to that subject.

‘ A femine reten to, multos produci morbos memorat Gal nus \* & exemplum in historia monstrat. Ille novit virum & mulierem quibus hujusmodi erat natura qui præ viduitate à libidinis usu abstinentes, torpidi, pigrique facti sunt. Homo cibi cupiditatem amisit, atque ne exiguam quidem ciborum partem concoquere potuit; ubi vero se ipsum cogendo, plus cibi ingerebat, protinùs ad vomitum excitabatur, mœstus etiam apparebat, non solùm has ob causas, sed etiam (ut melancholici solent) citrà manifestam occasionem: mulier vero præter cætera mala, nervorum quoque distentione vexabatur. Verùm hi quàm celerrimè liberati sunt, ad pristinam consuetudinem reversi. Dum Montis Pessulani eram, observationem verè persimilem vidi. Mulier valens, quadragesimum ætatis suæ annum complens, exiguo post tempore vidua; quæ

\* De locis affectis, l. 6. c. 5. Charter t. 7. p. 519.

quæ antea cum viri concubitu gauderet, hoc omnino post obitum ejus fuerit privata, incidit tam violenter in affectu hysterico ut deficere viderentur actiones sensuum; cum nullum remedium in ea accessus tolerare potuerat, nisi titillatio partium genitalium (veluti per coitum usu venire solet). Indè agitabatur toto corpore, & à copiosa pollutione feminis evacuebatur; quo facto liberata est mulier à molestiâ suâ.

\* Aliam observationem Zacutus refert\*: ex eadem causâ patiebatur puella; quæ ex intervallis paroxysmo ita convellebatur, ut accedente difficili respiratione, tota convulsa, sine sensu ullo, oculis distortis, nimio dentium strigore præcedente cum linguâ tremulâ, animam efflare videretur. Cui cum plurima auxilia quæ in hac accessione utilia sunt, non juvarent, pessaria ex acri confecta, utero applicanda curavit, ex quorum admotione titillatione & fervore quodam in utero cocitato, copiosum semen excernens, ab accessione sævâ superstes remansit.

\* Historiam monialis Hoffmannus enarrat, quæ ob eadem causam, ab eadem evacuatione, aliquoties paroxysmum solvebat.

\* Homines duo, inquit Zacutus, quum concubitu quo antea creberrime utebantur, privarentur, in gravissima damna incurrere: alter in otio & mollitie educatus cum tabi esset propinquus, à coitu cum cessarit, huic sensim & sine sensu umbilicus intumuit. Nuptus, & ad concubitum reversus, sanitatem recuperavit. Alter verò nobilissimus, adeò irat coitus studio deditus, ut lassatus, & debilis cogere hâc de causâ ad tempus lecto quiescere. Ecce post sex men-  
fes,

\* Prax. admirand. l. 2. obs. 85.

tes, nauscâ correptus, vertigine concutitur, & post paucos dies epilepsiâ sævâ opprimitur. Ab accessione auxiliorum ope levatus, medicorum præsidia expostulat. Hi, sympathicam epilepsiam à vitio ventriculi subortam rati tonum, & ventriculum à vitiosis humoribus expurgant, & roborant; sed frustra. Nam malo ferociùs infestante, post paucas horas velut sideratus extinctus est. Dissecto corpore, nullum vitium in stomacho, cerebro reliquisque partibus inventum, præterquam in cavitate vasis semen in penem deferentis & ulceribus sordidis, ab hac virulentâ substantiâ retentâ concretis.

‘Dum Zindel \* dissertationem Basileæ publicavit, jam quindecim ab hinc annis, ubi observationes morborum à semine retento acri productis in unum colligit quæ lectu non indignæ sunt.

‘Hic subjici potest quæ Dom. Sauvages dixit, de mulierum castitate, quæ pudori litant, sed tantâ veneris cupiditate incenduntur, & eò ardentius ac miserabiliùs flagrant, quo ardorem suum tegunt accuratiùs, indè mœror, agrypnia, anorexia, macies, pollutiones frequentes. Ille celebris Medicus puellam novit hujuscemodi quæ ad senis putidi & inficeti pedes prostitata & ecerrimè suam calamitatem deplorans, intereà hisce invitis feminis profluviis erat obnoxia, à duobus annis his miseriis cruciata & castimoniam mentis intermeratam fervans, immane patiebatur veneris desiderium sensitivum cui constanter reluctabatur voluntas.’

A physician celebrated for his age and knowledge, who for a long time attended the Austrian armies in Italy, told me he had observed, that the German sol-

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diers

\* Nicolaus Zindelius, de morbis ex castitate nimia oriundis. Casileæ, 1745.

diers who were unmarried, and who lived prudently, were frequently afflicted with epilepsies, priapisms, or nocturnal pollutions; accidents which arose from too abundant a secretion of the semen, and perhaps from its being more acrimonious in a hotter climate than their own country, and where the diet is more succulent.

Dr. Jaques, whom I have elsewhere quoted, produced a thesis \* upon the disorders occasioned by the privation of venereal pleasure. Mr. Reneaume has written another upon 'monastic virginity,' the object whereof is the same.

In fine, without mentioning any other, Mr. Gausbius places excessive continence amongst the causes of disorders. It seldom, says he, produces any ill; we have, however, found it operate so upon some men, born with strong constitutions, and who had much seed; also in some women †. He afterwards enumerates these disorders. Their existence, therefore, cannot be denied, but their uncommonness may be affirmed, particularly in this age, which seems to be that of weakness; and we are every day mistaken in attributing indiscriminately to this cause all the disorders of females who are marriageable, and prescribing matrimony

\* It may be necessary to observe that the thesis of Mr. Jaques was not maintained, and that there was an arret of the parliament against it. M. de la Mettrie translated this thesis into French, or rather printed it, for it was already translated, and inserted in that cruel and odious satire upon the physicians of Paris, a work wherein truth and his own judgment are equally attacked.

† Institutiones pathologicae, §. 563.

trimony to them as the only remedy; a remedy that is often badly recommended and prejudicial, because it cannot destroy the vices that kept up the disorder, and adds to the evils past those which pregnancy and lying-in bring on those women of a languid disposition. I must now resume the subject of pollution.

We found that the first species, produced by the superabundance of semen which it evacuates, was not a distemper of itself, but it may become such in returning too often, and when there is no superabundance that is detrimental. I have already observed, that one evacuation disposed the organs to make another; so great is the power of habit, which consists in the reiteration of the motions being more easy, and that they re-produce from the slightest cause, which is an observation of great importance to those who desire to arrive at a proper knowledge of the animal æconomy; upon which Galen, and particularly M. Maty †, have written some excellent pieces;

P 2

but

† Galenus libro de consuetudinibus. Charter, t. 6. p. 54.

M. Maty, dissertatio de consuetudinis efficacia in corpus humanum, Leid. 1740. M. Pujati has also given some very good reflections upon this subject, in his treatise upon diet for feverish patients, p. 57, &c. The metaphysicians, who seem to have the best comprehended it, are Mr. Locke, in his essay, &c. l. 2. c. 32. M. de Condillac, in his treatise upon animals, p. 2. c. 2. and 9. and the anonymous author of the Elements of Pſycology, c. 61, 62, 63, 64. I know a man, who having been waked by the tumult of a fire in the neighbourhood, at one in the morning, has constantly walked every morning since, precisely at the same hour.



but it has, notwithstanding, never yet been amply treated upon: and this inconvenience results from it, that evacuations become a consequence thereof, independent of necessity, and even when there is no occasion for them. They are then very disagreeable, being liable to cause all the dangerous effects of excessive evacuation produced by other means. Satyrus, surnamed Grypalopex, who resided at Thafus, had from the age of twenty-five years frequent nocturnal pollutions; he had even sometimes a running of the seed during the day-time. He died of a consumption in his thirtieth year\*.

M. Zimmermann mentioned to me a man of very fine genius, who by pollution was deprived of the faculties of his mind, and whose body was precisely in the state described by M. Boerhaave. We have seen (p. 9.) the disorders which M. Hoffman observed after pollution. The most usual symptoms before the disorder has made any progress are a continual oppression, particularly in the morning, and acute pains in the reins. I was consulted some months since, for a husbandman about fifty years of age, who was before very strong, and who, by frequent pollutions for three or four months, was so prodigiously weakened, that he could work but a few hours in the day; and he was often prevented doing this by pains in his reins, which made him keep his bed, and he daily fell away. I gave him some advice; but I am unacquainted with its effect.

I knew a man, who was deaf for several weeks, after a long cold, which he neglected, and who, when  
he

\* Epidem. 1. 6. §. 8. n. 52. Foëf. 1201.

he had a nocturnal pollution, was much more deaf the next day, and very uneasy; and another, weakened by several causes, who, after pollution, wakes so greatly oppressed, and with such a general numbness, that he appears to be seized with the palsy for an hour, and is vastly depressed for twenty-four hours.

Among the first class may be ranged the pollutions of those who, having been accustomed to frequent emissions, suspend them all of a sudden. Such were those of a woman, mentioned by Galen; she had been a widow for some time, and the retention of the sperm brought upon her disorders of the uterus; she had in her sleep convulsive motions of the loins, the arms, and legs, which were accompanied with a copious emission of thick sperm, with the sensation as in coition \*. A female dancer was, by accident, wounded near the left breast; her surgeon prescribed a pretty rigid diet, and forbid her indulging in those pleasures which she had often used to enjoy. On the third night of this privation, which she submitted to, in neglecting the regimen, she had an emission, which returning frequently the succeeding nights, she visibly fell away, and was afflicted with violent pains in the reins. The wound began to heal, and would have been completely cured, if she had followed the regimen prescribed. The surgeon, tenacious of his principles, continued his injunctions, bled and purged her. Wearied and weakened, she discontinued the remedies, returned to her former course of life, and her feebleness and pains soon dissipated.

But let us beware of concluding from this observa-  
 P 3 tion,

\* De Semine, l. 2. c. 1. Chartres t. 3. p. 213.

tion, that such chirurgical prescriptions are uselefs, as the greatest practitioners, who have founded their opinion upon other observations, strictly forbid coition to wounded persons; and there is no experienced surgeon who must not himself have been convinced that it is prejudicial. I shall relate one single example, wherein masturbation was of mortal effect, the history of which G. Fabricius de Hilden has handed down to us. Cosmus Slotan had amputated the hand of a young man, which had been wounded by a shot; as he knew him to be of a warm constitution, he very rigidly forbid him to have any commerce with his wife, whom he also acquainted with the danger. But when all dangers were surmounted, and the cure went on very well, the patient having desires which his wife would not gratify, he himself procured, without coition, an emission of semen, which was immediately followed by a delirious fever, convulsions, and the other violent accidents, of which he died at the end of four days\*.

I saw a young bridegroom, who idly throwing himself out of the seat of a chaise, fell on one side, and the hind wheel went over his foot, between the heel and the ankle-bone; he had neither a fracture nor a luxation, but a violent contusion; finding himself well at the end of five days, he behaved as if no accident had happened. Two hours after, all his leg swelled, attended with extraordinary pains and a violent fever, which continued near thirty hours. But to resume:

What I said in the beginning of this section, with regard

\* Observ. Chirurg. cent. 1. obs. 22.

regard to the connection that subsists between dreams and such ideas as the soul has been occupied with in the day-time, serves to explain why masturbators are so subject to nocturnal pollutions; their soul being all the day possessed with venereal ideas, represents to itself the same objects during the night, and the lascivious dream is followed by an evacuation, which is alwas ready to be made when the organs have acquired a considerable degree of irritability.

It is necessary to prevent in time the progress of the habit; and, whatever may be the first cause of pollutions, not to let them arrive at a degree of inveteracy. When they are of long duration they are cured with great difficulty. ‘There is no disorder,’ says Mr. Hoffman, ‘which torments more the patients, and gives more trouble to the physician, than nocturnal pollutions of long continuance, and which are become habitual, particularly if they have diurnal returns. The best remedies are almost always in vain administered, and they often do more harm than good\*.’

All physicians that have written upon this disorder have pronounced the cure to be very difficult; and all physicians who have had occasion to treat it, have experienced it themselves: nor need we be surprized. Unless we can either restore the powers of the organs, and diminish their irritability for the intermediate time, between two pollutions, which is impossible, or at once prevent the return of lascivious dreams, which is equally difficult, we may be sure that the pollution will return, and that it will destroy almost all

\* Conf. 102.

all the good that was produced by the few remedies that have been taken since the last emission: so that from one pollution to another, nothing is to be gained but a very small effect, which must frequently take place before a sensible one can be produced.

Cælius Aurelianus has collected the best things the antients have said upon the manner of treating this case. He says, that the patient should in the first place avoid as much as possible all venereal ideas; secondly, that he should lie upon a hard cool bed; that he should apply to his reins a thin leaden plate; that he should apply to all parts which are the seat of the disorder, a sponge steeped in water and vinegar, or refreshing things, such as balaustines, acacia, hypocistis, and psilium; thirdly, that he take no aliment or drink but what is cooling and astringent. He fourthly advises him to strengtheners; fifthly, the use of the cold bath; and sixthly, never to lie upon his back, but either upon his side or belly. This advice is replete with good things; but let us examine more distinctly what is the indication that appears. This is to diminish the quantity of semen, and to prevent dreaming.

Diet, and the general regimen are more likely to fulfil it than remedies. The most suitable aliments are those which are extracted from the vegetable tribe, roots, and fruit. Among the meats, those which contain the least substance. In each of these classes, such should be chosen as have the least acrimony. We have already found above, the influence of this regimen in procuring easy sleep; and it cannot be too strongly recommended to those who are afflicted with nocturnal pollutions, to whom this tranquillity

is so necessary. They should particularly abstain from suppers, or at least from all but light ones; paying attention to this single object, contributes more to perform a cure than the use of every kind of remedy.

I saw some years ago, a young man, who had almost every night a nocturnal pollution, and some fits of the incubus. A barber-surgeon prescribed for him several glasses of warm water, to be taken when going to bed, which, without diminishing the pollutions, increased the latter complaint: the two disorders united, and returned every night: the phantom was that of a woman, which occasioned at the same time the pollution. Weakened by this double disorder, and by the privation of easy sleep, he was in the high-road to a consumption. I ordered him to eat nothing for supper but a little bread and some raw fruit; to sup early, and to take, upon getting into bed, a glass of cold water, with fifteen drops of Hoffman's anodyne mineral liquid. He soon obtained uninterrupted sleep: the two disorders were entirely dissipated, and he in a short time recovered his strength.

Meats hard to digest, and particularly brown meats at night, are real poison in this disorder; and I repeat it, unless the patient leaves off suppers, especially meat, the other remedies will be of no efficacy. Wine, spirituous liquors, and coffee, are in several respects pernicious. The best drink is pure water, into every bottle of which a dram of nitre may be successfully dissolved. I nevertheless saw, not long since, a patient to whom nitre was pernicious, by occasioning him to have frequent pollutions; I attributed

buted this effect to two causes; the first is, that his nerves were very weak, and with such constitutions nitre is irritating; the other is, that it greatly increased his urine; the bladder was filled more speedily during the night, and we know the tension of the bladder is one of the determining causes of pollutions.

The precept which Cælius gives to avoid soft beds, is of the greatest importance: it should not be a feather-bed, straw is to preferred to hair: I have known some patients benefited by covering the matras with leather. The caution of not lying upon the back is equally necessary; this situation is pernicious, by contributing to increase the agitations in sleep, and by heating too much in the genital parts. In fine, as habit has, in this respect, great influence, and as it should be abolished, the following observation may furnish the means of succeeding. I had it from an Italian, eminent for his virtues, and one of the most excellent men that I recollect having ever known. He consulted me upon a very different complaint; but in order to give me a clearer insight into it, he gave me the history of his health. He had been troubled five years before with frequent pollutions, which totally exhausted him. He strenuously resolved at night to wake the instant a woman should strike his imagination, and this resolution employing his thoughts for a long time before he went to sleep, it was attended with the happiest success\*. The idea of the danger and the desire of waking were so closely connected the preceding day, that as soon as the idea of a woman presented itself, those two also

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\* Cas. 102.

occured at the same time whilst he was fast asleep; he awoke in time, and this precaution being repeated for some nights, the evil was surmounted.

But if these two cases are not sufficient to promise security, it should be observed that there are cases in which the best remedies are inefficacious. M. Hoffman gives us an example of one, and the same advice he gave should be previously given to patients, which is, that without continued perseverance in the use of remedies, no effect can be expected; or rather, in such where regimen is essentially necessary, a second benefit can be derived from it, only by observing it for a length of time. If remedies are used, they should be founded upon the same indication as the regimen. It is not long since I saw copious phlebotomy carry off the disorder. Nitrous powders, lemonades, spirit, and acid milk of almonds, may be of service.

M. Hoffman used for the masturbator, who after discontinuing his infamous practice was afflicted with nocturnal pollutions, the following powder.

*Rx. C. C. ppbicè ppati, ossis sepiæ aa. unc. S. succini cum instillat. olei tartar. per deliquium ppat. dr. II. cascar. dr. I.* a dram of which he took every night in black cherry water; in the morning bitter waters and milk; for drink a ptisan made of sanders, chinese root, succory, scorsoneira, and cinnamon. By means of this assistance, and a proper diet, the patient was cured in a few weeks. M. Zimmermann has performed cures by the use of the same powders, in the ‘ case  
‘ of a young woman twenty-one years of age, where  
‘ there were frequent pollutions, succeeded by  
‘ customary languor, and which had continued for  
‘ some



‘ some years.’ It cannot be easily explained how this powder, which is only a simple absorbent, can do any benefit; but I have seen the good effects of camphor.

The pollutions of those who are afflicted with the hypochondriac, are another species. Their circulation is very slow, particularly in the veins of the abdomen; the parts from whence they collect the blood are by this means stifled: their humours are of an acrimonious quality, proper to irritate; their sleep is commonly disturbed with dreams: these are so many causes of nocturnal pollution, and they are therefore much troubled with it. ‘ The imagination,’ says M. Boerhaave, ‘ frequently produces feminal emissions in sleep. The most studious people and those of a splenic cast, are subject to this accident; and the running of the semen is frequently so considerable, that they fall into an atrophy\*.’ This disorder is attended with still more disagreeable consequences, as they can never give way to any excess of this kind without its becoming extremely troublesome. Mr. Fleming has happily expressed it,

*Non veneri crebro licet unquam impune litare.*

There is but one method of cure, which is to attack the principal disorder. We should begin by removing the obstructions, then the cold bath should be used, and that salutary bark, which God preserve us. These two remedies must perform the cure; sometimes

\* Institut. p. 776.

times steel dust may be united with them. If the choice of aliments is an essential object in all cases, it is more particularly so in this. People troubled with the hypochondriac have generally a very bad digestion; aliments badly digested produce flatulent inflations, which trouble the circulation, and promote pollution two ways: first, by constraining the return of the blood into the genital veins; secondly, by interrupting the tranquillity of sleep, and thereby promoting dreams. This points out the reason why Pythagoras forbade his disciples to eat flatulent aliments, which he justly considered equally pernicious to the purity and strength of the mental faculties, as to chastity. Besides these two reasons which I have given, may I be allowed to risque a third, which I had much cause to suspect, from two of my patients? This is the expansion of the air, abstracted from fluids in the cavernous bodies, which caused an erection and the venereal titillation. We all know, that all liquors are impregnated with this fluid; but whilst they are perfectly pure, it is in a manner incarcerated and deprived of its elasticity. Eminent physicians have thought that there were but two methods of communicating it; a greater degree of heat than is ever discovered in animal bodies, and putrefaction; but an infinite number of observations made upon disorders produced by the air's being thus dilated, have evinced, that, independent of these two causes, there were other alterations in fluids which produced the same effect; and these alterations appear more frequently in hypochondriac people; so that it is not astonishing, that cavernous bodies should be the seat of the disclosure of

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this distempered air : on the contrary, there seems to be no part which must be so much exposed to it; and if attention has not been sooner paid to it, this has been probably occasioned by the want of observing rather than observations. We are then taught the necessity of avoiding these aliments, which being more impregnated with air than others, are troublesome, as well from that air which is separated from them in the first passages, as from that which they carry into the blood. Every one knows, that new beer, which is extremely flatulent, causes violent erections; and I find, since the publication of the last edition of this work, that M. Thiery, one of the most learned physicians, and most celebrated practitioners in France, was acquainted with these flatulent erections.

A disorder, which may be called *furor genitalis*, may be placed here as analagous to this last kind of pollution, and splenetic people are principally affected with it. It differs from a priapism and a satyriasis. I shall describe it by an observation which I made in the first Latin edition of this work. A man of fifty years of age was afflicted with it for upwards of twenty-four years, and during this long period, he could not for twenty-four hours together refrain from women, or that horrid supplement, onanism, and he usually repeated these acts several times a day. The sperm was clear, acrid, and sterile, and the evacuation very quick. His nerves were greatly weakened; he was seized with melancholy fits and violent vapours; his faculties were befotted, his hearing was very thick, and his eyes extremely weak; and he died in a most shocking situation: I never prescribed  
any

any remedies for him, he having already taken great quantities, many of which had done him no good; all those that were hot had been pernicious. Quinquina infused in wine, which Mr. Albinus prescribed for him, gave him ease; and the authority of this great physician is a fresh testimony of much weight in favour of this remedy. In the consultation of M. Hoffinan, we meet with a case nearly similar; the venereal cacoëthes was almost continual, and the soul and body were equally enervated.

## S E C T I O N XII.

### *Of a SIMPLE GONORRHOEA.*

**A** Gonorrhœa, says Galen, which is only simple, is a running of the seed, without erection \*. Many authors of every age, and Moses, the most ancient of all, mentions it. We find in the observations of Hippocrates, an instance of a mountaineer, whose disorder seemed to be a marasmus, and who had an involuntary running of urine and seed †. M.

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\* Boer-

\* Consult. cent. 2. and 3. oper. t. 3. p. 214.

† Epid. l. 6. f. 3. n. 13. Foëf. 1163.

Boerhaave, however, places this among the number of doubtful things. 'We read,' says he, 'in some physical books, that there has been an insensible running of the seed. But this must be a very uncommon disorder, and I do not know that the seed can ooze, without some titillation; or it was not the real semen secreted in the testicles, and collected in the vesiculæ feminales, though I have seen the liquor of the prostatæ run \*.' This authority, is, doubtless, to be much respected; but besides M. Boerhaave's giving no positive decision, all physicians oppose him; and, without quitting his own school, one of his most illustrious disciples, M. Gabius, allows of an insensible seminal evacuation. My own observations will not allow me to doubt of the existence of both the disorders. I have met with men, who after a violent gonorrhœa, excessive venery, or masturbation, had a continual running from the yard, which did not however render them incapable of erection and ejection; they complained even that a single ejection weakened them more than a running for several weeks, which is an evident proof that the liquor of these two evacuations was not the same, and that the liquor which flows from a gonorrhœa issues only from the prostatæ, and some other glands which surround the urethra, and follicles spread at full length, or else from the exhalent vessels dilated. I have seen others, who like the former had a running, which rendered them incapable  
of

\* Ibid. La Mettrie, t. 7. p. 214.

of all venereal inclination and erection, and consequently of all ejection, though the testicles did not seem unable to perform their functions. It appeared evident to me, that in these last cases the real testicular semen insensibly oozed. And when the structure of the genital parts is known, it is easy to conceive that the first disorder must be much more frequent than the latter. Authors who write with precision have stiled that the real gonorrhœa, in which they thought the matter that oozed was the real semen, and the other the bastard or catarrhal gonorrhœa.

The dangerous effects of this gonorrhœa are very considerable: I described what Areteus has given us upon this head. He says in the same place, ‘ How  
 ‘ can a person avoid being weak, when what gives  
 ‘ force to life is continually diminishing: semen alone  
 ‘ is what forms the strength of man.’ Celsus, who lived before Areteus, positively says, that the incessant oozing of the semen, without venereal sensation, brings on a consumption \*. John, the son of Zacharius, but better known under the name of Acharius, is of the same opinion as the author I have quoted, in the work which he composed for the ambassador of the emperor of Constantinople, who was sent into the North: his words are, ‘ If the oozing of the  
 ‘ semen, without erection or sensation, continues  
 ‘ any time, the necessary consequences are a con-  
 ‘ sumption and death; because the most balsamic

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‘ part

\* De Medicina, l. 4. c. 21.

‘ part of the humour and the animal spirits are dissipated \*.’

Authors of the most modern date are of the same opinion as the ancients. ‘ The whole body,’ says Sennert, ‘ falls away, and particularly the back; the patients become feeble, dry, and pale; they languish, and have pains in their reins, and their eyes sink in their heads †.’ M. Boerhaave places this gonorrhœa amongst the causes of the palsy; and it should be observed, that in this place he admits of the real seminal gonorrhœa. ‘ The palsy,’ says he, ‘ which arises from a gonorrhœa, is incurable, because the body is exhausted ‡.’ In an excellent dissertation written by Mr. Kemp, we meet, with some very important observations upon this head §.

This disorder may depend upon several distant causes. The most immediate cause is generally combined with the vicious state of the liquors that ooze, which

\* Medicus, sive methodo medendi, l. 13. c. 22.

† Praxis medica, l. 3. p. 9. sect. 2. c. 4.

‡ De Morb. nerv. p. 717. The work is a collection from his lectures, from the year 1730 to the year 1735, and therefore prior to the collection of lectures by M. Haller. By this work it is proved, that M. Boerhaave had changed his opinion with regard to the possibility of a real seminal gonorrhœa; and we know that this great man was always ready to explode his antient opinions, and to adopt others, as soon as he was convinced that they were founded upon false principles.

§. G. L. Kœmpf. de morbis ex atrophia. Ball. 1756.

which are too tenuous, and frequently too acrid, and the relaxation of the parts. The vicious state of the liquors denotes a defect of elaboration, occasioned by a general weakness, which requires strengtheners, as the feeble state of the organs also indicate: the concurring circumstances determine their election. It would be improper to expatiate upon all these particular circumstances, as many pertinent observations are to be found thereupon in various authors, and particularly Sennert, who has written the best abridgement extant of practical medicine. The same remedies as have been indicated in the course of this work against the other effects of pollution are also proper against this; the cold bath, quinquina, mars, and other strengtheners. Mr. Boerhaave says, 'that liverwort produces excellent effects (egregios sane prostat usus)' in the inveterate gonorrhœa occasioned by a relaxation of the organs \*. Some laxatives may be used in the beginning, to divert the tendency which habit has given to the humours falling upon that part. Experience, which surpasses reason, has convinced me to the contrary; and those who will take the trouble of reading the authors whom I have mentioned above, will find that they never prescribe any laxative remedies.

Actuarius prescribes remedies which strengthen without heating †.

Areteus, who is desirous of removing that complaint

\* Historia plantarum, &c. p.

† Ibid. l. 4, c. 8.



plaint immediately, considering the dangers that are likely to ensue, orders nothing but strengtheners, abstinence from amorous pleasures, and the cold bath \*.

Celsus, of whose works every one has availed himself, prescribes frictions and bathing in extreme cold water (*nationesque quam frigidissimæ*); he is of opinion, that every thing eat or drank should be taken cold; that all aliments which may engender crudities and wind, and increase the acrimony of the semen, should be avoided. Fernel prescribes succulent aliments that are easily digested, and restorative electuaries †.

If what Langise promises (‘who takes upon him  
‘ to swear, that purgatives and a proper regimen  
‘ will cure this disorder’) be true, this can only be in such cases as are produced by bad diet, which may have occasioned obstructions in the abdomen, and made all the humours degenerate, without the solids being in any considerable degree affected; and he had no other case in view; for if the solids had received any particular injury, purgatives must necessarily have been assisted by astringents. Such was the gonorrhœa that fell under the observation of Regis, and which Craanen has preserved an account of. ‘A man,’ says he, ‘of a pblegmatic constitution,  
‘ who for a long time had used humid aliments, was  
‘ afflicted with the running of a watery humour,  
‘ raw

\* P. 131.

† Oper. omn. p. 544.

‘ raw, viscous, and which oozed insensibly : he fell  
 ‘ away ; his eyes sunk in his head, and he every  
 ‘ day grew weaker.’ Regis began to evacuate this  
 watery humour by purgatives ; he afterwards or-  
 dered him strengtheners, and drying remedies ; and  
 in case these should fail, he prescribed a caustic for  
 each leg \*. But this method of using purgatives  
 can never be proper, when the disorder is the effect  
 of venereal excesses, and when it depends, as Sen-  
 nert says, upon the weakness of the ‘ vesiculæ femi-  
 ‘ nales, which they have contracted by such frequent  
 ‘ alternatives of repletion and inanition.’

The circumstances of some cases will more  
 clearly explain the true method of treating them.

Timeus furnishes us with one that is very apropos.  
 ‘ A young student of the law,’ says he, ‘ of a  
 ‘ sanguine constitution, manually polluted him-  
 ‘ self two or three times a day, and sometimes oftener ;  
 ‘ he was seized with a gonorrhœa, accompanied  
 ‘ with a weakness of the whole body. I looked  
 ‘ upon the gonorrhœa as a sequel of the relaxation  
 ‘ occasioned in the seminal vessels ; and the weak-  
 ‘ ness was caused by the frequent effusion of seed,  
 ‘ which had dissipated the natural heat, collected  
 ‘ crudities, and injured the nervous system, bruta-  
 ‘ lized the soul, and weakened the body.’ He pre-  
 scribed for him strengthening wine, with the astrin-  
 gents and the aromatics, infused in a deep red wine ;  
 an opiate of the same nature, and an unguent com-  
 posed

\* See J. J. Mangeti, Bibliotheca medico-practica,  
 t. 2. p. 625.

posed of oil of roses, mastic, nitre, bole ammoniac, terra sigillita, balastines, and white wax. The patient was cured at the end of a month of this shameful disorder; and I cautioned him to abstain for the future from this infamous debachery, and to recollect the eternal menace, which excludes the slothful from the kingdom of heaven. 1. Cor. c. 6. \*

‘ M. G. M. Wepfer, one of the best physicians  
 ‘ in Switzerland (as M. Zimmermann informs me)  
 ‘ whose authority cannot fail of being of great  
 ‘ weight, asserts, that he has cured a continual  
 ‘ running of the semen, the result of masturbation,  
 ‘ by the assistance of LUDOVICI’S tincture of mars.  
 ‘ M. Weslin, of Zurzach has confirmed the same  
 ‘ thing by his own experience. As to me, adds my  
 ‘ friend, I must add, that I have not seen such  
 ‘ good effect produced by it.’

The professor Stehelin speaks of a literary man who was afflicted with an involuntary effusion of the semen, without any venereal ideas, whom he cured with the use of mars and quinquina infused in wine. The remedies, and amongst others the waters of Swalbach, and the pumping of cold water upon the pubis and perinæum, had not the same success with a young man who had brought upon him this disorder by masturbation. He adds, that Dr. Bongars, a famous physician of Masseyck, had cured two persons who were afflicted with a debility

\* Ibid. P. 624.

bility in the feminal vesiculæ, by making them take, three times a day, ten drops of Sydenham's liquid laudanum, in a glass of Potac wine, and by making them drink a decoction of sarsaparilla. Mr. Stehelin observes, that though opium is a remedy contrary to the indications, he was, nevertheless, advised by 'Etmuller against too quick ejaculations, which depended upon over spirituous semen.' May I be allowed to subjoin, that in examining attentively the advice of this celebrated practitioner and by comparing the nature of the disorder, in certain cases, with the effects of opium, it may easily be conceived that this remedy may sometimes be useful, but not in the case wherein he advises it. He carefully distinguishes the different kinds of runnings, assigns the causes, and points out the method of treating each species; and then speaking of the ejaculation, which arises from the beginning of the erection *nimis citam*, he specifies two causes; 1st, The relaxation of the feminal vesiculæ; 2dly, A feminal liquor too much fermented, too spirituous, and too abundant: in this case it is that he prescribes opium \*. But for what reason? Opium, whose aphrodisiac virtue is so well demonstrated (a virtue that Etmuller himself points out, both in his little work upon this remedy, and in the very passage wherein he gives this advice) cannot fail to increase the cause of the disorders, and thereby aggravate the symptoms. The cases wherein it is  
useful

\* Colleg. pract. speciale, c. 2. t. 1. p. 459.

useful are, on the contrary, when the humours are raw, attenuated and aqueous, and the nerves at the same times very moveable. We know that he remedies these different accidents, that he suspends the irritability, and stops all evacuations except perspiration. But this cannot be too often repeated; great care should be taken never to prescribe it but when proper; otherwise it may prove pernicious. In M. Tralles's excellent work upon this remedy we find an observation, and similar ones are to be met with elsewhere, which should induce us to be very circumspect. A man, says he, who from his youth had a disposition for pollution, whereby he was become very weak, never took opium either to moderate a cough or a diarrhœa, or for any other purpose, without having in the night, to his great mortification, lascivious dreams, accompanied with a spermatic emission \*. Let me be allowed to make an observation which very naturally occurs, and is, that Et-muller's mistake evidently proves, 1st, What great influence correct theory has upon practice, which, without it aid, must necessarily be frequently false and erroneous. 2dly, How much advantage therefore a man who unites them both, must necessarily have over him who has no other guide than a few observations, or confines himself to systematic theory; in fine, 3dly, How much the reading of the best practical authors, who were deprived of that exact theory this age has produced, may deceive those who  
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\* *Ufus opii salubris & noxius*, p. 131.

in perusing must necessarily have implicit faith, and who are ignorant of those principles which should serve as a touch-stone for determining what, in medicine, is of good or bad alloy.

I shall conclude with two of my own observations—more would be superfluous.

A young man twenty years of age, who had the misfortune to pollute himself, had been for two months afflicted with the continual oozing of a mucus, and nocturnal pollutions from time to time, accompanied with great draining; he had frequent and violent disorders in his stomach; his breast was very weak, and he was easily thrown into sweats: I prescribed for him the following opiate.

*℞. Condit. rosar. rubr. unc. III. conditi anthos. cort. peruv. aa. unc. I. mastices dr. II. cath. dr. I. olei. cinnam. gtt. III. sirup. cort. aur. q. s. F. electar. solid.*

He took a quarter of an ounce twice a day: at the end of three weeks he was in every respect well; and the running did not take place till after the nocturnal pollutions, which were not near so frequent; the continuation of the same remedy for a fortnight quite recovered him.

A married pair, who were foreigners, and whom I did not know, being afflicted nearly in the same manner, and being very certain that the running was not virulent, though attended with great weakness and pains along the spine of the back, could attribute it to nothing but conjugal excesses; the hus-

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band's

band's running was much considerable than that of his wife's. They had tried many remedies unsuccessfully, and, among others, mercurial pills, which had increased the running; and they consulted me: I prescribed for them the cold bath, quinquina wine, steel, and red-rose flowers: they took regularly the prescription; this was in the summer of 1758, when the continued rains made it inconvenient to bathe in the river; so that the woman bathed only twice, and the man a dozen times; at the end of six weeks, they informed me that they were almost recovered; I ordered them to continue the same remedies till they were completely cured; which was very soon.

These happy successes are not sufficient to lay the foundation of a general favourable prognostic: this disorder is frequently very obstinate, and sometimes even incurable—I shall give but one example of it; but this is demonstrative. One of the greatest practitioners this day in Europe, and who has enriched the materia medica with excellent performances, has been afflicted for upwards of fifteen years with a simple gonorrhœa, which has baffled all his art, and that of many physicians whom he has consulted: this shocking complaint gradually wastes him; and there is reason to apprehend his loss long before it were to be wished to happen, or that period to which he might have lived in the ordinary course of things.

It would be useless to extend this piece any farther; I have endeavoured to omit nothing that might open the eyes of young people to all the horrors of that abyss which they prepare for themselves. I have pointed out the most proper means of removing those  
ills

ills which they have drawn upon themselves, and I conclude by repeating what I have said in the course of this work, that some happy cures should not delude them: those who are the best cured, with difficulty recover their primitive vigour, and preserve tolerable health only by dint of managing it. Those who remain in a languid state are ten-fold the number of those who are cured; and some examples of persons, who were either but little ailing, or of a vigorous constitution, which promoted their recovery, should not be considered as a general rule.

———*Non bene ripæ creditur;  
Ipse aries etiam nunc vellera siccat.*

F I N I S.

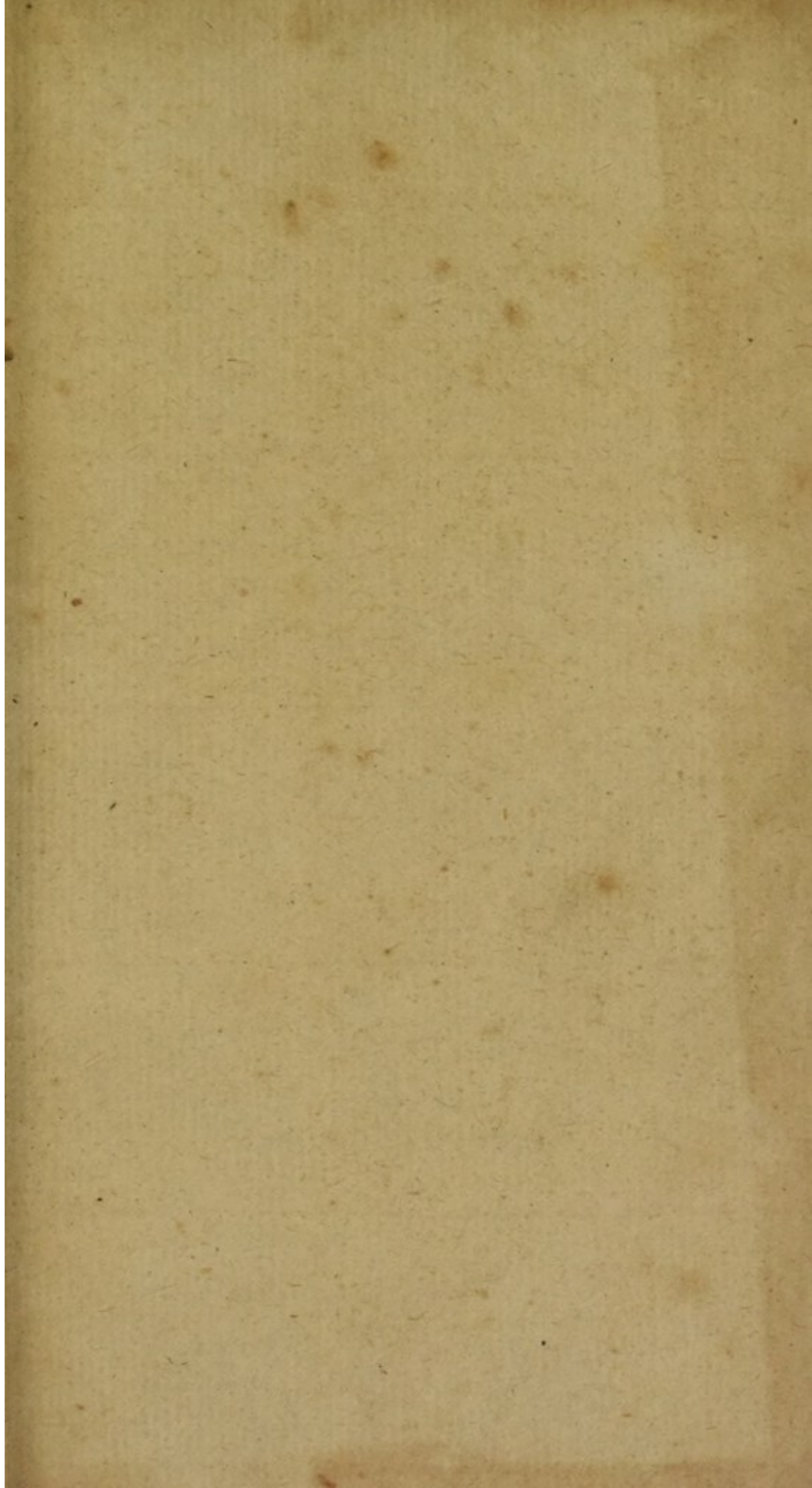


O W A N I G M

I believe they have been very thoughtful  
 and I have been very happy to see  
 of this work that some happy circumstances  
 have been the result of the  
 order to give their respective rigour  
 to the health of the people  
 in a happy time and to the  
 of those who are in the  
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