



REPRODUCTION

BY

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REPRODUCTION.

REPRODUCTION :

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE OF A LECTURE DELIVERED
TO NON-MEDICAL STUDENTS,

BY

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L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., L.F.P.S.G., F.C.S.,

&c.

PART I.

"What I have written, I have written."



London :

THE HOMŒOPATHIC PUBLISHING CO.,
WARWICK LANE, E.C.,

And all Homœopathic Chemists and Booksellers.

1887.





INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER has had the care and training of children must have remarked the restless earnestness with which many of them seek to obtain information, and gratify a persistent curiosity. This is so general as to be admitted to be natural, and it may be also remarked that when any obstacles are placed in the way of the satisfaction

of this curiosity, the eagerness to obtain information becomes more acute. On the subject of which this book treats, it is generally thought wise to be reticent, but this reticence only provokes interest, and those who fancy the child's curiosity is abandoned, and not gratified, are but like the oft-quoted ostrich, who buries its head in the sand, and fancies it is not seen. The curiosity never is abandoned, until, in some way or other, by lies or by truth, by impure and garbled information or by plain, simple statement of fact, it is gratified. If the information be obtained in spite of denial, the child is eager to impart its supposed knowledge to others, with added lewdness, and hence arises the remark of Dr. Arnold at the very sight of a knot of vicious or careless boys gathered

round a great schoolroom fire—"It makes me think that I see the devil in the midst of them." When my own sons came to an age when it was wise to send them from home. I did not choose that they should obtain information about this subject in a garbled way, and I judged it my duty to instruct them. This instruction was given in much the same way as it is conveyed in this book, and no harm followed. When later it fell to my lot to lecture to a class of young men on the structure of their own bodies, I believed I should have shirked my duty had I not dwelt on the subject. My lecture to them is in substance contained in this book, and as I believe all it contains is fit to be read by my own children, by my students, and also that many parents would be glad to

have a clear, simple way of explaining the matter, I feel justified in publishing it. Curiosity on the matter of reproduction is generally held to be improper; but I deny this: it is intensely natural, and justifiable, and the impropriety is entirely on the other side. An earnest enquiry into the growth of the embryo, and all the functions of generation, can only lead to wonder and reverence at the care and skill displayed in all its parts; and people who assert otherwise do so from ignorance, and surely do not remember that in so doing they are casting a slur upon the God who made the body.

It would have been easy to have made this book larger, to have padded it with cases in illustration, but, *cui bono?* Such cases should be sacred between medical

man and patient. Enough has been said for the purpose in view, and any dilution with words would have diminished the force.

That the subject should be avoided as one of promiscuous conversation is very right and natural, and when once the reason of this is understood by a child, it will be readily acquiesced in. A rightly trained child does not yield in delicacy of thought to any of its elders, and there need be no fear that right knowledge on this matter will cause indelicacy of thought. "To the pure all things are pure." With confidence, therefore, I send my book to to the world.

SHEEN PARK,
RICHMOND, SURREY,
Feb., 1887.



REPRODUCTION.



THOUGHTS about the origin of species may or may not occur to many minds, but it is certain that to every one, at an earlier or a later age, thoughts of the origin of the body will certainly obtrude themselves; and as I have undertaken to teach you somewhat concerning the functions of your bodies, it becomes part of my duty to explain to you the facts concerning generation and reproduction.

In considering this duty three courses are open to me: either to explain the matter thoroughly, to neglect to mention it altogether, or to mention it in such a manner (as is generally done in lectures such as these), as to leave you with vague and fluctuating ideas, and no certain knowledge. I prefer to take the first-mentioned course. I am aware that many good people, for whom I have the highest respect generally, consider the subject should be systematically avoided as pernicious. I am aware also that many religious people prevaricate about this matter, when it unavoidably crops up in the presence of enquiring youth, in a manner which they would adopt about no other subject, and, if they consider at all, consider themselves justified in so doing. I have no sympathy

with such doings or opinions, and I have absolutely no apology to offer for running directly counter to them, and treating the matter at length. I am of opinion that any religious feelings should cause us to reverence and treat well the body as we have received it; that it is vain to expect good treatment with ignorance: and therefore the fullest knowledge of the functions of the body should be communicated at the earliest age at which proper understanding is possible, and the knowledge of the functions of reproduction can be no exception.

To get a clear idea of the functions of generation we must consider some of its different varieties as occurring in nature. I have on a former occasion described to you the *amoeba*—a living body with no

more geometrical form than a minute mass of tapioca pudding; existing in a liquid atmosphere, capable of movement, of excretion, of assimilation, and of propagating itself. It has, within its jelly-like body, a minute spot called a nucleus, and often, within that is a more minute spot called a nucleolus. Its manner of propagation is what now concerns us. If it be viewed under a microscope, it may be seen to protrude an arm-like process, often to retract it; and sometimes this arm-like process protruded, gets thinner and thinner in its junction with the parent body, and finally is cast off. A nucleus forms within it, and henceforth it is an independent being, capable of all the functions pertaining to the parent, and, when it has sufficiently grown, capable of procreation. This is

the simplest form of living matter and the simplest form of procreation.

We will now turn to a higher and more complex form of life. You will have noticed that in the *amoeba* there is no organ which can be called a sexual organ, for, so far as we know, there is no sex whatever in the matter: it is a simple dividing of the being, a new being resulting. If we turn to the consideration of the mode of propagation in vegetable life of even fairly low type, we see at once an instance of higher arrangement. Ferns, for instance, are propagated by spores, but in a peculiar manner on which we need not dwell. Turning to a higher order of plants, we can consider their mode of reproduction. They can be propagated by cuttings, but this is scarcely a natural mode, and hence

we have, at present, nothing to do with it. The organs of reproduction are commonly situated in the flower. Let us consider, as an example, the flower of the common tiger lily. Within the circle of the petals are the stamens, and growing from the centre is a long stem called a pistil, tipped with a gummy material when fully developed, and at the other extremity the pistil is widened out and forms a cavity. If we dissect this pistil and its continuation we shall find it to be a continuous tube, and the widened out extremity a chamber containing substances which appear like seeds, and they are seeds in most respects. On the free extremity of stamens, when ripe, a powder appears, and this, when examined microscopically, is seen to consist of beautiful forms, varied in each flower

species. This powder is called the pollen, and corresponds with the male organ of generation, while the pistil and the enlargement, called the ovary, are the female organs. The seeds in the ovary are absolutely worthless until the pollen comes in contact with them. They have no power of growth, and the life in them cannot reproduce itself without the pollen. The modes by which the pollen comes in contact with the free end of the pistil are various, and you cannot consider them without being impressed with the evidence of design in some power outside the plant itself. The wind may blow the pollen, but the chief mode by which it is transferred is by the visits of insects, such as bees and butterflies in search of honey, and these proceeding from flower to flower

carry pollen, and deposit some of it on the free end of the pistil. I advise you to look into this subject; you will be charmed with it, and I need not adduce various modes here, for are they not fully described by Sir John Lubbock and published in his book on "Flowers, Fruit, and Leaves"?

Once the pollen is deposited on the stigma (the end of the pistil), all we know about it is, that it descends the tube and comes in contact with the embryo seeds, thereby rendering them fertile. How it descends the tube, or if it pierces the coating of the seeds we know not, although we theorise a great deal, and are apt to set our theories forth for truth.

Here then is an instance, one of the simplest, of a male element and a female

element being needful for reproduction, and you will notice that in the instance I have adduced the two elements are on the one individual. This is not always so in the vegetable kingdom: there are trees which produce flowers bearing pollen only, and these are never fruitful; while, generally beside them, there are others of the same species, producing no pollen, but bearing flowers having female organs only, and producing fruit and seed, provided the pollen of the male tree comes into contact with them; and in this case the bees and other insects are attracted to the pollen-bearing trees in search of honey, and thence to the embryo-bearing trees. Now there are two things I wish you to note while we are on this illustration—one is, the enormous amount of excess which

nature produces of the male element—an amount far greater by many times than the amount used. If you shake the bough of a larch tree when the pollen is ripe, you will disturb what looks like a cloud of dust, myriads of pollen grains all capable of fructifying, and yet destined in all but a small part to decay; and this fact should prove to you the absurdity of the argument that when a thing is fit for use it therefore should be used—“it is natural to use it.” The object of such an excess we do not know, but we know that if all were applied to use waste must occur at some later period, and each individual species would so replenish the earth that they would crowd out one another, and so the end would still be waste; and the second point is, the utter uselessness of

applying pollen to the stigma before the latter is mature. Pollen of a given flower often ripens many days prior to the full development of the pistil, and oftentimes days after this development is past, and this pollen, although it may be, and often is carried by insects to other flowers, is still, in great part, wasted.

Next we will consider what goes on for the reproduction of certain fishes. Let us confine our attention to the salmon as an illustration. At certain seasons of the year, to which they are guided by a wonderful instinct, which may be less than reason, but is certainly to us more wonderful, for we know less about it, the fish ascend the rivers from the sea, and the male and female salmon seek restlessly for the creeks and shallows which



they know, unerringly, are suitable for the propagation of their young. In certain rivers, those long acquainted with the water see myriads of minute eels ascending, and then they prophesy the speedy ascent of the salmon; whether the fish eat these eels, and so are tempted to ascend the river in pursuit of them, no one knows, for no one ever caught a salmon with other than an empty stomach. However this may be, when the suitable place is found the female salmon, full of eggs, begins laying them, squirting them over and among the stones in a most industrious manner. These eggs are perfectly useless until fructified, but the male salmon follows in her wake and squirts over the deposited eggs the fructifying fluid, the male element similar

in function to the pollen of the flower, the semen of the fish. And there lie the fructified eggs, developing in the watery atmosphere until they break the egg and swim away, certain items of development in their case being completed after their escape from the egg.

We have seen that the embryo seed exists unfructified in the flower; in the fish the embryo egg exists, unfructified, and in vast numbers, in the body of the mother; that it is retained in the flower after fructification, but the flower fades, the pistil dries, the purpose of its development is served. In the fish the embryo egg is exuded, fructified, and then developed.

Now we come to consider a higher case—higher because the organs are

more complex. We will take up and consider the case of birds. In the body of the female bird exist undeveloped the germs of innumerable eggs, and if we take the common fowl as a type we find that hens living alone will from time to time deposit eggs; to all outward appearance these are ordinary eggs, capable of producing chickens under proper developing processes, but in reality no more capable of development than the patent American egg which some years ago made its appearance in Britain and failed to interest the public. In order that the hen's eggs shall be capable of development they must be fructified, and fructification can only take place by means of the male fluid, and this is effected by the male depositing that fluid in the body of

the mother; the egg is fructified before the shell is formed, and if no male be in contact with the mother bird, she may lay many eggs, but they will hatch out no chickens. You may realise what a disastrous arrangement it would be if the hen were so ordered that the unshelled egg were formed on such a part of her body as to be readily exposed; it would be destroyed, and hence the wisdom of its being formed in the recesses of the body, surrounded by soft material, and protected from jars and shocks. In order to reach and fructify it, the male fluid must be deposited in its near neighbourhood, and this is effected by the male organ entering the body, as instinct suggests, and there depositing. But whether fructified or not fructified the

egg is deposited, and its further growth, if fructified, goes on outside the body of the mother just as much as does the egg of the fish, with this exception, that at certain periods the same wonderful instinct, of which we are so ignorant, prompts the hen, or in some cases the cock bird, to sit upon it and keep it warm until it has developed enough to do without the shell, or until life has left it. We call this maternal instinct and other names, and some people think they understand it, but

“Men are skilful to invent most serious names

To hide their ignorance.”

And in this case it is ignorance still.

We will now go a step higher, and consider what takes place when the embryo is not deposited. The animals in

which this occurs, with which we come most often in contact are rabbits, or dogs and cats. In these animals the process is intrinsically as I have described it in the bird. The egg, when ripe, is either voided unimpregnated or impregnated, and fructified in the body of the mother by the male organ being introduced, and the semen deposited in the body of the mother. If so impregnated, it remains in the body of the mother during its development, protected from harm deep in the tissues. The womb or *uterus*, which contains it, grows and enlarges with its growth, and adapts itself to all its changes, until finally the young living animal, and not an egg, is deposited. Once impregnated the male has nothing further to do with the matter, the body

of the mother supplies its nutriment, its bony material, and in many cases its brain development. And this is the highest type of development with which we are acquainted, it is the type of the development of man, and, allowing for anatomical differences, the process of growth which goes on in the rabbit or cat is no lower and no higher in its mechanical parts than that of the human being.

In the case of ordinary fish, it is, of course, not needful that special complementary organs be provided for male and female, for the impregnation takes place after deposition; but it must be apparent to your reason that in all higher than that, the organs must be complementary, the female for

reception and retention, the male for deposition; and as the place of deposit of the egg is deep in the tissues of the mother, therefore the organ of deposit must be proportionately long to reach it. This organ is called the *penis* and the female complementary organ the *vagina*. Bear in mind that in all species, from fish and insect up to and including man, an egg is the primary form, and this egg, fructified, will develop, under favourable conditions, into a fully formed animal. But you must bear in mind, also, that a fully formed, and a mature animal, are distinct things: the one may be a baby, the other a man. The eggs in the female of mammalia are formed and contained in organs called ovaries, of which

there are generally two, containing often many hundreds of embryonic eggs. These are shed, failing impregnation, at fixed periods, and this is, in the human female, every month after puberty; and when all organs are in a state of health, then the process goes on without pain, and without health disturbance.

But it is perfectly astonishing what extraordinary and remote effects, both moral and physical, are the result of health disturbance of these organs; due often in the first place, to slight neglect, originating from ignorance. This has of late years been more and more recognised in the case of the female, but I am very much inclined to think that slight disturbing causes, unrecognised, and often considered of small importance, are the

origin of grave disorders in the male also. To make my meaning clear, I shall explain to you the properties which must be common to both male and female organs.

You know (for I have told you in a former lecture) that the skin of man is formed of portions of different construction, that the epidermis is not supplied with nerves, and when raised, as by a blister, has no sensitiveness, but the layer immediately below is exquisitely sensitive when the epidermis is removed. You know that this epidermis covers the whole skin, ending by gradual thinning at the openings of the body, such as the anus, the mouth, nose and eyes, &c. But at these openings the skin does not disappear entirely, it becomes

thinner, and is carried inwards, lining every portion of the interior of the cavities of the body in one modification or another, and in cavities communicating with the atmosphere is called the mucous membrane. It lines in this way the throat and mouth, and also the anus and bowels; it lines also the extremity of the penis, and the tube passing down the penis (the urethra), and all bifurcations of that tube and the bladder; it lines also the vagina in the female. You know also that a very slight irritation will cause itching of the skin; that it is natural to rub such itching part in order to remove discomfort. But if the itching persist, the rubbing is also apt to persist, and the outcome of both is a smarting, a sore. It is well known,

for example, that scratching or rubbing chilblains is of little good for relief does not come, and soreness does. Carry your idea of the above set of operations from the skin to the mucous membrane; a slight irritation on the interior of the mouth for example, similar to itching, a rubbing, a sore from constant rubbing. It must be apparent to your reason that continual rubbing of a sore will never heal it, that it will in time become chronic, and all medical men know that a chronic sore on a mucous membrane is one of the most tedious of ills to heal. I want you to take in this fact as a general principle, and also the fact that the sensation of soreness is felt in consequence of the mucous membrane being supplied with nerves which convey this

impression to the nerve centres, and as these nerve centres control districts of the body, the irritation of a nerve ending will have a wide reaching effect upon the body. It is as though in a single wire of a telegraph a current were sent to a centre left unguarded. The current would inevitably disturb all wires communicating with that centre. Now let us realize somewhat of the various common ways in which an irritation of a mucous membrane may be set up; rubbing is not needed, the mere contact of cold air will be sufficient. You know how common is a sore throat, a catarrh, a bronchitis. These are but illustrations of irritated mucous membranes, and if you remember this curious fact, viz. that to cause irritation of a mucous membrane it is often

sufficient to cool the skin of some other part of the body, you will realise somewhat of the ease with which this disorder can arise. For instance, it has been found that a cold application to a dog's abdomen will set up irritation of mucous membrane, not in the abdomen, but in the throat. This is sufficiently singular, and shows at once how nerve endings in one part, when irritated, control other organs, and it is well-known that while in one individual the effects of a chill will result in sore throat, although he has not opened his mouth, in others it may result in inflamed bowels, in catarrh of the bladder, or vagina. The general principle being that some mucous membrane will be attacked, and as all these organs are lined with mucous

membrane you cannot foretell which will suffer. But should the mucous membrane of the organs of generation be inflamed, the far reaching effects cannot be lightly realised.

The tube proceeding down the penis (the urethra) serves a double purpose, as well as conveying the semen to the ovum you know it serves as a means of emptying the bladder. This tube is shorter in the female and serves but one purpose. We will consider the process of what is often termed "a call to micturate" in health. The bladder is more or less distended with urine and is closed by a circular band of fibres of muscle; the contractions of the bladder force a drop of urine through the closed orifice into the urethra, here it very quickly sets up

irritation, and this irritation it is which is "a call to micturate." If the bladder be now emptied the irritation ceases.

The semen (the male fructifying fluid) is elaborated in the testicles, which hang suspended in the scrotum below the penis, and is stored in receptacles found beneath the bladder, and when emitted comes from its store receptacle by a tube which joins the urethra near the bladder end. When the testicles are removed no semen can be elaborated, and such animals are called castrates; in man, eunuchs. The semen is, as you know, not emitted involuntarily in health; and, as in the emptying of the bladder, as also in the emptying of the bowels, some slight irritation (and it need only be slight), must be set up to start the nerve irrita-

tion which controls its emission ; friction of any kind is sufficient: friction against the sides of the vagina is the natural course. If you have not rightly followed and comprehended each of the above stated facts you had better refer to your notes as you will not well understand our subject unless you grasp what I have stated.

Whenever the bladder is emptied there is a slight nerve shock felt by the whole organism, and whenever the bowels are relieved the same thing occurs, so much so, that delicate and weakly people are directed to lie down for fifteen or twenty minutes after a motion of the bowels, to quiet the nerves ; in a state of robust health the nerve shock is not so much felt. When the salmon, male and female,

have finished their act of generation they are weak and flaccid. If you catch, you cannot eat them; they are simply out of condition and must return to the sea to recuperate, and in precisely the same way the act of generation is to the human being a nerve shock, followed by exhaustion. Undoubtedly it is a natural function, but nevertheless its operation is followed by lassitude and exhaustion, even in mature animals of the highest type, and this indicates unerringly that any abuse of it, or excess, must be followed by evil consequences, and if it be indulged in by the immature, undoubtedly the evil effects are proportionately great. Tilt states his belief that the shock of seminal emission and the fit of epilepsy are but the beginning and end of a series, and

if this be so, it must be evident how evil it must be for the constitution of man if he enter into excesses or abuses of this nature. Were not the facts well established it would appear incredible how apparently slight a nerve shock may cause death, but it is notorious in the prize ring that a blow "below the belt" was foul from the danger of death, not from organic injury, but from nerve shock, many important nerve centres being situated behind that spot. And it is equally notorious that many cases of hopeless epilepsy and insanity, of suicide and imbecility, have arisen from no other cause than the repeated nerve shock of sexual excesses. It is customary to put these evil consequences down to the loss of the seminal fluid, but this is certainly

not proven, for it is not known what becomes of this fluid when it is not used for year after year without inconvenience (part may be absorbed, but part is undoubtedly emitted without nerve shock); and in the female there is no seminal emission, but there is nerve shock, and exhaustion, and deeper consequences of abuse and excess.

At the age of puberty, that is the change from mature childhood to infantile manhood or womanhood, the reproductive organs undergo various changes. In the male the voice deepens, the trachea enlarges the frame sets; in the female the breasts enlarge and also the general frame, and nature indicates to the budding adolescent that wide and important changes are taking place. The

purpose of these changes is ill-understood by the youth or maiden, and I shall try to show somewhat of the importance of set and definite teaching even at, or before, their very beginning.

I have tried to put before you how a slight irritation (so easily occurring) can become a sore, and also how a slight irritation can produce an emission of semen. The mucous membrane of the urethra is liable to irritation from slight cold, rendering acrid the urinary secretion. A tenderness or itching at the mouth of the urethra may cause rubbing, and if this continues an emission of semen, repeated and repeated until, with no primary thought or evil intention, a bad habit is set up, leading, if unchecked, to life-long disastrous consequences. Can

anyone be blamed for involuntary irritation, such as itching? Is it rational when its occurrence leads to bad habits that unmitigated blame should be dealt out? That there is something wrong somewhere when these bad habits occur cannot be doubted, but is the blame due to the unfortunate sufferer or to those, his or her guardians, who knew how easily they might innocently arise, and did not warn and guard against them in definite easily understood language?

How common an occurrence it is for a child, male or female, to wet its bed night after night. Irrational people strive to check this by punishment, but this is notoriously inefficient, and medical treatment alone, and not always that, will combat the evil; but the irritation which

causes it will, if unchecked, when puberty comes on, tend almost irresistibly to produce masturbating habits, with their long train of attendant evils.

Grasp the fact that irritation of the mucous membrane of the organs of generation in either male or female will direct undue attention to these organs, primarily to remove the irritation, and by the friction used masturbation ensues, with no evil intention; then let us consider the various causes which may produce this irritation in the young. First, however, let us divide these causes into two classes—voluntary and involuntary. The former are, lewd talk and reading, example, long hours in bed, luxurious habits, over eating, stimulants, tobacco (in the young), and idleness. The latter are, nurses teaching

children to play with the genital organs to quiet them, irritation of the urine in the urethra, irritation of orifice from prolonged prepuce or narrow opening, worms, painful testicle or ovary, itching from all or any cause, constipation, sleeplessness, nervous irritation, epilepsy, tumour on brain, tuberculosis. You have only to glance over these lists to perceive at once that the causes within the control of the individual are fewer than those over which there is little or no control. But little need be said on the voluntary causes, and we can only appeal to the reason of the young to avoid them, and the best way of doing this is to state plainly the consequences of such habits. I feel sure if these are fairly stated, very few will be so obtruse or depraved as not to

take heed; that it is ignorance leads to evil in the majority of cases.

The involuntary causes demand a little more detail. The practice of children being taught by nurses to play with the genitals is very common and needs to be recognised and severely condemned. Ignorant women know that this will quiet the child, but the cost of such quiet is not considered, and should be impressed on the parent. Irritation of the urine in the urethra, as often demonstrated by bed wetting, needs medical treatment, so also does a foreskin with a narrow opening, and it need only be said that the ancient Jewish practice of circumcision was certainly a sanitary proceeding, and undoubtedly prevents irritation of the parts which is so very liable to occur in hot climates.

Constipation, by causing congestion and pressure on the parts, will cause congestion of the adjacent genitals, and hence lead to the evil. Sleeplessness, caused by late excitement or heated parties, will set up nervous irritation. Epilepsy will originate the habit, as will also the very rare tumour on the brain by centric nerve irritation. And in cases of consumption the cause can be guessed at but is undecided. I well remember seeing once a poor fellow dying of this disease, and indeed he did die four hours later, who implored me to give him something to enable him to leave his genital organs quiet, for he told me the impulse was irresistible. And since then I have seen cases which on quiet thought I have become convinced were

due to the phthisis present. These involuntary cases demand our pity and sympathy and help just as much as any other disease, and no amount of covering up and ignoring will do other than increase the evil.

A very thoughtful medical writer has stated that "between the haziness of intellect and temporary loss of mental power and positive idiocy there is no break, every intervening degree being exhibited in some individuals, in some one of the phases of healthy or morbid action of the reproductive organs, and when we come to seek after the consequences of masturbation we find them equally an unbroken line of gradually increasing evils. What are the effects, then, of masturbation in a growing boy

or girl? Probably at first little is noticed, but the habit is as sure to grow as the love of drink, and becomes an infatuation, because (1) Every indulgence diminishes the will power to resist, and helps to set up an irritation which calls imperatively for further irritation as an endeavour to allay discomfort; and (2) A chronic irritation is, in the end, produced, the presence of which renders the continuance of the habit almost irresistible. What follows? The repeated nerve shocks disorder digestion, disorder sleep, and diminish memory and power of mental work, cause palpitation of the heart, headache, and nervousness; cause epileptic fits and sometimes absolute insanity. And what more? Oftentimes the weakened and exhausted frame is

helped (?) by stimulants, and not until the effects of something wrong are visible to all does the invalid seek medical attendance.

It is the custom even among medical men to hold up the hands of horror and loathing at all such habits, and the poor invalid shrinks from any confession from the fear that the cry of "A leper, a leper!" will be raised over his unfortunate case, and medical men shrink in most part from even writing on such a subject. There is far too much of this sort of thing. If the possession of sexual organs and sexual feelings were the invention of the devil there could scarcely be more outcry raised over their misuse. There is no mother when her child is born but rejoices if it be well formed

and perfect, and yet when it has grown up in total ignorance of the uses of the sexual organs, and *therefore* falls into evil ways, all teaching is viewed as immodest and unneedful. The victim, if a male, is conscious of all this, conscious also of his weakness, and is therefore a prey to harpies of all kinds.

I should be the last to stand up in defence, or even weak excuse of such habits, but I am quite willing, while plainly stating the evil and its results, to stand up for justice, and to give help if need be; and it is not justice to cast the blame entirely on the victim and send him a scapegoat of sins of omission by those who educated him, out into a wilderness of self-condemnation and self-contempt. We are all too apt to cry

“Stand aside, I am holier than thou.” Let us face the matter fairly, admit the evil, admit also the temptations to the evil presented by modern life, and then consider what is to be done. Knowledge on the subject, I am convinced, will produce more good as prevention than all cure, and to that end I am now writing, the more earnestly because I never knew a boy who had been to boarding school who had not learned somewhat in a most undesirable way. But what about existing cases; can nothing be done? Much can be done, but picture to yourself what you have to act upon: an organism weakened and depraved, a will petulant and weak to yield; and the first, the very first element of success is the rigid exertion of a

strong will. What wonder that the case is difficult! The first thing to do in trying to cure is to recognise why you have difficulty. What is urging to a continuance of the evil? Was it an involuntary cause which first prompted it? If so, remove it. In the majority of cases (1) The mucous membrane of the urethra has become chronically irritated; (2) The nerves have become irritable in the extreme; (3) The nerve centres debilitated; (4) The digestion impaired. And while these things remain so you will do no good. Therefore the patient must take to a hard bed lightly covered. He must take to cold sponging (cold bathing will at first only debilitate) every morning. He must avoid stimulants of all kinds and diminish or avoid tobacco.

Then the diet must be light and unstimulating, meat once daily, milk, stale bread, weak tea, no cheese, no eggs. Constant occupation must be sought, but exercise must not be carried to fatigue, and part of the exercise each day must be such that it will cause panting respiration; this may be running, rowing, tricycling, &c. The reason of this is that each panting respiration in lifting the lungs opens wide the ascending *vena cava* and allows the liver to get rid of blood freely, thus relieving its congestion. The mental occupation relieves, both by exercising the mental faculties and enabling the patient to forget himself. Then the digestion must be improved by medicine.

The question of medicine in this disease is a most important one. The

Allopathic school give quinine phosphorous, iron, strychnine and cantharides, and then have done all they can do, and it is very little. The Homœopathic school carefully study the symptoms in each case, and give the remedy indicated. And here the higher dilutions tell. Phosphorous, iron, &c., in Allopathic hands are ruinous on account of the large doses, but the same remedies, and others, carefully applied on Homœopathic principles will work wonders in a short period. The practitioner *must* relieve the chronic nerve irritation and mucous membrane soreness; he *must*, if he is to effect a cure, guard against giving even so much as will endanger the least chance of a recoil action, and the improvement must be patiently waited for.

Any constipation must be alleviated, not hastily, but systematically. If the patient be female, the itching must be allayed, and the ovarian irritation also, or there will be no cure. One other precaution must be observed, viz. never to stay long in a close room, or sleep in an ill-ventilated one.

I have purposely said that childhood ends in infantile manhood or womanhood, and this occurs long prior to the complete development of the various organs. For instance, but few of the bones are fully developed and completely bony in substance at birth, and this development goes on, the bony material increasing year by year, until it is only at the age of twenty or twenty-one that the last, the upper arm bone becomes fully set. Bony

material is absorbed from the blood to complete this natural work. Now, if such an ill-finished individual takes upon himself, or herself, the functions of reproduction, what may be expected as a natural consequence? The formative process will diminish or cease; even the brain will cease its natural growth, and the whole manhood or womanhood be stunted. Therefore it is that marriages prior to twenty-one, either of male or female, but more especially of the male, are to be avoided, and the more they are delayed to, at least, twenty-five, the better for the race. The infantile man or woman to be healthy in mind and body must be fully set and developed—ripened, before it reproduces its species. I would not have you believe this on my



assertion. I would appeal to your reason. How can a woman, whose bones need all the nutriment her organism can give them, form properly the bones of a child? Is it not apparent to you such a child must be rickety, bandy, feeble in mind, and if the father be one who has abused his sexual powers, or is still undeveloped, how can he expect healthy children?

Undoubtedly these functions are natural, but if you will ask yourselves whether it would be proper for a boy of two years to undertake the exercises of one of thirteen, you will see that such an absurdity would be on an exact par with the idea of a youth of eighteen, or a man of twenty-one, undertaking the functions of the fully developed—the highest developed man. If he does so

he risks the spoiling of his life. A man possesses powers of procreation in common with the beasts, and nature has placed in the higher developed beasts a safeguard against excess. Except at certain seasons, the female will not tolerate the advances of the male; but man is higher than the beasts in as far, and only in as far, as he exercises voluntary self-control. The safeguards against his excesses are simply the punishment which follows unrestraint.

I am fully aware of the weight of the argument which has been urged repeatedly in this question, that temperaments differ, that in one man there is more of natural inclination to these things, "more of the animal," than in another; that no man in this matter can

be a judge of his neighbour ; and I willingly grant the force of the argument, but it is equally valid on the feminine side. Even the most licentious of men expect that their sisters should be pure in mind and body, and anything else would not be tolerated for a moment in civilised society. They will not entertain any argument against it, and yet all that can be said in favour of enforced female chastity is, at least, equally forcible on the side of male continence. The one sex is stronger than the other, and the weaker must necessarily possess least power of resisting natural impulses. If a man expects that line of conduct in morals from his sisters which he asserts to be impossible from himself, on account of sex, he admits his sex the weaker. I

assert, and the assertion is capable of proof, that the most animal-minded man is capable of self-restraint if he will study his diet, his habits, and his occupations. I do not assert that this can be done suddenly, after a course of self-indulgence, without medical care and supervision, but I would have it recognised that no continuance in ill-doing is defensible on the score of impossibility, owing to natural temperament. I remember once talking to a man who thought it necessary to pursue an immoral life, and asked him how he would like his sister to follow his example, or whether he would marry a woman who did so. He indignantly denied that their temptations were so great, and yet he esteemed his own the stronger sex. What is the meaning of

the protection extended to women by men, if the women are the stronger? What is the meaning of the worship of female purity by men, if it be not that the whole moral atmosphere would be vitiated if anything else were tolerated, and certainly what is possible for a woman is possible for a man.

You can see from this lecture (unless I have grossly failed in expressing my meaning) that I recognise fully the temptations of youths and men to immorality and vice, that I deny there is any natural innate principle within them leading them to virtue, that I admit the natural innate principle is all the other way, and yet I assert if they do not overcome it they make shipwreck of their lives, in avoiding which disaster they have a just

claim to help. I do not appeal to authority on this matter. I deny the force of any such appeal. But I do appeal to reason, right-thinking and self-interest, and I say that self-repression is commanded by all these; that it is the main distinction between man and beast; that it is the only way the man, or the nation, can rise to a higher, holier manhood.



RICHMOND :
PRINTED BY R. W. SIMPSON AND STOREY,
"HERALD" OFFICE.





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