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# IS IT I?

A BOOK FOR EVERY MAN.

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## WHY NOT?

A BOOK FOR EVERY WOMAN.

BY

PROF. HORATIO ROBINSON STORER, M.D.,  
OF BOSTON,

Vice-President of the American Medical Association.

*Homo sum, humani nihili a me alienum puto. TERENCE.*

BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD.

1867.

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1887

TO

DR. THOMAS ADDIS EMMET,

OF NEW YORK,

Surgeon to the State Woman's Hospital;

ONE OF THE ONLY TWO PURELY UTERINE SPECIALISTS  
AS YET PRACTISING IN AMERICA; \*

The Pupil and Successor of Marion Sims,

AND HIMSELF, AS AN OPERATOR, HIS GREAT MASTER'S  
MORE THAN EQUAL.

\* As contradistinguished from specialists, of whom there are many.

9758

**MY DEAR DR. EMMET:**

The little "Why Not?" of the American Medical Association is having so large a sale that my publishers have besought me to write a book for men, to cover ground that I had left untouched, relating to the causation and prevention of various forms of uterine disease. Many physicians and many lady patients have desired me to do the same thing, and I have yielded to their advice. Our friend Dr. Brown-Séquard permitted me to dedicate the second edition of the former book to himself, kindly saying that he deemed it something more than a compliment. At the outset I was uncertain of success, and so the first edition went without sponsor.

In allowing me, in the case of the book now in press, thus to manifest my personal esteem for yourself, and my appreciation of your many contributions to the advancement of our science, you will become my coadjutor in this attempt to preserve women from bodily and mental anguish, from disease and from crime.

Yours, ever sincerely,

**HORATIO R. STORER.**

**BOSTON, June 3, 1867.**

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

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SINCE the first edition of "Why Not?" was published, we have received many letters of approval, and of inquiry relative to its author. In issuing this new treatise, which we believe destined like the first to become a standard book, and to have even a greater circulation than that, we have thought that a few lines of information on our part would not be considered inappropriate.

Professor Storer's writings are no inapt index to his own character. He is thoroughly alive to his duties; sagacious to discern the truth, fearless in asserting it. Progressive, without being too radical, he is still sufficiently conservative to respect the opinions of others, even though at variance with his own. Perhaps no American physician of his own age, holds at the present time a more prominent position in his profession. He has already been quoted as authority by European writers; and in this country he seems everywhere to have received the most flattering acknowledgment of his scientific labors, save here in his own city, where for many years he has met with uninterrupted opposition, and even personal abuse, from a professional clique—the result, doubtless, of jealousy upon their part, envy, and that spirit of antagonism which has long rendered the disagreements of physicians a by-word.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes has happily described the

present instance in the last chapter yet published of his "Guardian Angel," where he says, "There is no possible success without some opposition as a *tertium*; force is always aggressive, and crowds something or other, if it does not hit or trample on it."

There is one other reason which has undoubtedly gone far to render Prof. Storer no exception to the rule that a leader is seldom appreciated by those in his own immediate vicinity, until — as is rapidly occurring in the present instance — he has conquered renown. Resident for a long time at Edinburgh, in very intimate relations with the celebrated Sir James Y. Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform as an anæsthetic, Prof. Storer is peculiarly a representative of the Scotch school of obstetrics, and has zealously and successfully upheld its peculiar tenets, in opposition to the many disciples of the French and Viennese schools among his contemporaries.

It has been asserted of Dr. Storer that, when engaged in professional controversy, he is pitiless and unsparring. These statements seem traceable to opponents who have been worsted, and speak from bitter experience. It may, however, be some reason to believe, that, like a teacher, Dr. Simpson, he has profited by the adage of Polonius: —

"Beware

*Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,*

*Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee."*

The character of the weapons that have been directed against our author may be judged by an extract from a personal attack contained — without a word of apology or excuse from the editors — in one of the numbers of the *Boston Medical and Surgical J*

In attempting to save a poor invalid — sure otherwise soon to perish — Dr. Storer had performed one of the most tedious and difficult operations in surgery, hitherto successful in a most notable instance at his hands, namely, the removal of the womb by incision through the abdomen: an operation with which his name will be forever identified. In commenting upon it, the would-be critic used the following language: "Allow me publicly to protest, most solemnly, against such practice, and earnestly to beg of my professional brethren, everywhere, to use their utmost influence to prevent their patients and friends from employing or consulting such practitioners."

Abuse like this is sure, of course, to react upon those who employ it, and to gain for its object the sympathy and active interest of all lovers of fair play and justice. By a happy coincidence, the article referred to chanced to be followed, on the same page, by another, which we also quote: —

"At a meeting of the Physicians and Surgeons in attendance upon Prof. H. R. Storer's course of Lectures on the Surgical Diseases of Women, just delivered at Hotel Pelham, in Boston, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted: —

"*Whereas*, We, the attendants upon Prof. Storer's first private course of Lectures on the Surgical Diseases of Women, being regular practising physicians and surgeons, have long experienced the disadvantages arising from the very imperfect manner in which these subjects have been treated in our text books, and by the professors in our colleges; many of the most important diseases and operations being entirely ignored by men who think deeply and reason candidly in all other matters pertaining to medicine and surgery; and, whereas, we cannot but feel that this class of diseases is the most

important, believing it to be the cause of more suffering than any other, therefore —

“*Resolved*, That we tender to Dr. Storer our sincere gratitude for taking the advance step which he has, thereby giving us, as we hope he will hereafter give others, the opportunity of hearing these subjects discussed thoroughly and impartially.

“*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be presented to Prof. Storer, and sent to The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, and The New York Medical Record, for publication.

(Signed) CHAS. M. CARLETON, Norwich, Conn.  
 DANIEL MANN, Pelham, N. H.  
 G. E. BULLARD, Blackstone, Mass.  
 J. A. McDONOUGH, Boston, “  
 M. C. TALBOTT, Warren, Pa.  
 H. GEROULD, Erie, Pa.  
 E. F. UPHAM, W. Randolph, Vt  
 W. A. L. CASE, Hamilton, C. V  
 W. L. WELLS, Howell, Mich.’

These resolutions derive their significance from fact that the signers are neither students nor reg graduates, but practitioners, chiefly of many y standing, who have become alive to the importanc the special diseases of women.

It will be perceived, by our title page, that Dr. Str although as yet hardly forty years of age, has attained the highest medical honor, save one, to be conferred in this country — the exception be Presidency of the National Medical Association, tion lately occupied by his distinguished father success of the son will not be wondered at, wh extent and variety of the contributions that h made to medical science are taken into consid In reply to several requests that have been

us, we append a list of the various professional works and monographs of Dr. Storer, so far as we have been able to collect them. This list is probably not entirely complete, in consequence of the author's disinclination to give us all the aid we could have wished in its compilation, partly we suppose from a lack of leisure, and partly from a desire, as we have reason to believe, to avoid any imputation of courting publicity.

We are ourselves satisfied that the book that we now present to the community will in nowise lessen his well-earned reputation.

---

## I.

THE OBSTETRIC MEMOIRS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF SIR JAMES Y. SIMPSON, Professor of Midwifery in the University of Edinburgh. Edited by his assistants, Drs. W. O. Priestley (now Professor in King's College, London), and H. R. Storer (now Professor in Berkshire Medical College). Two large volumes. Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black. 1855.

Also, THE ABOVE. American edition. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1856.

## II.

A WORD IN DEFENCE OF AN AMERICAN SURGEON. (Dr. J. Mason Warren, of Boston.)

Controversy with Dr. Gillespie, of Edinburgh.

Letter I. London Medical Times and Gazette, May, 1855.

Letter II. American Journal of the Medical Sciences. Philadelphia: October, 1855.

---

## III.

BOSTON LYING-IN HOSPITAL REPORTS. Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, 1855, 1856, &c.

## IV.

ELM TENTS FOR THE DILATATION OF THE CERVIX UTERI.

Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Edinburgh, May 1855.

Article I. Association Medical Journal of London, May, 1855.

Article II. Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, November, 1855.

## V.

CASES ILLUSTRATIVE OF OBSTETRIC DISEASE.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, 1856 to 1865.

## VI.

NEW FORM OF INTRA-UTERINE PESSARY.

Read before the Suffolk District Medical Society.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, November, 1856.

## VII.

REVIEW OF CLAY'S "COMPLETE HANDBOOK OF OBSTETRIC SURGERY."

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, November, 1856.

## VIII.

CAUSTIC POTASH AS AN APPLICATION TO THE INTERIOR OF THE UTERUS. ITS FIRST SUGGESTION.

Article I. Read before the Suffolk District Medical

Society. Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, October, 1856.

Article II. Ibid., October, 1858.

Article III. Ibid., July, 1859.

## IX.

## CASES OF NYMPHOMANIA.

Read before the Boston Society for Medical Observation, July, 1856.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October, 1856.

## X.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE SUFFOLK DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY, "to consider whether any future legislation is necessary on the subject of Criminal Abortion; and to report to the Society such other means as may seem necessary for the suppression of this abominable, unnatural, yet common crime."

DRS. H. R. STORER, *Chairman*.

H. I. BOWDITCH.

CALVIN ELLIS.

Read before the Society, May, 1857.

## XI.

## CUPPING THE INTERIOR OF THE UTERUS.

Read before the Boston Society for Medical Observation, February, 1857.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January, 1859.

## XII.

## THE USE AND ABUSE OF UTERINE TENTS.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January, 1859.

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## XIII.

## CASES ILLUSTRATIVE OF CRIMINAL ABORTION.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, April, 1859.

## XIV.

THE UTERINE DILATOR; A NEW METHOD OF REACHING THE UTERINE CAVITY, AND OF INDUCING PREMATURE LABOR.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, July, 1859.

## XV.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, "to investigate the subject of Criminal Abortion, with a view to its general suppression."

DRS. H. R. STORER, of Mass., *Chairman*.

T. W. BLATCHFORD, of New York.

HUGH L. HODGE, of Pennsylvania.

E. H. BARTON, of South Carolina.

A. LOPEZ, of Alabama.

W. H. BRISBANE, of Wisconsin.

A. J. SEMMES, of District Columbia.

Rendered at Louisville, May, 1859.

Transactions of the Association, 1860.

## XVI.

## IS ABORTION EVER A CRIME?

North American Medico-Chirurgical Review, January, 1859.

## XVII.

## ITS FREQUENCY, AND THE CAUSES THEREOF.

North American Medico-Chirurgical Review, March, 1859.



XVIII.

ITS VICTIMS.

Ibid., May, 1859.

XIX.

ITS PROOFS.

Ibid.

XX.

ITS PERPETRATORS.

Ibid.

XXI.

ITS INNOCENT ABETTORS.

Ibid., July, 1859.

XXII.

ITS OBSTACLES TO CONVICTION.

Ibid., September, 1859.

XXIII.

CAN IT BE AT ALL CONTROLLED BY LAW?

Ibid., November, 1859.

Also the above, from XVI. to XXIII., in a collective form, under the title of CRIMINAL ABORTION IN AMERICA. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1860.

XXIV.

A MEDICO-LEGAL STUDY OF RAPE.

New York Medical Journal, November, 1865.

XXV.

THE ABETMENT OF CRIMINAL ABORTION BY MEDICAL MEN.

Read before the Massachusetts Medical Society, May 30, 1866.

New York Medical Journal, September, 1866.

## XXVI.

SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION AS A CURE FOR THE TOOTH-ACHE OF PREGNANCY.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, October, 1859.

## XXVII.

STUDIES OF ABORTION.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, February, 1863.

## XXVIII.

ARTIFICIAL DILATATION OF THE OS AND CERVIX UTERI BY FLUID PRESSURE FROM ABOVE; a reply to Drs. Keiller, of Edinburgh, and Arnott and Barnes, of London.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, July, 1863.

## XXIX.

ON CHLOROFORM INHALATION DURING LABOR. A reply to Dr. Robert Johns, of Dublin.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, August, 1863.

## XXX.

REPORT OF THE STATE COMMISSION ON INSANITY.

HON. JOSIAH QUINCY, JR.

DRS. ALFRED HITCHCOCK,

and H. R. STORER.

Mass. Legislative Document, (Senate 72.) Feb., 1864.

## XXXI.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF ANÆSTHETICS IN CHILDBIRTH  
Read before the Massachusetts Medical Society, at  
Pittsfield, June, 1863.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, October, 1863.

The above was republished, under the name of **EUTO-  
KIA; A WORD TO PHYSICIANS AND TO WOMEN.** Boston:  
A. Williams & Co. 1863.

## XXXII.

**THE MEDICAL MANAGEMENT OF INSANE WOMEN.**

Article I. Read before the Suffolk District Medical  
Society, December, 1863; and the American Academy  
of Arts and Sciences, February, 1864.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, April, 1864.

Article II. Ibid., October, 1864.

Article III. Ibid., November, 1864.

## XXXIII.

**THE RELATIONS OF FEMALE PATIENTS TO HOSPI-  
TALS FOR THE INSANE.**

Transactions of the American Medical Association.  
1864.

## XXXIV.

**THE SURGICAL TREATMENT OF AMENORRHOEA.**

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January,  
1864.

## XXXV.

**REPORT TO THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
OF ITS DELEGATE TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SUPERIN-  
TENDENTS OF ASYLUMS FOR THE INSANE.**

Transactions of the American Medical Association.  
1866.

## XXXVI.

**A NEW OPERATION FOR UMBILICAL HERNIA, WITH  
REMARKS UPON EXPLORATORY INCISIONS OF THE  
ABDOMEN.**

Article I. New York Medical Record, April, 1866.

Article II. Ibid., July, 1866.

## XXXVII.

**SUCCESSFUL REMOVAL OF THE UTERUS AND BOTH OVARIES BY ABDOMINAL SECTION.**

Read before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, November 14, 1865.

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, January 1866.

## XXXVIII.

**THE CLAMP SHIELD; AN INSTRUMENT DESIGNED TO LESSEN CERTAIN SURGICAL DANGERS, MORE PARTICULARLY THOSE OF EXTIRPATION OF THE UTERUS BY ABDOMINAL SECTION.**

Article I. Transactions of the American Medical Association. Vol. XVII. 1866.

Article II. Read before the Berkshire District Medical Society, July 25, 1866.

New York Medical Record, October, 1866.

## XXXIX.

**VESICO-VAGINAL FISTULA, AND THE OPERATIONS THEREFOR. A Review.**

American Journal of the Medical Sciences, October, 1857.

## XL.

**THE CAUSATION, COURSE, AND RATIONAL TREATMENT OF INSANITY IN WOMEN.**

Transactions of the American Medical Association. 1865.

## XLI.

**THE UNFITNESS OF WOMEN FOR MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.**

Letter of Resignation as Surgeon to the New England Hospital for Women and Children.

Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, September, 1866.

## XLII.

INEBRIETY IN WOMEN; an Appendix to the Treatise on Methomania, or Alcoholic Poisoning, by Dr. ALBERT DAY, now Superintendent of the New York State Asylum for Inebriates, at Binghamton. Boston: James Campbell. 1867.

## XLIII.

ON THE DECREASE OF THE RATE OF INCREASE OF POPULATION NOW OBTAINING IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

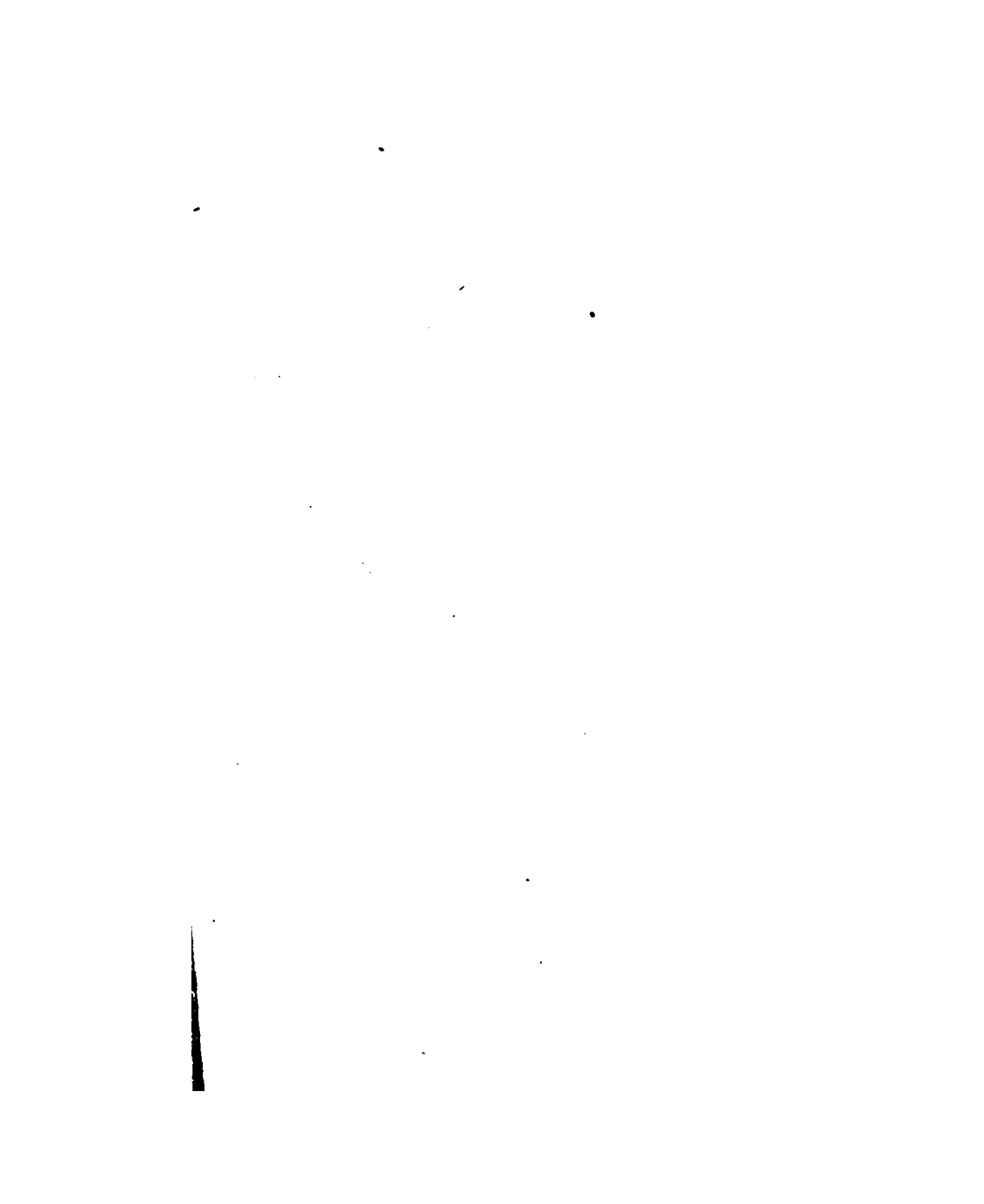
Read before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, December 14, 1858.

American Journal of Science and Art, New Haven, March, 1867.

We are happy to be able to add that Prof. Storer has half promised to prepare for us a book upon the Causation and Rational Treatment of Insanity in Women, his report to the American Medical Association having never been reprinted from the Transactions of that body, although permission has been given him to do so. For this work it is already well known that Dr. Storer is preëminently fitted. His opportunities both for private and official observation have been unusual, and his views are scientific, reasonable, and in great measure at variance with the antiquated ones hitherto generally entertained. The subject is one of intense interest to every member of the community, and we are sure that the appearance of the book will be eagerly looked forward to by thousands, alike of men and of women, and that it will do a great deal of good.

LEE & SHEPARD.

BOSTON, August 1, 1867.



## PREFATORY REMARKS.

---

By its action in 1864, in offering a prize for the best "short and comprehensive tract for circulation among females, for the purpose of enlightening them upon the criminality and physical evils of forced abortions," and again in 1865, in authorizing the general circulation of the successful essay, the American Medical Association initiated a system, or rather method, of *general* professional influence hitherto entirely unknown. The experiment was a hazardous one. There were many who viewed it with extreme anxiety, lest it should result in the destruction of "the barrier which, for the mutual protection, both of science and the community, had always been allowed to stand," there were those who, from having given no observation whatever to the subject, were inclined to think that its importance had been overrated; and others still, who, ad-

mitting the facts, thought their discussion indelicate, unwise, or positively dangerous. The event, however, has shown the propriety of the course pursued by the Association. The demand for the little essay has been so great as to astonish even booksellers themselves. Every medical journal throughout the country, I am told, without exception, has given it a kindly notice. The secular press has everywhere praised the profession for its united effort thus to enlighten the so general ignorance upon a professional topic; and even the pulpit has, in many places, joined itself hand in hand with our own body in the good work,\* so that the times of old, when the clergyman was to the physician an aid and a support, rather than as is now so frequently the case, an adversary and a stumbling-block, have seemed almost to be restored.

Upon carefully considering the whole subject, I am satisfied that though much has thus been accomplished by the Association towards enhancing the general weal, there is still further work to be done ere all that is necessary can be effected.

\* I refer more particularly to articles in the *North Western Christian Advocate*, by Rev. Dr. Eddy, of Chicago, and in the *Congregationalist*, by Rev. Dr. Todd, of Pittsfield, the latter having been republished by Messrs. Lee & Shepard of Boston, under the title of "*Serpents in the Doves' Nest.*"



In the prize essay referred to, I portrayed, and endeavored to do it with fidelity, the criminality of wilfully tampering with the life of the unborn child, and the physical injury sure, sooner or later, to result therefrom to the mother, ordinarily causing her, far sooner than would pregnancies naturally completed, to lose the bloom of her youth, and with it one of the securities of her husband's love, predisposing her to a wide range of disease otherwise escaped, and in fact rapidly breaking her down in health and in hope, alike of things earthly and of things spiritual; for to most foeticidal women, after the climacteric, or so-called "turn of life," has passed, there comes a realizing sense of the home they have lost through their own folly, their own sin. To stem the tide of fashion,—for it was fast becoming the way of the world to bear no children,—and to show matters in their true light by holding the mirror up to nature, was thus attempted by the Association. The nail upon which society is to hang its faith has been driven; to clinch it, and so to render its hold secure, another blow is needed. The necessity I proceed to show, and the stroke to give, only regretting that my feeble arm is not that of some one of the Association's stronger men, and my pen tipped with the flame which should cause these words to burn their

way to the very hearts of those to whom they are addressed.

It may, perhaps, be alleged that the topics of which this book must treat are such as cannot possibly be discussed without offending good taste or transcending propriety. This opinion, like many that are merely preconceived, may be found an erroneous one. It may also, perhaps, be said that the field of inquiry is one that has been given over, by tacit consent, to a class of writers who are theorists only, without previous opportunities of extended observation, or self-constituted moralists, who argue from abstract speculations rather than from the facts that nature daily furnishes to the physician in active practice. This has undoubtedly been the case. I have been astonished at the mass of material of the description referred to, that my publishers have sent me from their shelves for inspection since the manuscript of this book was placed in their hands. Essays of the most incoherent character, some of them utterly unintelligible even, have vied for circulation with others, which, under the guise of a rational physiology, or philosophy, or religion, inculcate doctrines the most pernicious alike to body, mind, and soul. It is my aim to avoid being confounded in any way whatever with this class of writers. The views

that I present are those accepted as true by the physicians of our time most competent to judge, and it will be seen that they are consistent with sound common sense. The result of many years of study, under very unusual opportunities for observing disease, I have not the slightest doubt as to the verdict that will be passed upon them by the grand jury to whom they are now submitted.

I have said that the Prize Essay upon Abortions has elicited extended and very favorable comments. Among those that have been brought to my notice there have been two of a very striking and very peculiar character, both of them apparently made in the most perfectly good faith, and from the most diametrically opposite quarters. As to the personal identity of their authors, I know nothing. One of these criticisms is offered by a woman, "the wife," she is styled, "of a Christian physician;" her plea is evidently the result of extended observation, in no way, I trust, from personal experience, though it must have been the unlocking of a warm, and brave, and sympathetic heart. Its arguments are so weighty, and they are so well put, that I copy the letter entire in an Appendix to this essay, and trust, with the editors of the journal in which it appeared, "that it may find its way, in some

more popular form than their pages afforded, to the eyes of every husband in the land." \*

The other article to which I refer is of a later date,† and this is written by one of our own sex, who comments upon the preceding, or "A Woman's View," stating that he is upon the eve of marriage, "and though not a whit more sensual than most men, cannot be too grateful for having thus forcibly brought to his mind a view which he for one had doubtless scarce otherwise considered." "I would to God," he continues, "that it might meet and claim the serious consideration of every man born of woman's agony." The first of these articles, to again quote from the editorial remarks concerning it, "certainly expresses, with exceeding delicacy and truthfulness, the universal feeling of her sex upon a subject which deserves more attention from our profession than it has hitherto received." The gentlemen making this assertion, Drs. Abbot and White, of the Medical School of Harvard University, are generally considered men of a conservative cast of mind, very conservative indeed for Massachusetts, and not in the least prone towards recognition of any "woman's rights" that are at all of a doubtful character. What,

\* Boston Med. and Surg. Journal, Nov. 1866, p. 274.

† Ibid., Jan. 1867, p. 490.

both at the sessions of 1864 and 1865, by which it showed most unmistakably its belief that researches like the present are for the advancement of science, and their publication for the welfare of the race, I intrust this book to the wheel of fate. Its manuscript has already passed through one trying ordeal with a certain measure of success. Submitted to the touchstone of the Prize Committee of the Association for the present year, it was distanced by the essays of Drs. Black of Ohio, upon the Cause of Intermittent and Remittent Fevers, and Pallen of Missouri, upon the Treatment of certain Abnormalities of the Uterus, treating as these did of subjects of more direct and especial interest to the medical profession; but it elicited the following letter from the distinguished professor in the University of Maryland, who represented the committee as its chairman, and was, of course, unaware of the identity of the author, which had been carefully disguised till I wrote to reclaim the manuscript.

“BALTIMORE, 21st May, 1867.

“DEAR DOCTOR :

“I have read your essay with very great interest, and hope that you will publish it. It certainly will do good. The subject, although one of great delicacy, is handled with marked ability. The whole profession ought to feel grateful to you for your efforts to check the fearful

---

amount of crime in relation to abortions. Your essay will, I have no doubt, meet with the general approval of the Association.

“Very respectfully,

“F. DONALDSON.

“DR. H. R. STORER, Boston.”

Such is the character and such the source of the above indorsement, which was wholly unsolicited, that I consider my object in submitting the essay to the Committee as fully gained.

# IS IT I?

A BOOK FOR EVERY MAN.

---

## I.—IT IS NOT GOOD TO BE ALONE.

As stated in the prefatory remarks, the present essay is written, and is intended for, the perusal of men. It is not impossible, however, that copies of it may fall into the hands of, or be shown to, individuals of the other sex. The subject upon which I shall speak, itself a very delicate one, is thus rendered still more difficult to treat. Inasmuch, however, as in my work upon the physical evils of forced abortions,\* published for the edification of women, under the authority and with the sanction of

\* Why Not? A Book for Every Woman. Lee & Shepard, Boston.

the American Medical Association, I seem to have so far succeeded in the duty intrusted to me as to win the encomiums of many of the sterner sex, I make bold to strike out for myself a similar path, let me hope, to the conviction and betterment of *all* my readers. If in doing this, I am found roughly to hew down certain old branches of custom, and to root up summarily certain privileges and alleged rights, usurped rather than legitimately granted, it is that I may let in light where it has long been needed, that I may remove causes of offence from the road of life's pilgrims, and widen that way, now too generally trodden in single file, even where wedlock exists, to its intended dimensions, sufficient for two to pass, side by side and hand in hand; and this work, for humanity's sake, I shall endeavor to do without fear or favor.

To all men I speak—the young, middle aged, and the old; to the rich and to the poor; to the gentle and the unrefined; to the single, the married, and the widower; to the happy and to the miserable; to the ardent and to the cold; to the



religious and to the blasphemer. The subject is one that concerns all, for it lies at the foundation of society, — sexual health and disease, the need or advantage of marriage, the need or advantage of divorce, the chance of home being such or an empty name, an earthly heaven, or a worse than purgatory, — these are topics that affect each man, however careless or unconcerned he may think himself, or may appear to be. Therefore is it that I am sure of the attention of the continent, that he may gain still greater reason for self-control; of the prurient, for the very title of my essay will serve to arrest his attention; and of the brutish man, impelled by curiosity to learn upon what grounds I shall condemn him.

Is it asked, if the disclosures that I shall make are not by their very publication subversive of good morals, and the calling attention to the true relation of the sexes suggestive to bad men of, and conducive towards, their false relations? I answer, —

First, that to ignore the existence of sin, error, misery, is in reality to encourage and to increase them. It is like walking upon thinly-

crusted lava, or upon breaking ice, certain to prevent our saving others, ready indeed to engulf even ourselves. We varnish over or seek to conceal vice, and it loses half its grossness — it becomes attractive perhaps, or fashionable; but if we strip it of its veil, any soul, not wholly smirched, will recoil with horror.

Again, all of us learn the lessons of life by experience — sad experience, indeed, it too often is. Many a man would give even his own soul could his past life be restored to him, and its follies, its sins be effaced. Too often his soul is no longer his own to give: inextricably entangled in passion's web, wound about and about with its myriad threads, there remains but the dead and worthless semblance of himself, that can be restored by nought save the boundless grace of God. Who would not gladly escape such risk, and welcome every premonition of danger?

Still again, many, claiming to be immaculate themselves, will ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" And yet, living together in communities, as we do, it must be confessed that we are responsible, every one of us, and to a very great

extent, for the shortcomings and evil deeds of all the rest, and it must also be confessed that there does not exist, that there probably never existed, a perfectly immaculate man, who never once has erred in the very matter we are now considering, either in deed, or in word, or in thought. Consoling indeed for those of us who humbly confess our infirmities is this very fact. Take the very basest of us, and he at times is conscious of vain regrets of his own misdeeds, and a fond desire that those whom he loves, for every man has such, may be better than he. Take the very best of us, and he sees a height beyond any he has yet attained, that he prays he may yet reach and pass.

And further: not merely are researches, such as this essay is founded upon, publications for the general weal, such as it claims to be, perfectly legitimate and advisable in themselves; they have been sanctioned by precedents that have already been established. I do not refer to the attempts of unprincipled empirics to terrify the masses by overdrawn pictures of disease, nor of holy and well-meaning men to turn them to

better ways by fervent descriptions of the **wrath** to come. We shall take neither the **fear** of things present nor future as our standard in this discussion, but appeal solely to each **man's** reason — and such appeals have been made before. They have been made in France by **Ricord**, by **Lallemand**, and others of the great medical **philosophers** of the day ; by **Parent-Duchatelet** and by **Diday**. In England, there are men like **Acton**, who dare to sound the trumpet of alarm, **bringing** forward their facts from private practice, from the hospital, and from the dead-house, and drawing from these indisputable conclusions. In our own country there are men like those **brave** souls, now one of them at least translated to a **better** country, **Blatchford**,\* and **Hodge**, and **Poij** and **Barton**, and **Lopez**, and **Brisbane**, **physicians** of the very highest rank in their profession, **were** not ashamed, in the question of the **f**requency and the ill results of criminal abortion,

\* Dr. Thomas W. Blatchford, of Troy, N. Y., died the 7th of January, 1866. One of the oldest and **m** influential members of the American Medical **Ass**ociation, he was *belov*ed by all who knew him.

take stand beside me upon the platform of our personal knowledge, and knowing they dared maintain. I will cite but one instance more. It is that of a good man now gone to his rest, and a very rock he was to the swelling tide of moral as well as physical evil — the late Professor John Ware, of Massachusetts. His little work on a portion only of the topic we are now considering,\* has stayed many a headlong step and saved many a soul alive. The book to which I refer has, however, probably obtained but a limited circulation compared with that at which I now aim, and its author, so good himself, used only the gentle, persuasive eloquence of a tongue attuned by Nature to peaceful themes. For myself, accustomed as I have been in the practice of my profession in the especial department most bearing upon this subject, to probe humanity to its lowest depths, I shall not hesitate to speak plainly the truth as it is, to pile argument upon argument, to resort to invective if need be, ay, and to apply the lash, till every man who reads

\* Hints to Young Men on the True Relation of the Sexes. Boston, 1850.

me stammers, conscience-stricken or indignant, "Is it I?" For, one of themselves, both by birth and by nature, I know my ground, and my answer shall be, "Thou hast said."

I shall try, I have stated, while speaking cogently, to keep my language within the bounds of the strictest decorum. Treating of similar topics with Michelet and Jean Jacques Rousseau, I would fain, while discussing the sphere, the charms, and the complaints of woman, the force and the claims of the passion of love, whether pure or illicit, and the unalloyed, unredeemable evils of purely selfish gratification, escape all semblance alike of approving sensuality and of condemning a rational yielding to natural laws — which last, as I shall be found to define it, must be considered a far different thing from the lustful appetite of a satyr or the nightly phantom of the ascetic, who is such from cowardice alone. Composed as we are, in this fleshly tabernacle, of many a member, and many an adaptation of these to use, combined as one, there is the old, old combat described by St Paul, — our instincts warring with our bette:

selves, our will and our reason, for mastery. To govern a slave, and govern him well, one need not crucify him. To govern one's self, it may be necessary severely to discipline, but not always to kill, the body in which we have been placed for so many useful ends. To use, as not abusing ourselves or others, is but collateral to the rule called "golden" — together they form for us the safest of creeds.

All men, old or young, seek companionship. This is necessary for their very self-possession, both in body and in mind; and the companionship which they instinctively seek, as truly and as unvaryingly as the loadstar seeks its pole, is that of the opposite sex. Where this special yearning is absent or has never existed, there is to be found, always, the effect of disappointment or of disease. The disease, if such is present, may, it is true, have been self-occasioned, but the vessel itself was either improperly built for the voyage of life or was stopped in its course by some hidden shoal: it has foundered or been wrecked, and we shall find that in by far the majority of cases this was from neglect in

obtaining the necessary sailing charts or from non-adjustment of the compass.

And here let me answer in advance one question that would undoubtedly be put to me by every one of my readers, Do I believe in fair-weather sailing alone? in hugging the shore, and never daring to put to sea? Do I expect that each craft should be so stanch as to defy every wave and every blast of danger? I do neither. It is not the zephyr that calls into being the sturdiness of the oak, nor the mere heat of the sun that separates from the dross its fine gold. It is the burning that causes a child to dread the fire, and the philosophy that learns these things tentatively, and not from chance, is not of necessity sheer wickedness. I am no apologist for vice. A habit of evil doing is one thing, and a slip, or even a momentary plunge into the mire, is a very different thing. The last, by its very taste of earth, may engender a longing, else unknown, for heaven. For myself I have little faith in passive goodness; that is, in us men. Those who have never been exposed to temptation, from staying quietly at home or through



accident alone, are the soonest to yield if the tempter comes. Having never tested their strength, they find it but weakness. As with eagles reared in a cage, there is no power of wing. It is the fall to the ground from the eyry, and the often disappointment when too fully self-relying, that gives the force of pinion to soar to the highest ether, face to face with nought but the sun. That I may be rightly understood upon this very threshold of our inquiry, let me quote a few lines from one of the most thoughtful, most chaste, and most accepted writers of the present day, the late Rev. Mr. Robertson, of England. "The first use," he says, "a man makes of every power and talent given to him is a bad use. The first time a man ever uses a flail, it is to the injury of his own head and of those who stand around him. The first time a child has a sharp-edged tool in his hand, he cuts his fingers. But this is no reason why he should not be ever taught to use a knife. The first use a man makes of his affections is to sensualize his spirit. Yet he cannot be ennobled except through those very affections. The first

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time a kingdom is put in possession of liberty, the result is anarchy. The first time a man is put in possession of intellectual knowledge, he is conscious of the approaches of sceptical feeling. But that is no proof that liberty is bad, or that instruction should not be given. It is a law of our humanity that man must know both good and evil; he must know good *through* evil. There never was a principle but what triumphed through much evil; no man ever progressed to greatness and goodness but through great mistakes." \*

These remarks apply more particularly to the young man, just becoming conscious of his newly-awakened emotions and physical powers. Should he be viewed and treated as a child, or allowed to go out from home to the dangers of the world? In acquiescing, as a general rule, in the latter course, I know that I shall shock the sensibilities and prejudices of many superficial observers. Yet Sydney Smith did not hesitate to avow a similar opinion. "Very few young men," acknowledges the reverend gentle-

\* Discourses, &c., pp. 87, 88.

man, "have the power of negation in any great degree at first. Every young man must be exposed to temptation; he cannot learn the ways of men without being witness to their vices. If you attempt to preserve him from danger by keeping him out of the way of it, you render him quite unfit for any style of life in which he may be placed. The great point is, not to turn him out too soon, and to give him a pilot." He must be *taught* purity.

There is no doubt that in very many children an improper tone of thought is established even before the period of puberty, unnatural as this must be allowed to be, and that oftentimes this sexual precocity is induced very directly by causes within our control. For a boy in our cities, or even our villages, to reach his teens without learning from his associates or by observation something of these matters, is simply impossible. It is for us to see to it that he does not receive the idea that they constitute the whole or the best part of life. "Remember," says Herbert Spencer, "that the aim of your discipline should be to produce a self-

governing being, not to produce a being to be governed by others. As your children are by and bye to be free men, with no one to control their daily conduct, you cannot too much accustom them to self-control while they are still under your eye. Aim, therefore, to diminish the parental government as fast as you can substitute for it in your child's mind that self-government arising from a foresight of results. All transitions are dangerous, and the most dangerous is the transition from the restraint of the family circle to the non-restraint of the world. Hence the policy of cultivating a boy's faculty of self-restraint by continually increasing the degree in which he is left to his self-restraint, and so bringing him, step by step, to a state of unaided self-restraint, obliterates the ordinary sudden and hazardous change from externally governed youth to internally governed maturity." \*

With reference to this point, who of us does not agree with the strictures of Acton upon the carelessness or prejudice which subjects a boy to unnecessary and too early temptations, sanc-

\* Moral Education, p. 140.

tioning perhaps by parental advice his exposure to the wildest and most dangerous of foes, his own unbridled imagination? Humphrey Clinker and Roderick Random are no longer to be found upon the family book-shelf. Griffith Gaunt, and the exciting issues of the modern French press, have taken their place. Lempriere, Ovid, and the other such meat for strong men, are put into the boy's hands with an expurgated text. What lad, however, who has not been tempted to ransack his father's library, and every other collection of books within his reach, in the hope of finding an original edition, just precisely as at a certain time of his youth, longer or shorter as this may have been, he has found himself turning to the coarsely translated and sometimes flagrant pages of the Old Testament, rather than to the chaste and ennobling language of the Gospels? "It has often surprised me," writes Acton,\* "that the filthy stories of the loves of the heathen mythology should have been so generally placed in the hands of lads. In such works the youth

\* Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs, p. 38.

gloats over the pleasures which the heathen deities are supposed to have indulged in, while his imagination runs riot amid the most lascivious passages. The doctrine laid down in these volumes seems to be, that lust went on unchecked, that it was attended with no evil results, either physically or morally, to the individual, or to the society in which such scenes are supposed to have existed. To enable him to live as these gods of old are supposed to have done, with what companions must he not associate? He reads in them of the pleasures, nothing of the penalties, of sexual indulgence; and it is at a later period that the poor school-boy is first to learn that sexual pleasure is not to be indulged in with impunity. He is not intuitively aware that, if the sexual desires are excited, it will require greater power of will to master them than falls to the lot of most lads; that if indulged in, the man will and must pay the penalty for the errors of the boy; that for one that escapes ten will suffer; that an awful risk attends abnormal substitutes for sexual intercourse; and that self-indulgence, long pursued,

tends ultimately to early death or self-destruction.”

Thus educated, and thus vainly imagining a large proportion of our boys pass from childhood into youth, with the preconceived idea they soon find apparently confirmed by their own sensations, that it is not good to be alone. Let Kingsley tell us what is but too often the very reasonable result. Lancelot had discovered “a new natural object, including in itself all—more than all yet found beauties and wonders—Woman. What was to be expected? Pleasant things were pleasant, there was no doubt of that, whatever else might be doubtful. He had read Byron by stealth; he had been flogged into reading Ovid and Tibullus, and commanded by his private tutor to read Martial and Juvenal for the improvement of his style. All conversation on the subject of love had been prudishly avoided, as usual, by his parents and teacher. The parts of the Bible which spoke of it had been kept out of his sight. Love had been to him, practically, ground tabooed and carnal. What was to be expected? Just what happened.

If woman's beauty had nothing holy in it, why should his fondness for it? Just what happens every day — that he had to sow his wild oats for himself, and eat the fruit thereof, and the dirt thereof also." \*

"Here, then," says Acton, "is our problem: A natural instinct, a great longing, has arisen in a boy's heart, together with the appearance of the powers requisite to gratify it. Everything, the habits of the world, the keen appetite of youth for all that is new, the example of companions, the pride of health and strength, opportunity, all combine to urge him to give the rein to what seems a natural propensity. The boy does not know that to his immature frame every sexual indulgence is unmitigated evil. He does not think that to his inexperienced mind and heart every illicit pleasure is a degradation, to be bitterly regretted hereafter; a link in a chain that does not need many to be too strong to break." † The only answer to this problem is for the boy to learn to possess his soul in patience, and through example and advice, and earnest, prayer

\* Yeast, p. 3.

† Loc. cit., p. 46.



ful effort, to compel his own self-control, till he attains that full and complete development of all his powers that distinguishes the man. How small the proportion of all my readers who can lay their hands upon their hearts and say, with perfect truthfulness, that up to the time of reaching their majority they had never, for the sake of selfish or illicit gratification, been guilty of any offence against purity!

With these reflections, which are not of a character to make us particularly self-confident or vainglorious, I approach the second chapter of my task.

## II. — MARRIAGE AS A SANITARY MEASURE.

Having now shown that while it is natural for young men to be impelled towards women by an instinctive yearning, this is not unfrequently prematurely excited, I proceed briefly to call attention to its evil effects, in many instances, both upon the individual and upon society. I cannot do better, in commencing my remarks upon this subject, than to quote a few words from Dr

Ware. "Unhappily for the young, a just and elevated view of the relation of man to woman is forestalled by impressions of a totally different sort, early made and deeply rooted. Among the first lessons which boys learn of their fellows are the impurities of language, and these are soon followed by impurities of thought. Foul words are in use among them before they can actually comprehend their origin, or attach to them a definite meaning.

"Most men who, when young, have been in the habit of unreserved communication with others of their own sex, will recognize the truth of this statement. Happy is he who can look back upon no such recollections; happy is he, the surface of whose mind does not bear upon it through life, stains which were impressed there by the corrupt associations and the corrupt habits of youth; happy indeed is he if the evil has not eaten into the soul itself, and left behind such marks of its corrosion as neither time nor even repentance can ever obliterate. When it is the training of boyhood, it is not strange that the predominating ideas among young men,

relation to the other sex, are too often those of impurity and sensuality. Nor is this evil confined to large cities, though it there manifests itself more distinctly in open and undisguised licentiousness, and in the illicit commerce of the sexes. It equally exists in the most secluded villages in the corruption of the thoughts and language, and in modes of indulgence, which, if less obvious and remarked, are not, therefore, the less dangerous to moral purity.

“We cannot be surprised, then, that the history of most young men is, that they yield to temptation in a greater or less degree and in different ways. With many, no doubt, the indulgence is transient, accidental, and does not become habitual. It does not get to be regarded as venial. It is never yielded to without remorse. The wish and the purpose is to resist, but the animal nature bears down the moral; still transgression is always followed by grief and repentance. With too many, however, it is to be feared, it is not so. The mind has become debauched by the dwelling of the imagination on licentious images, and by indulgence in licen-

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tious conversation. There is no wish to resist. They are not overtaken by temptation, for they seek it. With them the transgression becomes habitual, and the stain on the character is deep and lasting. The prevailing sentiment of the mind, the prevailing tendency of the will, is to sensual vices; and there are no vices which so deeply contaminate the soul of man, so degrade, so brutalize it, as these. The degree of debasement has in some men, even in some communities, reached so low as to suggest modes of indulging this appetite from which the common sensualist shrinks with horror, and which cannot be even named without loathing." \*

These statements must be acknowledged by every honest man to be true, and it is therefore needless to adduce probatory evidence. Viewing the matter, as I do, from a professional standpoint, it becomes necessary for me to discuss methods of preventing habits as shameful as they are injurious to physical and mental and moral health, and sorrows that are but too often irremediable. Foremost among these methods, — I

\* Hints to Young Men, &c., p. 36.

shall speak of it more particularly as a sanitary measure, — will be found Marriage.

In thus summarily, perhaps even roughly, referring to the most important of all human relations, I shall, I doubt not, again shock certain sensitive minds. In these delicate matters, however, it is best to be frank and plain. At one time of his life or another, every man, selfish or generous-hearted as he may be, delicate or brutal his nature, looks forward to marriage: not as a spiritual blending of two souls in one merely, not as a self-sacrificing means of making some woman supremely happy, nor in fulfilment of a supposed duty to leave children behind him, the latter being very generally considered too old-fashioned doctrine for these days, but as the means of gratifying certain instinctive, and therefore natural, although so often condemned as carnal, bodily desires, and thereby, as many will not hesitate to acknowledge, was their own purpose in marrying, of keeping himself in the better physical health. I would not be thought to believe that such selfish motives, low ones they may very properly be called, actuate the



majority of mankind. Many are governed by sordid considerations, others by platonic, and still others by very romance. Through almost every marriage, however, there runs this thread of instinct, more or less strongly marked, more or less distinctly recognized, at times indeed deliberately woven in, and according as one or the other of these conditions obtains, so is it generally that the after and relative life of the parties is decided.

Let us grant, to save time, what I have already assumed, that it is natural for man to long for woman, and thus yearning, to seek her; and that, constituted as they both are, the one reciprocally for the other, not for the world's purposes of population alone, but for imparting to and receiving from each other the most exquisite of physical sensations, it was intended by the Creator that, like every other function, those pertaining to this most intimate acquaintance should also occasionally be allowed gratification. The question now confronts us, How is this possible? How can men lead many lives, fulfilling all the purposes for which they were constructed and

for which they were born, and yet avoid infringing upon the rights or the happiness of others?

To this question a variety of answers have been given. Of late years, many have advocated the so-called doctrine of Free-love, in accordance with which, by some alleged process of elective affinity, every positive would seek its negative, every male its female, and this whether or no each of the parties were already legally the property of some other person. Subversive as such views, if allowed, would prove of all domestic unions, and therefore of the peace of society, their interested advocates have found many proselytes. Many more still carry into constant practice what they would be ashamed, or would not dare openly to acknowledge.

The views now referred to are as repulsive to the best sense of mankind as are those by which Mormonism is supported. In the one instance, a man professes to satisfy himself with one mistress, though he may possibly be conducting amours, at the same time, secretly, with a dozen; in the other, he openly surrounds himself with concubines, much as in the Eastern seraglio, save

that with the Latter Day Saints, the comparatively better education and intelligence of the women, however deficient these may practically be, render it advisable to invest the scaling with a semblance of religious authority, at once to prevent rapine by other men and quarrels among the women, however impossible this last may be to accomplish. In both cases, the Mormon and the amative socialist take to themselves a lion's share; like some of the carnivora, who seem to kill for the mere pleasure of destruction, or who slake their thirst by a mere draught of their victim's blood and then discard the disfigured carcass, so useless to them, these men play with their toys for a while and then throw them aside, heart-broken, dishonored. So nearly are the sexes balanced in number, nominally, that were it not for disturbances of the equipoise by emigration, the prevention of pregnancy, its criminal subversion and the like, by the time men and women have reached a suitable age they would stand very nearly one woman to one man. At birth, in almost every country, the males very slightly predominate, being usually some five or



six in excess to each hundred children born living. There are greater dangers to the infant in male than in female births, the boy averaging a little the larger, and therefore its body, and more particularly its brain, being subjected to a greater and more prolonged pressure. Thus it is that more boys than girls are born dead, and that more boys than girls die during infancy and early childhood, their nervous system not having entirely recovered from the comparatively greater shock to which it had been exposed. If then but one woman actually belongs to each man in a properly balanced community, what right has he to a second or more?

To this argument will be opposed the statements, that like other male mammalia, every man is physically competent to conjugally care for an almost indefinite number of women, and that the normal proportion of the sexes is already disturbed by the large number of both who voluntarily remain single, and of both who, released from an earlier bond by divorce or death, marry for a second, a third, or even a fourth time, and by the comparatively earlier death or decrepi-

tude, on the large scale, of females. Upon the other hand, a man's possible uxorious ability is, and should be, no gauge of what it is advisable for him to undertake or to perform. Even in wedlock it is too often the case that men liken themselves in practice to the most bestial of the lower animals, and to their wives are the most exacting and cruel of tyrants. The plea of merely yielding to the impulses of a pure affection is used but too often to sanction the vilest debauchery, for a man, if he choose, may make a brothel of his own nuptial bed. As to plural marriages, confining that term to instances where the unions are successive and legally solemnized, there is a doubt whether as many, if not more, women are not married a second time than men; and as to the comparative mortality of the sexes, it is gradually becoming the way of physicians to study invalid women more closely and more accurately than was formerly the custom, and as a very natural consequence, much oftener to cure them, so that the comparative death rates are gradually assuming a relation more favorable to women than to men, especially if we allow for

the greater liability of the latter to accident and other exposure. It will be noticed that the death rate, comparative or positive, of a country is a very different thing from its birth rate, and this again from the fecundity of its population, — that is to say, the rate of its annual increase, — subjects all of them of great interest, both to professional and to non-professional men ; the latter of them particularly so to us in our present inquiry, as will hereafter be seen. I may mention, in this connection, that results of two elaborate series of observations in our own country, made from different points of view, but very coincident in their conclusions, have been published by two of the members of the American Medical Association, namely, Dr. Nathan Allen, of Lowell,\* and myself.† Not satisfied with bringing the subject before my own profession, I have endeavored to fix the attention of the scientific world upon the statistics that have been presented, more especially by an article upon the subject in the

\* Report of the Massachusetts Board of State Charities, 1867, p. 19.

† Criminal Abortion in America. Philadelphia, 1860, p. 14; North Am. Med. Chir. Review, Mar. 1859, p. 260.

March number of the leading scientific journal of this country.\*

To return. Other answers than those yet indicated have been made to the main question that I have propounded. Prostitution, even to the extent of a public and legal license, just as obtains in many of the large cities of Europe, has even in our own country its avowed and honest advocates, and by this I mean far other advocates than lewd and licentious men. An engineer may study and direct systems of sewerage, and yet neither desire, nor allow himself to attend to the details of their management. I do not mean, however, to open the very interesting and important problem here involved, although it is one to which I have given much personal attention, both abroad and at home. Suffice it merely to say, that as a safety valve to the latent brutality and vice always heaving and raging beneath the surface in great crowds of men, and to prevent, by frequent and authoritative inspection of the unfortunates, led by cir-

\* American Journal of Science and Art. New Haven, March, 1867, p. 141.

cumstances far oftener than by inclination to pander to the unbridled instincts of man's lower nature, the so frequent importation of the lecher's contagion into his household, setting its mark upon his innocent partner, if not also upon her offspring, there is much to be said in favor of the restricted license referred to.\* Upon the other hand, what more horrid thought to man's pure companion, or to him with reference to all others than himself! I do not here say that any restricted license like that alluded to has my own approval, although I am not sure but that of two evils it may prove the least. My question was, How can natural instincts reasonably be gratified without infringing upon the rights and happiness of others? By prostitution, even taking so plausible an exception as that of the French grisette, the woman's happiness, certainly her highest happiness, is endangered, if not assuredly wrecked; and I here take into account, that in France,

\* For remarks pertinent to the above, see editorials in the *New York Medical Record*, February, 1867, p. 550, and in the *Philadelphia Medical and Surgical Reporter*, for the same month, p. 137.

so peculiar are certain phases of society there, the public woman, after years of shameless sale of herself, often retires upon a competency, to marry and to lead a blameless life, and that in England, the common drabs from the gutter, transported to distant colonies, and sent into the bush, find themselves at a premium, marry, and have fanned into a flame the spark of virtue that may still have lurked in their bosoms. The same is true, to a more limited extent, of some of our own outlying territories and states.

That I have referred to such a topic as the above, was requisite in order that I might approach properly certain matters we have still to discuss together. When sanctioned, as it has been by the study and outspoken convictions of no less a person than Florence Nightingale, who, stainless herself, is yet said to acknowledge certain necessities in the conduct of armies and the care of camps, no further apology upon my part is required.

And such I take it is the case also with the last of the answers to which I shall at present refer, the still more terrible and destructive cus-

tom of self-indulgence, that solitary sin that has hurried so many men to the madhouse and to the grave. To this I need but allude, for hardly the person exists who does not know, from experience or from observation, its blighting effects. With the prudery which prevents the parent from cautioning his son, or the physician his patient, from this violation of every natural instinct and every physiological law, I have not the slightest patience. Enfeebling to the body, enfeebling to the mind, the incarnation of selfishness, it effaces from its victim his fondness for the other sex, unfits him for true love, and likens him in very fact to that embodied concentration of all man's frailties, devoid of all the apparent virtues of animals still lower in the scale, the ape. And yet, it must be acknowledged, that this baleful habit, like the kindred self-indulgence, inebriety,\* is in many instances

\* To the million, drunkards themselves, or with drunkards in their family, the concise and philosophical treatise upon Methomania, just published by Dr. Albert Day, then of Boston, and now Superintendent of the New York State Inebriate Asylum at Binghamton, will be found to convey, with conviction, much comfort and hope.



the result not of vice, but of disease. The congestion of hæmorrhoids, the presence of ascarides in the rectum, the existence of constipation, are all of them agencies, which, by their reflex irritation, determining an abnormal excess of blood to the parts, and inducing a state of hyperæsthesia, or undue nervous excitability, may give rise to procedures which, in the same individual, at other and more healthful seasons, would cause for him but the most revolting disgust.

Such being the case, and I may consider it as frankly acknowledged by my readers to be true, we are prepared to look more calmly at Marriage as a sanitary measure, and to see whether or no it is for this reason to be resorted to or advised.

Every man knows that when the sexual passion has once been aroused and gratified, it can never afterwards be put entirely at rest, even by the hermit in his cell. It is asserted by certain writers, rather, however, upon theoretical than practical grounds, that such passion may always, with comparative ease, be conquered, by sheer force of will. To insure a



peaceful life, it should undoubtedly be vanquished; but few feel at first this necessity, and fewer still have the required mental or moral strength. The confessions that are made to every physician prove this. "The incontinent man," says Acton, "is indulging a servant, who, if he becomes a master, will be what Cicero called him, a furious taskmaster. The slave of his passions has no easy life. Nay, life itself may be in danger. Often the patient falls a victim to sexual misery. The sexual feeling has caused many a suicide; it has madé many a misanthrope; many are the cells now peopled by single men, who, unable to control their feelings, have sought the monastery as an alleviation of their sufferings, and there found it in fasting, penance, and prayer."\*

And again. "If a man wished to undergo the acutest sexual suffering, he could adopt no more certain method than to be incontinent with the intention of becoming continent again 'when he had sown his wild oats.' The agony of breaking

\* *Loc. cit.*, p. 57.



off a habit which so rapidly entwines itself with every fibre of the human frame, is such that it would not be too much to say to any young man commencing a career of vice, 'You are going a road on which you will never turn back. You had better stop now.'"\*

The Catholic Church has always recognized the tortures so often accompanying a single life, when, exposed to temptation, as every man occasionally is, he endeavors to preserve himself therefrom. "Our strength is like the strength of tow thrown into the fire; it is instantly burned and consumed. Would it not be a miracle if tow cast into the fire did not burn? It would also be a miracle if we exposed ourselves to the occasion and did not fall." According to St. Bernardine of Sienna, "It is a greater miracle not to fall in the occasion of sin than to raise a dead man to life." And thus quaintly and forcibly concludes the learned translator of Bishop Liguori, "Do not allow your daughters to be taught letters by a man, though he be

\* Loc. cit., p. 56.

a St. Paul or St. Francis of Assissium. *The saints are in heaven.*" \* Moreover, it is a rule of that church that applicants for the priesthood should be fully formed and virile ; for although priests are required to observe a moral eunuchism, still they must have the merit of resistance to the thorn in the flesh to obtain the palm of recompense.†

I do not, of course, imply, nor do I believe, that the great majority of unmarried men are habitually addicted to immoral practices, but that a very great proportion of them, in curbing their desires and keeping themselves under due subjection, undergo a frequent and severe, however unsuspected, martyrdom, is a fact that cannot be gainsaid.

In speaking, as I have done, of certain alternatives that are extensively adopted instead of marriage, namely, the resorting to houses of ill-fame and self-abuse, I have merely mentioned the fact. I have not dwelt upon the risks, and frightful risks they are, accompanying both these

\* Instructions on the Commandments and Sacraments, pp. 154, 173.

† Acton, p. 192.

measures. The lurid halo surrounding the strange woman, attracting men, as it were, by its very dangers, like moths fluttering about the candle that is to prove their destruction, has been commented upon through the centuries by writers sacred and profane. It has remained, however, for modern science to prove, what had long been suspected, that the venereal lues resulting from unclean intercourse, is, in one of its forms at least, a disease at times wholly ineradicable from the system, and transmissible in all its virulence to children's children.\* Were physicians to reveal to the unsuspecting victims of man's treachery or early backslidings, whom they are called upon to treat in the upper walks of life, the actual character and history of many of their diseases, there would indeed be weepings and wailings and gnashing of teeth. In the absence of supervision, medical inspection, and the license of public women, the chances are greatly in favor of the existence in those poor fallen ones of contagious disease, which, remaining latent in man's system, or directly trans-

\* Bumstead. Pathology and Treatment of Venereal Diseases.

planted to his home, may wreck all his hopes of future happiness. "Nothing tends more certainly to wither the energies of youth and blast the hopes of manhood. It is not merely that the mind is polluted; the body is enervated. A thousand forms of disease may hang round the victim, embitter his existence, or destroy his hopes in life, which he never imagines to have had such an origin. But even farther than this: Providence seems to have stamped this vice with more than its ordinary token of displeasure, by rendering its votaries liable to that terrible disease from which so few of them ultimately escape. The effects of this disease, as is well known, are not always to be eradicated. They are not confined to present suffering. They may set a mark upon a man as indelible as that of Cain. They may cling to him through life, may destroy his health, undermine his constitution, hasten his death,—may even terminate in disfigurement and mutilation. Nay, they may even so taint his blood as to descend to his very offspring, and inflict upon another generation the fearful consequences of his transgression." \*

\* Ware. Loc. cit., p. 43.

The dangers environing those accustomed to consort with harlots exist to almost the same degree where a single private mistress is employed. To say nothing of the expense of supporting such, usually much greater than that of honestly building a family, there must always exist the fact that the woman who permits one man to unlawfully use her will be very likely to grant similar favors to his friend or any one else who may please her fancy or offer her her price; and then comes the chance of her receiving and imparting disease.

Many men think that all such risk is avoided in the case of deliberate seduction. Such, however, is by no means always the case. The popular spread of physiological knowledge has been productive of many unforeseen results. Many women, as well as many men, imagine that by the observance of certain precautions they can do as they please with a friend without possible chance of discovery; the result of all which is, that, in many instances of intercourse with supposed virgins, the biter is sorely bitten, and repents him at his leisure. Where true seduc

tion is effected, not only is the offender oppressed by a life-long sense of the wrong he has done, but he must also feel that the prize thus unfairly gained is liable at any moment to slip from his grasp, or to prove to him the veriest apple of Sodom.

Thus disappointed, or thus fearing, many, even of adult age, resort to what is physiologically a worse crime against nature — self-excitation. This yielded to in boyhood sometimes makes of the young man a woman pursuer, but probably more often a woman hater ; while, on the other hand, it is often the last and final resort of the old and broken-down debauchee. In either event the effect upon the constitution is detrimental in the extreme. It is customary, but still a grave error, to preserve silence upon this subject. “But,” to apply to it the brave words of my friend Dr. Shrady, of New York, when discussing prostitution, “notwithstanding our prejudices of education, agitation will here, as in the kindred question of pre-natal infanticide, finally culminate in reform.”\* If the subject is decided,

\* New York Medical Record, February, 1867, p. 550.

as I believe will be the case, to be of the importance that is claimed by every philosophical physician who has looked into the matter, a voice will go out into every corner of the land, caught up and re-echoed by all the medical men thereof, that will cause those who care either for their souls or their bodies, to pause and tremble.

I would not exaggerate this matter — I would not indorse that empiricism in medicine which seeks to obtain gain through awakening ungrounded fears, or imply that I believe that those who have occasionally gone astray are necessarily incurably diseased, or their souls irretrievably lost. On the contrary, it is my opinion, already stated, that just as there is more joy in heaven over the repentant sinner than over those who wandered not, so those who have learned by bitter experience often make, here below, the better men. I have more than once in this essay drawn from the language of Dr. Ware, an old man, of widely-extended experience, close habits of observation, a thoughtful mind, and of abounding charity for those who had erred. There is no one among the wide circle of



medical men who were on terms of personal acquaintance with this distinguished member of our profession who will not acknowledge that the following sketch is far from being over-drawn : —

“ There is another form of sensuality, far more common among the young, it is to be feared, than that of which we have been speaking, and equally demanding notice — solitary indulgence. This is resorted to from different motives. With many there is no opportunity for the natural gratification of their appetites ; some are deterred from such gratification by the fear of discovery, regard for character, or a dread of disease ; others there are whose consciences revolt at the idea of licentious intercourse, who yet addict themselves to this practice with the idea that there is in it less of criminality. It is to be apprehended, however, that its commencement can usually be traced to a period of life when no such causes can have been in operation. It is begun from imitation, and taught by example, long before the thoughts are likely to have been exercised, with regard either to its dangers or its criminality.

“The prevalence of this vice among boys, there is great reason to believe, has very much to do with the great amount of illicit indulgence which exists among young men. The one bears the same relation to the other, in a certain sense, that moderate drinking does to intemperance. It prepares the way, it excites the appetite, it debauches the imagination. There is little doubt that it is often, if not commonly, begun at a period of life when the natural appetite does not, and should not, exist. It is solicited, prematurely developed; it is almost created. On every account, then, this practice in the young demands especial notice. It is the great corrupter of the morals of our youth, as well as a frequent destroyer of their health and constitution. Could it be arrested, the task of preventing the more open form of licentiousness would be comparatively easy; for it creates and establishes, at a very early age, a strong physical propensity, an animal want, of the most imperious nature, which, like the longing of the intemperate man, it is almost beyond human power to overcome. The brute impulse becomes a habit of nearly

irresistible force before the reason is instructed as to its injurious influence on the health, or the conscience awakened as to its true character as a sin.

“The deleterious, the sometimes appalling consequences of this vice upon the health, the constitution, the mind itself, are some of the common matters of medical observation. The victims of it should know what these consequences are; for to be acquainted with the tremendous evils it entails may assist them in the work of resistance. These consequences are various in degree and in permanency according to the extent to which the indulgence is carried, and also according to the constitution of different individuals. But there is probably no extent which is not in some degree injurious.

“Among the effects of this habit, in ordinary cases, we notice an impaired nutrition of the body; a diminution of the rotundity which belongs to childhood and youth; a general lassitude and languor, with weakness of the limbs and back; indisposition and incapacity for study or labor; dulness of apprehension; a deficient

power of attention ; dizziness ; headaches ; pains in the sides, back, and limbs ; affections of the eyes. In cases of extreme indulgence, these symptoms become more strongly marked, and are followed by others. The emaciation becomes excessive ; the bodily powers become more completely prostrated ; the memory and the whole mind partake in the ruin ; and idiocy or insanity, in their most intractable forms, close the train of evils. It not unfrequently happens that, from the consequences of this vice, when carried to an extreme, not even repentance and reformation liberate the unhappy victim.

“ Let no one say that we overstate the extent of this evil, or exaggerate its importance to the health and morals of the young. It is in vain that we attempt to stay the licentiousness of youth, when we leave, unchecked in their growth, those seeds of the vice which are sown in the bosom of the child. If there is impurity in the fountain, there will be impurity in the stream which flows from it. To what purpose is it that we make and execute laws against open licentiousness ; that we arm ourselves with

policemen and spies; that we prosecute the keepers of brothels; that we hunt the wretched prostitute from the dram shop to the cellar, from the cellar to the jail, from the jail to her grave? This does not purify society: it stops merely one external development of a corruption which still lurks, and cankers, and festers within. The licentiousness of the brothel is clear and open in its character; nobody defends it; every one is aware of its seductions and its dangers; the young man who enters the house of shame knows that he does it at the peril of reputation, and under the dread of disease. But the other form of licentiousness is secret from its very nature. It may be practised without suspicion; there is little fear of discovery or of shame. It lurks in the school, the academy, the college, the workshop, ay, even in the nursery. No age and no profession are without examples of the dreadful ruin it can accomplish. Begun in childhood, and sometimes even in infancy, it is indulged without a thought of its nature or its effects. Gradually it winds around its unhappy victim a chain which he finds it impossible to break. Continued for

years, he may wake at last to a sense of his degradation, but perhaps too late; for it has often happened that neither the pressure of disease, the stings of conscience, a strong sense of religious obligation, nor even the fear of death, have been sufficient to enable the unhappy sufferer to break from the habit which intralls him.

“None but those who go behind the scenes of life, and are permitted to enter the prison-house of the human heart, can know how many are the terrible secrets which lie hid beneath the fair and even face of society, as we see it in the common intercourse of the world. With how many are their early days a struggle for life and death between principle and passion, the spirit and the flesh! With how many are those days spent in yielding and repenting, in reluctant indulgences, followed by agonies of remorse and shame! With how many does the conscience become callous, and vice a second nature! How often has it happened that natures, really fair and pure, have gradually become tarnished and dim, and the highest hopes of youth been defeated.

How often has it happened that young men of rare promise, of whose success great expectations have been entertained, have suddenly failed by the way; have seemed prematurely worn down by study, and been forced to relinquish the career on which they were entering with the brightest prospects! Little is it suspected by anxious friends, or a sympathizing public, in such cases, that it is not too exclusive devotion to study; that it is not midnight toil; that it is not errors of diet, or want of air or exercise, that have withered their energies and unnerved their frame. There may be a nearer and a more inevitable destroyer than these.

“This is a subject most painful to dwell upon; one upon which it is hard to think, to speak, or to write, without seeming to partake in some measure of its pollution. Still, attention to it is vital to any successful effort to arrest the vices of impurity. The evils which are directly inflicted upon the health, the physical development, the constitution, by these secret practices, are enough in themselves to command our interest. It sometimes happens that the habit is

acquired by accident, or persons of a peculiar temperament are led to it by a spontaneous impulse. More frequently, however, it is taught by one generation to that which follows; and so general is this education of evil, that it is rare to find those who have been fortunate enough to escape wholly from its contamination. Unhappily the physical pollution is not all; for, as a matter almost of course, there are associated with it loose conversations, licentious imaginings, and low ideas of the relations of the sexes. It leads to the reading of obscene, or at least voluptuous books, gazing upon pictures of the same description, and to general licentiousness of thought and of language. It is not strange, when the mind is thus filled with such images, and taught to dwell upon and brood over them in the immature period of youth, that this part of our nature should be prematurely and unnaturally developed, and that the opportunities of more advanced years should lead to that state of morals among young men which is so notorious, and so much to be deplored.

“Is it not obvious then, where the remedy is



to be applied, if indeed a remedy be possible? Is it not obvious that our success must be small indeed if we confine ourselves to means intended to check the overt indulgences of maturity in licentiousness in one generation, whilst those who are to constitute the next are left to the same fearful development of their animal passions, which must lead them on, by steps as certain as the grave, in the same career of indulgence?"\*

Such being the case, and seeking what is for the good of men alone, without regard as yet for the interests of women, we are compelled to indorse marriage as a most important sanitary measure, alike for enabling a reasonable gratification of the sexual instinct, for the avoidance of disease, and for restraining men from alternatives alike disastrous to themselves, their descendants, and to society.

I proceed now to discuss the time in a young man's life at which marriage becomes advisable.

\* *Loc. cit.*, p. 45.

### III. — HOW EARLY IN LIFE IS MARRIAGE TO BE ADVISED?

The answer to the above question varies with the circumstances under which it is asked. Viewing the subject, as I am doing, solely from a medical point of observation, it is unnecessary for me to give much attention to the other arguments, for and against, that would else have to be considered.

Political economists, almost without exception, have inveighed against an early entrance into wedlock. I could give much evidence upon this point, were it necessary. They base their reasonings upon several assumptions, which are almost purely such. In some ancient states, as Sparta, it was by law forbidden to men to marry under the age of thirty. "And in this," says Acton, "as in many other matters, Lycurgus, the old lawgiver, showed his wisdom."\* In some modern states, also, a time has been fixed, as twenty-five years, until which men must remain celibate.

\* Loc. cit., p. 76.

These restrictions have frequently been established for the purpose of keeping alive a martial spirit. When a people are permitted to follow the dictates of their own hearts, they are apt to anchor themselves at home, tied down by the innumerable cords of affection and pecuniary necessity or advantage. If this is prevented, the youth remains for a certain number of years at the service of the state, is taught that first of all lessons of life, obedience, without a knowledge of which no man can himself come to rule; he is supposed less likely to form a hasty or injudicious conjugal alliance, and from having been sent hither or thither across the world at the command of his superior, to be finally more anxious to settle permanently down as a private citizen.

Again, in most countries, whether young or old, there is a tendency, exaggerated, no doubt, in many instances, to become overstocked by the human race; and theorists and lawgivers vie with each other in their efforts to keep down the population. Not only is it thought that by preventing the young from marriage, a direct

check is thus given, but that when that condition is entered at a more advanced time of life, the man has become sobered by age, and what is technically called "more prudent."

Many suppose that the children of persons in the prime of life are more likely to be sound in body and in mind than the offspring of earlier years, — a result that does not necessarily occur, — while others, among whom Mr. Acton, more or less distinctly denying the benefit of marriage as a sanitary measure, add to the above arguments a still more untenable one, that perfect continence is the only wise and true measure of life. "Marriage," he says, "is not the panacea of all earthly woes, or the sole correction of all early vices. It often interferes with work and success in life, and its only result is that the poor man (poor in a pecuniary point of view) never reaches the bodily health or social happiness he might otherwise have reasonably expected. Under the age of twenty-five I have no scruple in enjoining perfect continence. The sighing, lackadaisical boy should be bidden to work and win his wife before he can hope to

taste any of the happiness or benefits of married life." \*

There is much that may be said in favor, and much in disapproval, of these several views. The great uprising of our own people, both North and South, during the late civil conflict, the long and patient endurance they exhibited, and the innumerable feats of great personal valor that they performed, sufficiently prove that early marriages, which are common in this country, and a national devotion for many years to the arts of peace, do not necessarily deprive a race of its most vigorous manhood. In our own instance, the conflict over, and the best blood of the country spilled, we were yet ready, if need had been, to defend our rights against the world.

As for becoming overstocked, there is for us no danger of this for many long years to come. Our fertile prairies, and the long reaches of arable land lying between the mountain ranges of the far West, are destined to cradle untold millions; and if to these we add the parched but still irrigable plains of the extreme Southwest, we

\* *Loc. cit.*, p. 76.

see that our country is still in its infancy. If older nations had but followed the example of the Irish, the English, and the modern Jews, all over-crowding would be more than met by emigration, the peaceful transfer of colonists meeting the exigencies of the case far better than the former eruptions of northern hordes, thinned by disease, famine, and the sword.

Is it said, that contrary to the doctrines of physiologists and to the precepts of Scripture, a purely ascetic life is the only normal one? Acton has adverted to the fact, as he calls it, "that the intellectual qualities are usually in an inverse ratio to the sexual appetites. It would almost seem," he continues, "as if the two were incompatible; the exercise of the one annihilating the other."\* With Thales, he would reply to those who ask when men should love, "A young man, not yet — an old man, not at all;" and he styles Lord Bacon the still wiser Englishman, quoting from him the following passages: "You may observe that amongst all the great and worthy persons whereof the memory

\* Loc. cit., p. 73.

remaineth, either ancient or recent, there is not one who hath been transported to the mad degree of love ; which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. By how much more ought men to beware of this passion, which loseth not only other things, but itself. He that hath preferred Helena hath quitted the gifts of Juno and Pallas, for whosoever esteemeth too much of amorous affection quitteth both riches and wisdom. They do best who, if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter, and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and actions of life ; for if it check once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can be no ways true to their own ends."

As a fair offset to these remarks, I shall give a brief extract from a letter to Mr. Acton from a Cambridge graduate, whose experience will be found not so very different from that of intellectual and sedentary men this side the water. "Looking from the academic side of the question, the celibacy of Fellows would seem very desirable (for thus only can they retain their

fellowships and the annual stipend pertaining), but no one can deny that such a principle involves the sacrifice of individual comfort. Is this fair to the celibate? I think not. It has always seemed to me that a single man is in an unnatural position; a being created by the Almighty to increase and multiply a race made from the beginning male and female, will, of course, have his natural instincts in accordance with this design; and mortify or control them as he may, they are still there, and cannot become extinct. The sufferings of an abstinent life I believe to be *cruel* to every man between five and twenty and five and forty; and though athletic exercises, regular diet, and so forth, supply some slight relief, still it is never permanent; and in any event of reaction, the sufferer will find himself the worse for his previous regularity. Of course a sedentary life aggravates the symptoms, and I cannot believe that any man of ordinary vigor, so living and so abstaining, will be free from nocturnal annoyance. Still, this would be among the least of his distresses; nay, in nine cases out of ten, I presume the



safety valve of nature is a most happy and beneficial relief; and though I cannot fly in the face of medical authority, and deny that there is a pernicious class of the disorder, still I firmly believe all those cases immensely exaggerated by the sufferers, and capable of an easy cure, to wit, matrimony, unless the patient, by degrading practices, has reduced himself to a state of impotence. Meanwhile a man should go into training for a conflict with his appetites just as keenly as he does for the University Eight, the only difference being that the training will be more beneficial and more protracted. Besides diet and exercise, let him be constantly employed; in fact, let him have so many metaphorical irons in the fire that he will find it difficult to snatch ten minutes for private meditation; let his sleep be very limited, and the temperature he moves in as nearly cold as can bear; let neither his eye nor his ear be untarially open to anything that could possibly excite the passions; if he see or hear accidentally what might have this tendency, let him at once resort to his dumb-bells, or any other mus-

cular precaution, till he is quite fatigued ; whenever any sensual image occurs involuntarily to his mind, let him fly to the same resource, or else to the intellectual company of friends, till he feels secure of no return on the enemy's part. Lastly, I would fain add, let the sufferer from sexual causes make his affliction the subject of most earnest prayer, at any and all times, to that Ear where no supplication is made in vain. Thus armed, he *may* keep his assailant at bay, though I fear conquest is impossible, and the struggle a most severe one. Sound old Jeremy Taylor, after discoursing on chastity in something like the above strain, says, if I remember right, 'These remedies are for extraordinary cases, but the ordinary remedy is good and holy marriage.'

As I have said, the time at which marriage may be entered upon must vary in accordance with the circumstances of each case. Love is proverbially blind, and I shall be told that regard ought to be had to the actual and relative ages of the parties, their health, their pecuniary circumstances and prospects, the advice and wishes

of friends. All this is very true, to a certain extent, but far more depends upon the mental and spiritual strength of the husband; if he is determined to conquer adverse circumstances, he can generally do so, just in proportion as he curbs and keeps under control himself. Let him look forward and determine to use and not abuse his marital privileges, to respect his wife, and not make of her a mere plaything that will early wear out, and a man will find the lions that seemed to stand in his path the veriest illusion. The points, however, that I have referred to are worthy a moment's consideration.

As to age, there can be no doubt that, for some reasons, it would be better for no man to marry before he has reached the age of twenty-five, and for no woman until she is twenty; for till this time neither party can be considered, physically, as really mature. To apply this rule, however, rigidly to practice, would, in this country, be very difficult. With us, such is the precocity of mental development, that the young child is often in many things the old man. Taken from the nursery almost before the

first dentition has occurred, placed in business or upon the classics almost at the time of assuming the boy's distinctive garments, many of our merchants and manufacturers have achieved a fortune, and many of our professional men a reputation, by the time they have hardly passed their majority. Precocity of youth, spent under the stimulus of the American atmosphere, climatic, intellectual, and moral, can but result in a certain kind of precocity of manhood.

The same is also true of our women. Subjected as they are to excessively early excitement of the mind, in school and in society, they rapidly press their mothers from the stage, and though physically not giving earlier signs of being nubile than the girls of other nations, they are far earlier in the market, as it were, for the sale, as it too often is in fact, of their charms and of their lives. No doubt this so early "coming out" from the chrysalid of youth is detrimental to both man and woman. An early bloom is too apt to presage an early decay; and though our mortality statistics, thanks to the advance of medical and sanitary science, do undoubtedly shew that

the average duration of life is becoming more and more extended, and that the Golden Age, in this respect, is before us rather than in the past; yet, taking a given number of persons exposed and not exposed to all the excitements of modern American civilization, there can be no doubt that the unfashionable live longer than the fashionable, the steady than the unsteady, the slowly matured than the Pallas-like monstrosities of our own day and generation. Whether or no the slow and sedate life is the happier of the twain, and whether or no the life of threescore years and ten can be compressed within the limits of two twenties, are questions beyond the scope of the present inquiry. We all know that, at the best, life is but a quickly passing dream.

Provided, then, there exist sufficient self-control to wait a while, very early marriages are not so desirable as those where the ages I have mentioned have been attained; that is to say, provided the man has led a life of continence and purity, or has the strength to do so. If he has not, it may become advisable for him, in case circumstances otherwise favor, early to enter the

married state ; awake, as he should be, to the responsibilities this brings with it, to many of which I shall hereafter refer. And here let it be understood that extremes are always, almost without exception, to be condemned. The marriages of young children are very properly forbidden by the law ; those of older children too often become necessary through their own indiscretion, and result in future as in present unhappiness. The marriage of very old people, permissible on platonic or economical grounds, is sanitarily to be disapproved, and in many instances is but the folly of the second childhood. Great disparities in age are almost always matches of interest rather than affection : the selfish greediness, the shameless yet impotent lechery, of old age joins itself well with that ambition or thirst for wealth which sells the young girl to her worse than slavery — this mating of youth to a virtual corpse.

I do not like to advise marriage to parties in ill health ; and yet, as a medical measure, this is often advisable. We have seen that a single life is for men, and on sanitary grounds, not the best.

There are many cases where it is as unadvisable for women. As a class they need marriage, for a different reason than ourselves. Constructed as evidently for companionship, their yearnings are more mental than physical. They are less conscious of any bodily needs, that is, in their normal condition, but more craving of a spiritual sympathy; more angelic than ourselves, we may truly call them. The point to which I would now refer, however, is the fact that, in many instances, women are deterred from consenting to marriage upon the ground of their own ill health; and I merely shall say that, in very many instances, far more than is usually supposed, marriage would prove for such ill health the most certain cure. I do not make this remark too sweepingly, for there are some affections under which women suffer that would only be aggravated by the change; there are certain bars, as that of cousinship, which, on some accounts, ought never to be passed, and there are certain physical evils of which marriage is only but too productive. Plainly I would avow my conviction that just as marriage should



be avoided among blood relations, for the reason that any family taint, as scrofula, deformity, or insanity, is thus rendered nearly certain to their children, so should the same similarity of constitution be avoided, so far as possible, by Cælebs in search of a wife. If, selfishly, he would avoid defects in her, is it not his duty also to see to it that he brings to her a constitution of his own unmarred, so far as he himself has been concerned? And when, as is too often the case, men who carry with them a system infected by that terrible disease of the licentious, marry pure and unsuspecting women, a great outrage is committed upon society, which no penance and no individual suffering can ever efface or atone for. One of the worst features of this whole matter, as I shall hereafter point out, is as yet generally unknown — that the most ineradicable form of the disease has its period of incubation; the primary sign of it may escape notice, the virus may lie latent, and when it does exhibit itself, the party really to blame may throw the whole enormity of the trouble upon an innocent person, and thus, on the wreck he has made of his home, immolate its guardian.



But I have not time to pursue these collateral lines of thought, manifold as they are, and as important as they are interesting. One of the great rules of life being to try to have and to preserve a sound mind in a sound body, and it being essential for this that the conscience should be sound also, we are forced to admit that, all things being equal, a comparatively early marriage is better for the man than a late one; this on its medical grounds, and uninfluenced by business, or other considerations. Were I to discuss these and push them to their legitimate conclusions, I am afraid I might bring grief to some of my readers — if, for instance, I should assert that it were better for the wives of many seafaring men, especially those going very long voyages, if their husbands had never married them at all, or at least had waited till their days of absence, and peril, and exposure, in foreign ports, to worse dangers than those of the sea, were permanently over. By this remark I am reminded of the question of long engagements — a very pertinent one to our present inquiry.

In presenting Mr. Acton's opinion as to the

advisability of early marriage, I might have said that this very writer contradicts himself, as must every one who undertakes to ignore the great underlying and controlling passions of men. I have quoted some of his remarks concerning continence. In another connection, however, he says, "If an adult is in a position to marry, by all means let him do so. If his sexual desires are strong, and his intellectual powers not great, early marriage will keep him out of much mischief and temptation." He then goes on to say, what I myself hold, that "for any one, especially a young man, to enter into a long engagement without any immediate hope of fulfilling it, is physically an almost unmitigated evil. It is bad for any one to have sexual ideas and desires constantly before his mind, liable to be excited by every interview with the lady. The frequent correspondence, further, keeps up a morbid dwelling upon thoughts which it would be well to banish altogether from the mind; and I have reason to know that this condition of constant excitement has often caused most dangerous and painful affections. These results, to an

alarming extent, often follow the progress of an ordinary courtship. The danger and distress may be much more serious when the marriage is postponed for years.\* The same evil results of hope deferred may also be observed in the female. Physicians devoted to the study of her diseases attribute the causation of some of them, or their increase, to the same identical influences. Mental emotions, even in the purest and chastest minded, are often reflected upon the reproductive system, acting as excitants, even where the mind is unconscious of anything like a bodily sensation ; and, on the other hand, physical excitement, which may exist unconsciously as it were, constantly reflects itself back again upon the mind, increasing the force and intensity of its emotions. "It is no whim," remarks that close student of minds, healthy and diseased, Dr. Isaac Ray, of Providence, "but a suggestion of sound physiology, that the nervous erethism, excited even by courtship, has a controlling influence over the female will." †

\* Loc. cit., p. 77.

† American Journal of Insanity, October, 1866, p. 267.

I should do wrong, moreover, did I not here allude to the dangers, so often proved to exist by their results, of undue waiting, to the moral as well as the physical health. When parties have plighted to each other their faith, they often consider themselves as already one, and demean themselves together too much as such, — forgetting for the time that thus they are almost sure to lose their mutual and self-respect, — they are more likely, for this very reason, to take offence at some unintended trifle, or to become wearied of each other and so to break their engagement, and that they run great risk, by a forced and hasty marriage, of giving its tongue to scandal, and confessing each other's shame.

The length of a betrothal, just as the time of its inception, is too often dependent upon circumstances of a trivial character. Where these endanger the happiness of the man alone, he himself should judge as to the propriety of allowing them undue weight. He has no right, however, as so often occurs, to drag or to coax a young girl to the altar, who is as yet but half matured, or to condemn her to remain for years half-mated,

through his selfish fears that unless thus pledged she would elude his grasp. As I have said, too early bloom is apt to presage too early decay; and even with the best of care our American dames at fifty are prone to pass into the condition called old, even while their husbands, more advanced in years, are still in the very prime of life. A word to the wise should surely be sufficient. Let us hope that Lord Bacon erred in declaring love wholly inconsistent with wisdom, and now consider, —

#### IV. — THE RIGHTS OF THE HUSBAND.

Most men would claim these to be absolute. In view of such claim, which is constantly in practice enforced, married women are expected to quietly yield themselves, often most unwilling victims. Have I any ground for this last assertion? I have. Is it gained from observation or from confession? It is gained from both. Is it a conclusion hastily founded? On the contrary, it is the result of the daily study and direct questionings of fifteen long years.

But it is evident that there are two very distinct sides to this important inquiry ; and it is requisite that they should both be fairly presented before the balance can be struck between them. Are these rights absolute, or are they the rather reciprocal with duties? Should mere instinct, or reason, be the rule ?

The rights of the husband regarding his wife, I have said, are usually considered total and indisputable. Till now they have seldom been challenged ; certainly seldom of men by a man. In listening, as I have done, to the complaints of women, I have neither eavesdropped nor suggested. In presenting them now after these years of comparison and cross-examination, it is with no quixotic feeling of championship, but solely with the desire of an earnest physician to assuage physical and mental pains, very real though often uncomplained of and unappreciated, to carry comfort to hearts disappointed and well nigh broken, to check abuses whose authors may not have recognized them as such, and to evoke a higher manliness than is our usual wont, as men, to exhibit.

What, then, do we usually claim? All that the law, and still more tyrannical custom, grants to us, in our wives; all that they have, and all that they are, in person and in very life. And here let me say, that I intend taking no ultra ground; that I am neither a fanatic nor professed philanthrope; and that in loosing, as I hope to do, some of woman's present chains, it is solely for professional purposes, to increase her health, prolong her life, extend the benefits she confers upon Society — in a word, selfishly to enhance her value to ourselves; and yet there is somewhat in this effort, as I believe there is also in the hearts of all those who will peruse it, of gratitude to her for the love with which she has solaced us, as mother, and sister, and wife, and daughter, — all of which I have myself possessed; unhappy he who has not. Give to her, then, the serious consideration due from every man "born of woman's agony," the depth and measure of which but few of us ever really know. I am no advocate for unwomanly women; I would not transplant them, from their proper and God-given sphere, to the pulpit, the forum, or the cares of state,

nor would I repeat the experiment, so patiently tried by myself, and at last so emphatically condemned \* — of females attempting the practice of the medical profession. I would undoubtedly open to single women every legitimate avenue to an honorable self-support, and thus keep them from many of the pitfalls which so closely environ them, and by causing for the married woman more or greater occasion to respect her husband, I would redouble for him her affection. These are some of my claims to be heard, and they are weighty ones in truth.

In the early history of nations, woman has always been the slave. She is still such, confessed, in all barbarous or but partially civilized tribes. Condemned, by custom or her lord's caprice, to menial offices, she has pandered to his transient emotion, suffered its hardest consequences, and still drudged on. Save in name, in what does this description differ from that of thousands of our own women? They do not,

\* Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, September, 1866, p. 191. New York Monthly Medical Journal, November, 1866, p. 156.



in their best estate, it is true, bear the nominal burdens of life, the hoe and the venison meat, the tent pole and the paddle; but a queen's finery, to the higher natures of our time, may be far heavier than these.

In former days, or in distant lands, husbands have held for their wives the tenure of life or death; were they disobedient, or their fidelity even questioned, the bowstring or sack of the Bosphorus, or being built aside by masonry while still alive, in countries perhaps nominally Christian, are but a portion of the penalties that were meted them. In what, save in being easier to bear, do these differ from enforced seclusion, as in private lunatic asylums not so very many years ago, or the still more dreadful divorce, where not desired and not deserved, with all its attendant publicity?

In by-gone times, and among heathen, as at present in a remote valley of our own great land, so jealous of the honor of its people, and so lenient towards their crimes, women have been openly held as concubines, to possess an abundance of whom were as worthy as to num-

ber one's children. What variance in this from the secret amours and liaisons of our own time, so easy to indulge in, so difficult to detect, in consequence of the almost universal knowledge of the means of preventing or escaping the natural consequences of illicit sexual indulgence?

In days long past, and in tribes far down in ignorance and superstition, it has been the custom to slaughter new-born infants, to avoid the trouble of their support, or to appease the gods. In Sparta, it was alleged that such destruction of the puny or deformed was justified for the sake of preserving the race in all its pristine beauty and vigor. Is such a deed, at the hands of even a heathen Greek, to be compared for wickedness with the pre-natal murders of the present day, daily in occurrence, fashionable even, and be-praised by professing Christians, repeated over and over again by the same married woman and mother? You will exclaim with horror that it is not! And yet, in a very large proportion of instances, this shocking and atrocious act is advised and abetted, if not compelled, by the husband — by us men. Who enjoys asking now, "Is it I?"

For the woman, enfeebled perhaps by too excessive child-bearing, for which her husband is generally wholly responsible, for few of our wives do not become, sooner or later, virtually apathetic; for the woman, timid, easily alarmed, prone to mental depression or other disturbance, and dreading the yet safe and preferable labor that awaits her, and withal under that strange and mastering thralldom of fashion, there is a certain measure of excuse. For her husband, none.

This is a matter concerning which the public mind is now undergoing a radical change. Slow to set in motion, but every day gaining more rapidly in force, the world's revival proceeds. In "Why Not?" or "Why should women not commit this crime?" I have sounded almost a trumpet to awake the dead. Would, indeed, that it might arouse a better life in every man who reads these words: "Of the mother, by consent or by her own hand, imbrued with her infant's blood; of the more guilty father, who counsels or allows the crime; of the wretches who, by their wholesale murders, far out-Herod Burke and Hare; of the public sentiment which pal-

liates, pardons, and would even praise this, so common, violation of all law, human and divine, of all instinct, all reason, all pity, all mercy, all love, we leave those to speak who can." \*

What, then, I repeat, do husbands usually claim? The right to their wives' persons, to use or abuse at their pleasure; the right to their wives' happiness, and to endanger or destroy it, as they may choose; the right to their wives' lives and those of their offspring, and to destroy these also, the latter directly, the former thus indirectly, and at times also, by their physical violence or their persistent though petty cruelties, very directly too.

Formerly men had control, exclusive and entire, of any possessions their wives might bring them. Now, and with us at least, the law has very materially curtailed the husband's power in this respect, save it be granted him by the wife's consent. Will the time come, think ye, when husbands can no longer, as they now frequently

\* Prize Essay of the American Medical Association, p. 79.

do, commit the crime of rape upon their unwilling wives, and persuade them or compel them to allow a still more dreadful violence to be wreaked upon the children nestling within them — children fully alive from the very moment of conception, that have already been fully detached from all organic connection with their parent, and only re-attached to her for the purposes of nutriment and growth, and to destroy whom “is a crime of the same nature, both against our Maker and society, as to destroy an infant, a child, or a man” ? \*

I cannot be too emphatic upon these points. It is of no use to say that I am straining them to conclusions that are forced and unwarranted. That these are in accordance with fact must be allowed by every medical man at all familiar with the practice of his profession, and indeed by every layman who will for a moment think of the matter. It is one of the simplest common sense, as well as in unison with the teachings of the purest science, and its results are already show-

\* Percival. Medical Ethics, p. 79.

ing themselves in the ill health of our women and in the gradual dying out of our native population. Just as some of the means for preventing pregnancy are evincing themselves to the practised eye in the dyspepsias, the unsteady step, gray hairs, and premature decrepitude of many of our men.

In pointing out the physical diseases resulting to woman from intentional abortion, I instanced insanity, of which at that time several cases, thus occasioned, had come under my observation. To this, as to some other of my views concerning the causation of insanity in women, many psychologists have been inclined to take exception. One of the most influential asylum superintendents in the country (I refer to Dr. John P. Gray, of the New York State Asylum at Utica), has lately given most emphatic approval of my views. In his Report for the present year, just published, Dr. Gray devotes several pages to this special question, taking occasion to speak very kindly of "Why Not?" and using the following impressive language: "All

must admit the corrupting tendency of vice in any of its shades, and especially when in intent or fact it seeks to thwart, by actual violence, the beneficent laws of our being, and turn the purposes of God, in ordering the ' holy estate of matrimony,' into the basest species of prostitution. The existence of this horrid, unnatural, secret crime, carried out, often, by the mutual consent and connivance of husbands and wives, is not new. Its terrible prevalence has steadily increased. I have for many years received and treated patients whose insanity was directly traceable to this crime, through its moral and physical effects." And again: "I need not here discuss at length the disorders consequent on this crime, in any and all of its shades, but I deem it no less than my duty to declare, as already stated, that it is, directly and indirectly, one of the causes of insanity." \* This being the case, well might I preface one of my earlier works by the follow-

\* Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Managers of the New York State Lunatic Asylum, pp. 33 to 37. Legislative Document. Albany, 1867.

ing quotation from Granville's Treatise on Sudden Death : " Let the legislator and moralist look to it, for as sure as there is in any nation a hidden tampering with infant life, whether frequent or occasional, systematic or accidental, so sure will the chastisement of the Almighty fall on such a nation." \*

I pass now to discuss these rights of the husband still further, and to see whether they are unaccompanied, or not, by obligations which should control them.

\* Criminal Abortion in America. Philadelphia, 1860. Title-page.



**V. ARE THESE RIGHTS ABSOLUTE, OR RECIPROCAL, WITH DUTIES?**

In the first place, let us see under what circumstances the rights I have now described were assumed, and whether it was by the power of the strong over the weak, or from a belief that woman was in reality inferior to man, as well as physically not as fully developed, or whether it was from a belief that such assumption was intended by the Creator, and inculcated both by natural and revealed religion, and in the latter instance by both the old and the newer Scripture.

Probably all these arguments have weighed, but stronger than these even has been possession, that nine points of the law. Custom, handed down from father to son, from time immemorial, has sanctioned what so often results in tyranny. Appeals are made to Genesis, to the Proverbs, and to the Acts of the Apostles, and it is asserted that the inferiority of woman is thus proved to a demonstration, just as the Bible has been made to evidence the divinity of the institution of slavery, and to disprove — for some still assert

this — the truths of geology, astronomy, and all other natural science. If no man should put asunder those whom God has joined, we must confess, in all conjugal matters at least, their full equality; and in relinquishing the title of lord and master, we must also waive the point of unreasoning and blind obedience, and so shall we gain the more complete obedience where such is really to be desired.

It is very probable — for such are the teachings of the most philosophical anatomists of our time — that, so far as the mere structure of her body is concerned, woman has not attained so advanced a stage of development as man. It is even alleged, by thoughtful embryologists, that every man during the earliest period of his existence was once a woman; that is to say, that in the fœtal condition his was at one time identical with the female type, and that this was subsequently outgrown. There is no doubt that many facts support this opinion, as the persistence, for instance, in every man, of a minute and undeveloped womb,\* useless, save as furnishing one of

\* Simpson. *Obstetric Works*, vol. ii. p. 294.

those homologies so abounding in the plan of creation. Suppose, however, that we grant all this, and that in purely intellectual matters woman varies normally from man, as she does in physical strength; we must yet allow that in moral vigor, in religious aspiration, and faith, and in all purely emotional attributes, she far excels him. It is not from accident that the chaste and good of all ages have selected the female rather than the male as their ideal of angels and saints in heaven; but it is in tacit yet universal recognition of her superiority in certain matters over us. We men are of the earth, earthy, but they the gift of God; and such, in the tradition, did Adam see in the beautiful mother of mankind. Well for us all that she gave to him of the tree of knowledge, else, if that tradition be true, we ourselves had never been.

It is in accordance with those differences in feeling, dependent upon differences of conformation, growing with their growth and increasing with the years, and not in consequence of custom alone, that, just as obtains with the lower mammals, the advances towards the union of the sexes

are made almost entirely by the man. He is impelled by that strong and almost irresistible instinct by which the future peopling of the earth is determined, while in the woman it is, to a great extent, the subsequently awakened emotion of maternal love, which, far stronger in her than that for simple congress, leads her in very truth to lay down her life for her children; for this in every household, where husband and wife live in accordance with the laws of their being, is the practical result. The mother may live to a good old age, but still the best energies of her life are expended on her offspring, in rearing and caring for them till able to shift for themselves; and in this lies, or should lie, her highest happiness.

I shall be told that many marriages are unfruitful. Granted. That many must necessarily be such. Also granted, but with a limitation. Every man of the present day knows that, of these unfruitful marriages, by far the majority are such from intention. We seldom now see families of any size; and yet women conceive as easily and men are as potent as in the olden

time. Every physician who has considered the subject will aver that my statement is true, and will acknowledge, moreover, that of the unfruitful marriages where children are yet desired, the barrenness of the woman is often owing to a brace of causes that are frequently easily removed by treatment; in the one instance there being some form of organic displacement or physical obstruction on the wife's part, in the other temporary or persistent impotence on that of the husband, generally owing to previous careless or unphysiological ways of life. It is folly to think, as so many do, that early years of intentional childlessness can be atoned for by subsequent years of intentional plenty. Those who begin by thwarting the laws of nature very constantly find that in later life, when mere sensations pall, and physical weariness supplants the freshness and ardor of youth, these laws, disobeyed, will in turn disappoint them. This subject is of such importance, and is so little understood, that I must here quote again from one of my own previous writings upon the subject; indeed so few physicians have dared to write or

apparently to think of these matters, that there are hardly others to whom I can refer..

In a paper read before the Massachusetts Medical Society in May of last year, and published in one of the New York professional periodicals,\* I have laid down the following series of propositions, which are startling, but undoubtedly true.

“ 1. That while, owing to the advance of our knowledge in the treatment of childbed, more children are born living than formerly, and more mothers saved, and owing to our wiser treatment of the diseases of children, and their exposure to better sanitary conditions, a much larger percentage of them reach maturity, yet among the better class of inhabitants fewer infants are born ; that is to say, that the average number of births to each Protestant family is less than it was half a century ago.

“ 2. That of the pregnancies in reality occurring in this class, fewer reach completion.

“ 3. That of the instances of conjugal intercourse taking place, fewer result in impregnation.

\* New York Medical Journal, Sept., 1866, p. 423.

“4. That of these incomplected pregnancies and apparent instances of sterility, a large proportion are intentional.

“5. That such wilful interference with the laws of nature is productive, as might have been expected, of a vast amount of disease—disease whose causation has been unexplained, and whose character is made evident alike by the confessions of the patient, and by the results of a more natural course of life.

“6. That intentional abortions are a greater tax upon a woman's health; and more surely followed by uterine disease than pregnancies completed, and this even though the patient may seem to rally from them with impunity—the result showing itself, if not immediately, then after a lapse of years, or at the turn of life.

“7. That the systematic prevention of pregnancy, by whatever means, is also followed by prejudicial effects, affecting the nervous and the uterine systems, not unfrequently producing sterility from an organic cause, and laying the foundation of serious or incurable disease.

“8. That when such prevention is occasioned

by incompleted intercourse, by whatever means effected, the effect is equally bad for the husband's health as for that of the wife—there resulting dyspepsia, functional or organic nervous disease, and at times impotence, temporary or persistent.”

It will be seen by the above, not merely that in many instances of unfruitful marriage the barrenness is intentional, but that thus to trifle with the full gratification of our natural instincts whenever the rein is given to them, is fraught with the most detrimental consequences to both parties concerned,—to us men, as well as to our associates,—and this in either event: for if we permit or counsel them to destroy their unborn offspring, their health is very likely to be thereby undermined, and our conjugal intercourse with them very materially interfered with, or permanently ended; and if, on the other hand, we allow ourselves to use them merely as mistresses we not only are liable to seriously injure their health, but are almost sure to ruin our own. So that in both instances we are the losers.

It will thus be seen that certain of the conjugal



rights that are assumed by men, are, whether absolute or not, of a very questionable character; harmful to our moral natures, destructive to our physical constitutions, and much more wisely honored in the breach than in the observance.

How is it with others? Some may allege that while they would neither approve the wilful interference with or prevention of impregnation, no harm can surely attach to very frequent indulgence in what they call living a perfectly natural life, that is to say, giving themselves up, fully and constantly, to unbridled sexual license.

To this I reply that some men are brutes. Even among husbands, pledged truly to love and cherish those who generally give far more real affection than they receive, there exist the veriest satyrs, eroto-maniacs, madmen. Knowing that they are endangering their wife's life, that they are causing her health seriously to suffer, or to be ruined, they still persist in their demands for what at the best is but a momentary gratification, and when begrudged, becomes the most selfish and the basest of all pleasures; and this they do in the face of remonstrance, entreaties, tears.

Many a married man has, as I have said, virtually committed a rape upon his wife: though the crime may be unrecognized as such by the law, it is none the less this in fact, the element of consent having been wholly wanting.

There are others of our number, who, kind at heart and not so selfish, equally err through ignorance of the real nature of the case, or from inconsiderateness. It is only of late that even physicians are awakening to the importance of the manifold special diseases of women, and to the very existence of many of them. It is often asked if these diseases are not a new thing, if they have not indeed wholly sprung up during the present century. This may be true to a certain extent, in consequence of certain variations from the normal standard of living; but there is no doubt, on the other hand, that hosts of women used to die of disease, then undetected or wholly misunderstood, that is now readily cured. Among these diseases, all of which are enshrouded by the veil of a woman's natural delicacy, but which, involving as they do the very existence of social life, come directly within the physician's

province, and that also of simple common sense, — among them there is a very large class, closely related to the subject of our present inquiry, those occasioned or aggravated by excessive sexual indulgence. I shall, of course, refrain from speaking more explicitly than I have now done, but will merely say that we may all of us be thankful that our development was carried to the positive extreme, and that we are not women. They are subject to an immense variety of disease, of which, from personal experience, we know nothing, and it is often attended by the most exquisite suffering. This they are prone to conceal; far from generally exaggerating it, they endeavor to undervalue it, and suffer, with a fortitude that we could but feebly emulate, in silence. There are exceptions to this statement, it is true, but they are still but exceptions, and so prove the rule. Even where such do exist, there is usually present great nervous excitement or exaltation, which is often much more difficult to endure than direct physical pain. Far from ridiculing or chiding these sufferers, they deserve and should receive our hearty sympathy, which

is by no means sure, as it is so commonly supposed to do, of evoking a fresh accession of the malady. Many a heart is broken by the sneer of disbelief at the gentle complaint of bodily anguish; many a divorce takes its origin in the charge of lost affection, because a wife refuses to be accessory to her own slow destruction; in many cases she prefers to this disgrace, and resorts to, suicide. These are facts, instances of all of which have been known to me. There are men, and very many women, who will thank me for so plainly stating them. Men do I say? They are facts that should be made known to every man, that, so warned, he may live a truly manly, generous, and dutiful life.

For these rights, of which I have been speaking, are, in reality, not absolute, but reciprocal with duties. How can we ourselves expect enjoyment, if perchance we are inflicting terrible suffering? How can we look for constant and untiring affection, if, inconsiderate or brutal, we compel what would be withheld perhaps, however reluctantly, by ill health? Is it thus we would cherish? As we sow, even so must we

resp. No true conjugal enjoyment can exist, unless it is mutual. We cannot be loved, unless we are respected. We cannot be respected, even by our wives, unless we respect them. The true rule should be to take only what is freely given; were this the case, far more freely would gifts be offered.

#### VI. SHOULD MERE INSTINCT, OR REASON, BE THE RULE?

I have said that while some men are brutal in their conjugal relations, others are simply inconsiderate; and I have referred somewhat plainly to very important matters that "prurient prudes" would keep concealed. I have expressed my condemnation of the vile practices by which the size of families is kept in these latter days at the minimum. In ancient commonwealths, the most fruitful mother was considered to have deserved well of her nation, and a statue was erected in her honor. Now, on the contrary, such a wife is considered as almost the greatest misfortune that can occur to a man, and

women have learned to consider the carrying into effect the noblest purposes of their being as alike a disaster and a disgrace.

There are some husbands who, while shocked at the idea of interfering in any way with the natural course of events, should such be really established, yet consider excessive carnal indulgence necessary for the preservation of their own physical vigor—a most mistaken opinion. There are others who could not be persuaded to resort to direct measures of a preventive character, and yet indulge in excessive sexual intercourse for this very end, on the ground, say they, that prostitutes, in proportion as they are constant in their attention to their vile trade, are usually childless; and this opinion, true to a certain extent, is yet in its effects as prejudicial as the other. The sterility of prostitutes is in great measure owing to disease that has been occasioned by the constant local excitement to which they are exposed; I am not now speaking of lesions of a specific or infectious character, but merely of those diseases which may be occasioned in any wife when treated by

her husband as a prostitute. It is well known also that the common woman usually soon breaks down in health, and dies early, not so much from the other forms of debauchery to which she is exposed, as for the reason to which I have now referred. Woe therefore to the man who would thus cause within his own house disease and death.

As to the former of the excuses given: we are all of us prone in early life to excess, and especially so during the first years following marriage. As we grow older, we are compelled to live more moderately, and it becomes very necessary for us to apply the brakes when beginning to descend the down grade of life. Often, after a period of abstinence or semi-abstinence, anything like the license of earlier life becomes dangerous, or even fatal; and this it is that explains the rapid decadence so often observed in men who have married late in life, or in widowers, who, after a long period of rest, have taken to themselves a youthful spouse.

In advising, as I am compelled to do, moderation, that golden mean, wherein lie the highest

duty and the truest happiness, it is necessary that I refer to a still additional class of husbands — those who, endeavoring to be reasonable in their demands, yet manage, for one reason or another, to keep their wives in the state of gestation the greater part of the time. From such, physicians often hear complaints; but not so often as from their consorts. Extremes, it is true, are dangerous: it is almost sure to be detrimental to a woman living in wedlock to intentionally continue sterile: it is frequently depressing to a woman's health to be allowed no interval of rest between her pregnancies. This fact, however, affords no excuse, as it is constantly constrained to do, for preventing impregnation or inducing a miscarriage. The remedy lies often in the strictest continence, and in continence alone; for whatever care be used as to the observance of certain times and seasons, — and such is now the popular knowledge of physiology, that even little boys and girls know at what times conception is, and at what times it is not, probable, — accidents will sometimes occur. Ova, it is true, are probably only disengaged from the ovary at



the menstrual period; but these in exceptional cases may be, and undoubtedly often are, retained for a longer time than usual in a place and condition favorable to impregnation. Moreover, while nursing women, as is generally supposed, do not often conceive until after the re-establishment of the catamenia, still they sometimes seem to do so; the error probably being one of observation, and either from a colorless leucorrhœa having taken the place of the usual sanguineous discharge, or from the latter having been just about to show itself, and having been suppressed, as an effect, by impregnation.

However this may be, it is clearly the husband's duty to care for his wife rather than for himself. Every married woman, save in very exceptional cases, which should only be allowed to be such by the decision of a competent physician, every married woman, until near the so-called turn of life, should occasionally bear a child; not as a duty to the community merely, nor a compliment to her husband, nor even an additional bond of union between him and herself, but as the best means of insuring her own per-

manent good health. How frequently should this be? Usually the interval should be from two to two and a half or three years, so as to allow a sufficient time for nursing, so important both for the welfare of the child and its mother, and an interval of subsequent rest. Did women half appreciate the importance of lactation as a means, by establishing for a sufficiently long period a tendency of the circulation towards the breasts and away from the womb, of averting many of the common varieties of uterine disease, fashion in this matter would have fewer votaries.

Is it asked, whether by my above remarks I intend to imply that the conjugal approach should never be indulged in, save for the sole purpose of begetting children? I hold no such opinion. The case is a very parallel one to that concerning diet. Had it been intended that we should confine ourselves, in amount and character of food, to only so much as would barely support life, and this of the simplest character, we should hardly have been supplied with such exquisitely sensitive gustatory nerves. It cannot be said that this was necessary to insure a proper consumption

of food, for the languor and craving induced by fasting would have been sufficient for this. The pleasures of the table, restrained within due bounds, serve not only to enhance the comfort of the individual, but they form that centre of social attraction which serves to cement friendships, and to increase as well as to render permanent the sweet communion of each regularly assembling family circle. And so with the pleasures of venery. Restrained within due bounds as to frequency, they serve to add a charm to life, and to give fresh courage for enduring all its vicissitudes. But to gain these, one single rule must be observed: it is this — that the husband compel his wife to nothing that she herself does not freely assent to. A forced union is even worse than the solitary vice, whose baneful character was alluded to in an earlier portion of this essay. It is even worse, for it is compelling an unwilling and often a chaste-minded person to pander to the basest of lusts. When such habits exist, we are not wholly to blame the woman if she seek to avert her impending maternity, even though at the risk of her life; forced upon her, it is repulsive,

and her whole nature rebels, even her most natural of instincts. It is rather the husband who is to be condemned; his selfish hardness of heart, his brutality, are the cause of her crime.

#### VII. ARGUMENTS AND COUNTER ARGUMENTS AS TO DIVORCE.

The ease with which marriages are consummated in this country, and their bonds loosed again, are among the features of our social system that are most wonderful to foreigners.\* Some of our States have acquired an unenviable reputation as places of unshacklement for those who tire of their self-imposed burdens, and journeys have repeatedly been made, of hundreds of miles, that, by a short sojourn at this distance from home, the lenient legal requisitions might be complied with, and the knot unloosed that in old time only death could sever.

\* The reader will find this subject fully discussed in a late publication upon Marriage in the United States by Mons. A. Carlier, of Paris, and Dr. B. J. Jeffries, of Boston.

Of the thousand reasons alleged for divorce, most of them depend upon the simple cause for unhappiness I have already indicated. The parties tire of each other, the wife wearied by her husband's unreasonableness, and the husband, still more unreasonable, complaining of the very weariness he has himself occasioned. Cases undoubtedly occur where disability for marriage originally existed, there being some physical impediment or some disabling disease of body or mind, such as is adjudged by courts to be a sufficient bar. As to these, however, the progress of medical and surgical science has rendered it now possible, in many instances, to effect a cure, and to change the husband's or wife's disappointment into joy. In many of the instances referred to, the parties live unhappily on, dreading the scandal of a public application for divorce or trial in court, and ignorant that relief is ever otherwise possible. The extent at times of their unhappiness may be judged, when it is stated that, in cases of deformity, men have repeatedly, through mistake, been married as women, and women as men. For every instance

of the kind that has been publicly reported, it is probable that a hundred have occurred.

Other cases undoubtedly exist, where, for proved and patent unfaithfulness upon the part of one of the parties, it is rendered impossible for the other to remain conjoined in wedlock. I would not palliate such wickedness as adultery, but would merely state, from studying such cases, — for they fall within the scope of my observation both as a teacher and an expert, — that at times the offender has been actuated by motives of jealousy or of revenge: fancying himself or herself sinned against in this same identical manner, the false step has been taken as an offset, just as in many instances the husband has gone from home and astray, because he honestly thought that his wife had deliberately ceased to love him, while she, poor creature, pining for him at heart, was yet compelled to deny him her favors, on account of bodily suffering that perhaps he himself had occasioned.

There are still other causes of divorce. Their importance is so great, and the subject so closely concerns every citizen, that I have no hesitation

in being even more explicit. In many cases the charge of infidelity is rested upon the communication, or supposed communication of infectious disease from one of the parties to the other. Often the charge is true, often it is false, at least so far as the imputation of sinful conduct is concerned. I disbelieve the statement so often made, that either one or the other of the two forms of specific disease has been occasioned, in the adult, by other than by sexual contact. The allegations as to water closets, soiled linen, &c., it has irreverently been remarked, should be allowed weight only in the cases of clergymen, or others supposed by their position to be above the scandalous practices of the every day world. There is no doubt that to children such disease has been communicated by suckling an unclean wet nurse, or by her using to bathe it the foul rags with which she had cleansed her own sores. In the case of adults, however, there are certain mistakes that can be made, that indeed have been made, and have plunged families into the deepest distress, the suspected party being wholly innocent. One of these errors depends upon the

fact that the primary lesion of the most dreadful disease of unchastity may escape even the most careful scrutiny, or from its insignificant appearance may be considered of trifling importance. The disease being inheritable, may yet not be evinced in husband or wife save as tainting their children, the unmistakable signs of such taint being familiar to every physician, and upon this discovery of infidelity, it may be attributed to the wrong party. Another source of error is, that the other result of unfaithfulness may be simulated by the effects of peculiar irritations, or of the chastest congress under certain circumstances. Of this fact there is not the slightest doubt.

Where none of these causes exist, the fire that consumes the bonds of marriage as tow, is kindled from a spark, the veriest trifle in itself, some unkind or careless word or look, perhaps unnoticed even by the offender. This spark, through our own innate perversity, for I contend that here as elsewhere, in sexual relations, the fault lies generally with the man, or through the malicious or ill-judged meddling of third parties, is fanned into flame, and then the work is done;



a separation, with or without the formality of a legal divorce, becomes but too often inevitable, or if not carrying matters to this extent, perhaps for the sake of the children, the parties still live together, united in semblance, but in reality living the most dreary of prison lives, each virtually changed to a foe.

For these sad experiences is there no remedy? Some would find it in legislation, and would so extend the legal grounds for divorce that it might become a relief or a luxury within the reach of every one. To this, however, there are many grave objections of such importance that they must everywhere be acknowledged; enumerating some of them, I shall not attempt to present them all, for my remarks upon this subject are not intended to be exhaustive, but are only collateral to the general inquiry we have been pursuing.

First. Were divorces made more common, there would be far more children and invalid women thrown upon other persons than their legitimate owners for support, that is to say, upon the community. The long and bitter trials

that take place between parents for the custody of their children, do not always rest upon parental affection; they are sometimes based upon spite or revenge.

· Secondly. The weaknesses and evil passions of mankind are only controlled, to a great degree, by the existence of law, to thwart which is attended by personal detriment. Remove or relax the statutes, and an inducement, as it were, is held out to baseness and to crime. "The saints," said the wise observer I have already quoted, "are all in heaven." We are all of us mortal, and prone to selfishness, to retort when irritated, to fly into passion when retorted to. There is too much reason to believe that were divorces possible wherever, at one time or another, they have been longed for, scarce a house on earth would stand. The test would be too much for poor human nature. If he would challenge this assertion, let every man first ask himself "Is it I?", and then he may look into the mysteries of the circle of neighbors surrounding him.

It has very truly been said that every person in this world bears his cross, and that in every

house there is a skeleton. The closet may be adroitly concealed, and its door may be kept closed, but though the dry bones never rattle, though indeed they drop into dust, yet the knowledge that they are surely there, robs home life to many of half or of all its charm. In the little chafes and ills, the disappointments and sorrows of married life, the rule of safety is to bear and forbear, recollecting that every really chivalrous or whole-hearted man should seek, as the stronger, to bear more than an even half of the natural burden.

Thirdly. Were divorces more common, or more readily obtained, the very foundation of all society and civil government would be uprooted. The stability of the state rests upon that of the elements of which it is composed. When these return to chaos, or dissolve themselves into the thinnest air, the commonwealth itself must prove a bubble, collapsing as soon as pricked by circumstance.

And, fourthly To seek peace and mental quiet through a divorce is, as a general thing, but cowardice. To encourage them is, therefore, to

offer a premium for pusillanimity. Were marriages, or rather engagements, contracted less hastily, and never, as is sometimes confessed, from curiosity, coquetry, or for fun, much, very much evil and suffering would be prevented. Men and women are often but the silliest of children, playing with each other's hearts as though they were toys, and sowing for themselves and for each other a harvest of life-long misery. I am writing no homily. I am stating what every man who reads this knows to be the fact, and there is not a single one of us, however happy his present relation, who has not some careless, or rude, or positively unkind word or act to regret, possibly to bitterly repent himself of. We may well excuse women for the witching, though sometimes galling, arts they practise on us, for it is but a part of their charm. Let us, however, never excuse ourselves for inflicting hurt upon them, or disaster. If carelessly done, it should be sincerely regretted. No gentleman could commit such an act with malice aforethought.

Were these the rules of life generally followed,

and were they all embodied in the single line, "To err is human, to forgive divine," divorces would no more be thought of, and we should taste even in this world that best of refreshments, the sweet sleep of the just.

#### VIII.—A PLEA FOR WOMAN.

In bringing this essay, which I hope has not wholly been a tedious one to my readers, to a close, I cannot do better than recapitulate my reasons for writing it, the main argument that I have advanced, and the end or effect I have labored to accomplish, the latter being to cure, as a physician, the great and festering sore on our body politic, corrupting its life-blood and threatening its very existence.

I have endeavored to discuss the relations of the sexes to each other in their social bearings and from a professional standpoint, and have been moved so to do from a belief, resting upon my own careful investigations into the subject as a medical man, and upon the confessions of many men and the allegations of many women,

that these relations are very frequently unlike what they should be in the better, the more respectable walks of life. Lest I be said to judge of others by myself, I will frankly state that I make no pretence to be, naturally, more effeminate or more apathetic than the average of men, and I hold that to most of us refinement, purification, godliness, come less by grace than by fire. Assailed by temptations from without and within, all of which are so freely acknowledged by Dr. Ware, and other candid writers upon the subject, the boy runs a gantlet which is not ended with manhood. We dig pitfalls for women; they, deceived, if surviving their disappointment, in turn lay snares for us. Happy those of either sex who have never suffered themselves, nor caused others to suffer!

Starting with the premises that for much the greater part of the domestic woes in this world our own sex is to blame, and for much of the wrong and wickedness committed by women we ourselves are accountable, I proceeded to show that by natural instinct, divinely implanted for the furtherance of the Infinite Plan, we are

**forced from our earliest childhood to perceive that it is not good to be alone, and that both sexes are impelled, the male by far the more strongly, towards bodily union.**

**Conscious or unconscious of the desires awakened within him, the man instinctively seeks their gratification. Sometimes, and very often it is, in the middle aged as in the young, he endeavors to find pleasure or relief in an unnatural and wholly selfish abasement of himself; sometimes, and very often this is also, he consorts with abandoned women, and thus degrades himself to their level; sometimes, though this is comparatively seldom, until by impure thought or improper deed he has bestained himself (for if a man lusteth after a woman hath he not already committed adultery?) he seeks legitimate happiness in honorable marriage, blending the physical with the spiritual union, the earthly with that which we hope may survive all time.**

**By remarks such as these, it will be probably said by those whose professions have been of a higher character than their lives, I but lower the standard, and nature, and objects of marriage. I**

would not intentionally or willingly do so. But that it may be seen that I have reasoned only in accordance with the fact, I shall draw once more from that unchallenged authority, who was to myself, while a student, the same teacher I would fain make him to be for my fellow-men. His voice now comes to us from the grave; it is none the less earnest or impressive for this. "It is easier," says Dr. Ware, "to show that a remedy is needed than to discover and apply it. In this case, indeed, we encounter the most difficult question presented to us in the moral education of our race. At the early age at which the evil begins to exist, when it is gradually creeping into the thoughts and habits of the child, how are we to detect and counteract it? In the present state of the relations between the old and the young, between parents and children, this is a task of extreme delicacy. It can only be done by the judicious observation and management of the associations, the conversation, the intercourse, the amusements, and the habits of children from their earliest days, both in families and in schools. But alas! how few parents, how few instructors, have the knowledge, the



discretion, the tact, the judgment, to qualify them for such an office! How often must those who are fully aware of their duty shrink from its performance, from the apprehension that they may suggest, instead of preventing, the evil they fear!

“At a later period of life, the attempt to counteract the tendency to sensual indulgence is also encompassed with great difficulties, though there is less embarrassment as to the exact means which are to be put in force to accomplish the object. At this age, we are to depend not so much upon the watchful care of others as upon the establishment in the mind of the young man himself of a principle of resistance founded upon reason and conscience. We can often succeed in doing this, and although, where the mind and body have both been debauched by early training, the mind filled with impure images, and the body stimulated by unnatural gratification, the struggle is painful and often protracted, yet it is frequently effectual.

“The young man who becomes sensible of the dangers to which he is exposed, should fortify himself by every motive that can aid him in his

endeavor to escape them. A regard to reputation, the fear of disease, may do much to restrain, and these are considerations not unworthy of regard; but the surest safeguard is to be found in the cultivation of an internal principle of resistance to evil because it is evil. Much may be done by those who sincerely aim to save themselves from these early temptations by a sedulous discipline of the thoughts, and a corresponding carefulness of words. Thoughts lead to words, and words lead to thoughts; both are liable to be consummated in actions. Purity of language in the intercourse of society should be regarded as an essential quality of the gentleman, and the want of it exclude him from good company as much as any other vulgar habit.

“Another safeguard is to be found in the cultivation of a just perception of the true relation of the sexes. Let the young man cherish a high estimate of, and a reverence for, the character of the true and pure woman, and a corresponding detestation and horror of her who abuses and prostitutes the privileges of her sex. Such a view of this relation as has been inculcated, if it be fully

appreciated and heartily received, will lead him to regard a legitimate and permanent union with one of the other sex as the most desirable object in life, and will fill him with a loathing for any other than such a union. The young man who looks forward with honorable feelings to such a connection with a congenial and virtuous woman, will find in the hopes and prospects which it opens to him in life the surest defence against the temptations which continually assail him." \*

Reasoning from the above, I endeavored to show that while very early marriages were probably contracted at the expense of the vigor of their offspring, it was yet well to begin to found one's home while young, and pointed out that a house was never a home till it contained one's children. The rights of the husband, alleged and actual, were then discussed; and it was proved to a demonstration that so far from being absolute, these rights are all of them reciprocal with duties, and that in their assertion and realization reason rather than mere instinct must

\* Ware. Loc. cit., p. 60.

govern us. From this point, glancing at its relations to divorce, as affording arguments and counter arguments, I have come to the recapitulation, which, rightly weighed, of itself affords one of the strongest of pleas for woman.

She pleads for what? For undue power in public life, for undue control in domestic affairs, for privileges not justly her own? The true wife desires none of these. Suffering through the centuries, and the varying phases of social civilization, she has been consecutively man's slave, his idol for the moment, his toy. If recognized at all as in equality of rights, it has been in the right to suffer, and lest by nature she should not possess enough of this, woes unnecessary, unmentionable, innumerable, have been heaped upon her. Every one knows this, whether man or woman, and if woman's voice has till now been nearly silent, she will none the less value these words of grateful appreciation, of sympathy, and of appeal to my fellows. We owe kindness to her for her kindness to us; we owe it, that we may still possess her to comfort and to cheer us; we owe it, for the sake of our children, that they

may be healthy and well cared for, that indeed they may be born. The terrible fashion now so prevalent, of slaughtering the innocents while still in nature's lap, is, in great measure, attributable to our own apathy, our own neglect, our own teachings, our own cruelty, and it behooves every one of us to make such amends as he best can. By his own life and his own example every man can show his detestation of that depravity of spirit which would turn a woman's purity into an offence, and would nail to the block of sensuality and licentiousness the wings of angels, — so much chaster are women than ourselves. Woe unto those of us by whom such offences come.

As very pertinent to this especial point, I shall here present portions of a private letter, written to me by a lady of great intellectual and moral worth, well known indeed throughout the country.\* Her remarks are of a kind to rivet attention, plain spoken and yet delicate as they are. "I have just laid down," she says, "your 'Book for Every Woman,' and I want to thank you

\* Mrs. Caroline H. Dall, of Boston.

with all my heart for having written it. I was very slow to be convinced that any woman of decent character would consciously perpetrate an abortion; still slower to see how any woman calling herself pure minded could so degrade the sanctities of marriage as to make steady and persistent attempts to prevent impregnation, — and yet I had for many years felt sure that a great many so-called ‘female diseases’ were incited and developed by the luxurious and indolent habits of our women, which permit them, when neither cultivated nor philanthropic, to become conscious of every phase of gestative action or sexual excitement. To live straight on is the only wholesome way to live, and I could see that women were not doing this, but watching themselves in a morbid fashion sure to make mischief.

“When my friend, Dr. E. H. C., had opened my eyes to the actual fact, I felt so disgusted that I could have prayed to die. Since I could not do that, I did not hesitate to speak with unction to the large class of women who privately appealed to me, and to whose plain language I had not before known how to return any adequate answer.

“Will you believe me, when I say that I usually find it easier to induce the victim of seduction to take the consequences of her weakness than to persuade the fashionable woman to refrain from crime? The nether millstone is not so hard as the heart of a worldly woman. You will hardly concede to me the right to speak to you upon the matter in a physiological way, but will you overlook the seeming want of modesty which permits me to say that there is one argument which has weight with this class of women that has not been appealed to? From the moment that I understood the frequency of the attempts made to prevent impregnation and induce abortion, I felt that I had a key to the loss of beauty, of expression, and the sweet maternal charm, which every one who thinks must miss in this generation of women.

“You speak feelingly of the large families which used to make the homestead charming and attractive, but you say nothing of that element of motherliness, which I have missed for years, and especially of that genial, loving, thoughtful grandmother who used to be the beneficent fairy of childhood.

“I despised myself for it, but I did look in women’s faces to see what marks their lives had left, and I tell you that it is a simple fact, that women who habitually prevent impregnation grow cold, debased, unlovely in their expression, and that those who resort to abortion become sharp, irritable, and ungenial, everything, in short, that we mean by unmotherly.

“Now we may predict disease and death to these fashionable women forever in vain. They will not believe; they are sure they shall escape whoever else is lost; but if you tell them that they are destroying all sweetness, grace, and charm, and that this innermost secret of their lives is written plain on lip and brow for him who runs to read, the mirror itself will bear witness to them. And if to their startled consciousness you go on to urge the loveliness which wraps that woman round who gives herself gracefully to this, the highest function of her life, not merely loving him who gives her children to her, but loving them so much that she would rather live on the simplest food, and wear the plainest dress, draped and crowned with this maternal honor,



than have all luxury and all power, about an unlovely and lonely way, — I think one often may, through woman's very weakness, appeal to and touch the most sacred impulses of her nature.

“But the book needs a counterpart addressed to *men*. Till *they* are willing to spend as freely for wife and children as for the mistress, hidden but a few doors off, women will hardly be free agents in this matter. No woman dreads her travail, as she dreads the loss of what she calls, in her unhappy ignorance and blindness, her husband's love. O, that we could restore the happy simplicity of thirty years ago, when there were homes where we now have houses, mothers and housekeepers in the place of lady patronesses, fathers and husbands instead of loungers at the club! But the world moves onward, never backward, and you must ring the bugle call again and again, till it brings conscience and harmony into the irregular and ‘purposeless march.’”

Before this, however, can be done, men must have a higher respect for women. They must be taught that in childhood the female mind is

far oftener stainless than that of the male, and that, saving only those exceptional cases where unchastity, like other family diseases, seems to descend from parent to child, the vice, really such, has been engendered, fostered, developed in woman by man. So truly is this the case, that I have never hesitated to consider the victims of seduction as generally sinned against rather than sinning, and to teach that even in the mire may be found many pearls of great price well worth the saving.

It is not generally known, though most men have had individual experience of the fact, that a large majority of married women, whatever their natural temperament, become considerably or entirely apathetic after a few years of conjugal life; that many married women never become sexually awakened at all, so far as sensations of pleasure or physical yearning are concerned, and that, despite all the evil in the world, and all the spread of knowledge, advisable and unadvisable, there still exist many unmarried women, not only entirely innocent of improper act or thought, but foolishly, inexcusably ignorant concerning mat-

ters which every mother who would save her daughters from the chance of great risk, and possibly still greater mental and bodily suffering, should teach them beforehand, as is done to so much greater extent in England than in this country.

These are the facts, and it is an insult to the sex when men treat women, whether single or even their own wives, as though they were as sensually minded as themselves. Says Acton, "We offer, I think, no apology for light conduct when we admit that there are some few women, who, like men, in consequence of hereditary predisposition or ill-directed moral education, find it difficult to restrain their passions, while their more fortunate sisters have never been tempted, and have, therefore, never fallen. This, however, does not alter the fact which I would venture again to impress on the reader, that in general women do not feel any great sexual tendencies. The unfortunately large numbers whose lives would seem to prove the contrary, are to be accounted for on much more mercenary motives — vanity, giddiness, greediness, love of dress

distress, hunger, make women prostitutes, but not generally sensuality."\*

I know that there are none so prone to plunge a fallen woman deeper into the mire, alike by their acts and their tongues, as women themselves. Thoughtless, forgetting that if exposed to the same dangers or the same temptations they also might have erred, women too often give to us men the impression that they are themselves but hypocrites and whited sepulchres; too often the first step towards a woman's ruin has been from mere curiosity to see if she were really the immaculate and unapproachable creature her words would proclaim her. A woman's hasty and uncharitable condemnation of an erring sister may well serve as a challenge to the tester of souls. As for us, he that is without sin let him cast the first stone.

Men often complain of the apathy in their wives, to which I have just referred, and improperly attribute it to want of affection. It is in no small number of cases the result of phys-

\* Loc. cit., p. 137.

ical suffering, often extreme, and sometimes endured without a word of complaint even to the end. The spirit prompting this great patience is one of the truest and most self-sacrificing heroism. I do not, however, hesitate to pronounce it wrong, and to declare the silence of one woman, under such circumstances, is a positive harm to her whole sex. It is often through a mistaken sense of duty — an opinion encouraged of course by the husband, and sometimes even by the medical attendant, to whom the simplest principles of his science should teach a more reasonable view. Thus one eminent writer remarks: “In some instances, indeed, feeling has been sacrificed to duty, and the wife has endured, with all the self-martyrdom of womanhood, what was almost worse than death.”\* Even in these later days, since it has been discovered that there almost always exists a physical cause for all the many peculiar woes that women suffer, there are still many husbands, there are still physicians, who see in a wife’s languor,

\* Ibid., p. 134.

a wife's disability, a wife's complaints, but the vain imaginings of a distempered mind, or the restless chafing of a soured and impatient disposition, and think that by according even but trifling sympathy, they are encouraging a groundless whim, or exciting to ennui, hysteria, or rebellion. Hard, indeed, the lives of these poor sufferers, — who, if half confessing their secret distress, are thought to exaggerate a trifling ailment, or to fabricate one for the occasion. And yet it is upon just these troubles, actual and very real, upon just these sufferings, harassing and often very intense, that half the woes of a woman's life are based. They cause her to reject her husband, to destroy her unborn offspring; they make her moody and despondent, and to look forward without hope; they often send her to the insane asylum, and not unfrequently cause her to take her life; just these simple troubles, so easily detected when searched for, and many of them so easily cured.

These are matters upon which we may well ponder. They concern every man, whether gentleman by birth, education, or pretence, and he

who scoffs at the word as usurped, yet generally makes of its idea the standard he would be glad to reach. If we have no such aim, we do not deserve to live; and of all the tests of such, the one always nominally most acknowledged, has been respectful conduct towards women, and the endeavor to protect them from harm. Courteous to strangers, we should be still more so to our own, and so be most truly brave in fighting down and conquering ourselves. To aid us in such chivalrous work was one chief end of The Good Physician; himself master of self, and, therefore, free from sin. It is surely no slight labor to endeavor thus to evangelize, no slight gain can we but thus be chastened, for chasteness is only to be gained by strict self-chastening, which, fruit from a perfect blossom, is the sign of a fuller love thus gained to us, both human and divine.

How can I better close my plea for a purer port towards woman than by the pungent, sensible, philosophical maxims of Jeremy Taylor? Let this good old prelate, whose whole life was in accordance with his own unsullied precepts,

be to ourselves as to those who long ago preceded us, a Ductor Dubitantium, to lead us from the devious paths of sensuality into the Golden Grove of an earthly paradise.\*

“Married persons,” he says, “must keep such modesty and decency of treating each other that they never force themselves into high and violent lusts with arts and misbecoming devices. It is the duty of matrimonial chastity to be restrained and temperate in the use of their lawful pleasures. In their permissions and license, they must be sure to observe the order of nature and the ends of God. He is an ill husband that uses his wife as a man treats a harlot, having no other end but pleasure. Concerning which our best rule is, that although in this, as in eating and drinking, there is an appetite to be satisfied, which cannot be done without satisfying that desire, yet since that desire and satisfaction was intended by nature for other ends, they should never be separate from those ends, but always be

\* To some of the oldest among us, the expressions noted above will recall the titles of two of Jeremy Taylor's best known works.



joined with all or one of these ends, — with a desire of children, or to avoid fornication, or to lighten and ease the cares and sadnesses of household affairs, or to endear each other; but never with a purpose, either in act or desire, to separate the sensuality from those ends which hallow it.\*

There are men who live thus soberly and wisely. Let each of my readers, before closing this book, again ask himself, “Is it I?”

\* Rule and Exercise of Holy Living, p. 70.



## APPENDIX.

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[From the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal for November 1, 1866.]

“WHY NOT? A BOOK FOR EVERY WOMAN.”

### A WOMAN'S VIEW.\*

THE light in which a subject presents itself depends very much upon the standpoint from which we view it. Dr. Storer's arguments and statements are earnest, conscientious and powerful; but women, the chief players in this tragedy of life, feel that while the facts are in possession of medical men, their motives are not so well known and appreciated. Often they are of such a character as may not be repeated, even to the long-tried and trusted physician; for there are certain things of too painfully delicate a nature for woman's lips to utter to a masculine ear, while to a sister sympathizer, perhaps, the whole story is freely poured out.

Abortion is fearfully frequent, even more so than Dr.

\* This communication, a proper supplement to Dr. Storer's prize essay published under the above title, has been sent to us by a lady, “the wife of a Christian physician,” who has certainly expressed with exceeding delicacy and truthfulness the universal feeling of her sex upon a subject which deserves more attention from our profession than it has hitherto received. We publish it with pleasure, and wish that it might find its way, in some more popular form than our pages afford, to the eyes of every husband in the land. — *Editors Medical and Surgical Journal.*

Storer has assumed, and is rapidly increasing. One great reason of the aversion to child-bearing is the thousand disagreeable and painful experiences which attend the long months of patient waiting, and the certain agony at the end — agony which is akin to nothing else on earth — agony which the tenderest susceptibilities and sympathies of the noblest physician can but faintly imagine — agony which, in not one case in a hundred, is mitigated by anæsthesia. If the blessed, benevolent suggestion of the general use of chloroform could be adopted, the world would hear less of abortions. The thousand times reiterated fact, that “it is a woman’s *duty* to suffer this,” and that it is “the end to which she was created,” is but sorry comfort in the hour of her anguish, and such injunctions will, of themselves, never work reformation.

It is a suggestive fact that it is not young wives, but mothers, who most frequently procure abortion; women of mature years, who know what they are doing, and the danger before them. That they are guilty of taking life is not generally understood (that there is life actually existing at the time the bud is blighted), but that the essential principle, which, under favoring circumstances, might at some distant day produce life, is removed.

It is not strange that women of delicate organization shrink from suffering, and perhaps grow cowardly in the face of duty. Many is the intelligent woman, noble in all else, who says, consciously and deliberately, “I would rather die than pass through that agony again;” and, in such a frame of mind, how long would the prospect of feeble health at some distant day, weigh with the prospect of immediate suffering, almost, or

quite to death? I do not say she is right. I only say she needs something else than censure.

The true and *greatest* cause of abortion is one hidden from the world, viz., unhappiness and want of consideration towards wives in the marriage relation, the more refined education of girls, and their subsequent revolting from the degradation of being a mere thing — an appendage. All the world knows that in this "age of progress" marriage is too often corrupted from a sanctuary of love and purity, to a convenience for revelling and grossness. Many is the intellectual, spiritual woman bound to such a condition, which she will not, for pride's sake, or honor's sake, report. Stung by disappointment, she rebels, and is perhaps told that marital rights are ordained of society and Heaven, and that she, knowing it, should not have come within their power. A very common argument, true within limits; but power does not necessarily imply right of abuse. She is, perhaps, on the way to motherhood, and with her feeble strength, depressed spirits, and waning ambition and courage, she needs sympathy, comfort, and encouragement. Surely her burden is heavy enough. But if she grieves or complains, she is perhaps confronted with the assertion that it is what she is made for; and with bitterness of heart and sorrow of soul, looking down through long weeks of heart-sickness and physical pain and unrest, to the dreaded, unknown crisis, to the after years of care, labor, and anxiety, and all to bear without hearty sympathy, what wonder that she is in despair, and little cares whether she live or die? Yet she must smile, and be cheerful to the world, and it never guesses all is not right at home. This is not fancy (would it were!), but veritable, every-

day life. If she learns a way of escape, what wonder that she count herself happy to be rid of, not so much the pledge of a husband's love, as of his selfishness, that has haunted her life! What wonder if she for a time forget her moral obligations in her extremity, and is indifferent to the life which is no longer a blessing! Remonstrance is met at home, perhaps with inattention, perhaps with blame. Remonstrance abroad is forbidden. Whither shall she turn? What is left but to bury her grief in her own heart, and live on as best she may? Deal tenderly with these stricken ones. Condemn them not utterly, for though they sin, they are sinned against. Don't load them with all the guilt, for they are already overborne. Not that sin in one excuses sin in another, but it is harder to walk with a mountain in our way, than in a smooth, well-beaten path.

Dr. Storer says, if women would avoid consequences, they must make choice of time; but in the goodness and generosity of his heart, he fails to see that no choice is allowed them in many cases. They are not independent, but subject; and all teaching tends to keep them so. Here is just where the trouble begins. This is why they rebel. Save themselves from the *cause* they cannot. The consequence is mainly within their power, and the temptation is strong to throw off the bond which confines them to the fireside. Domestic and maternal duties and joys, in moderate degree, make women nobler and better; but do not for a moment imagine that an almost absolute imprisonment at home, for ten years or more, as is common, with finances ranging as they ordinarily do, can tend to make wives more intelligent, more companionable, more Christian, *or more happy*. It may be duty, but of the stamp unmingled with joy.

It is noticeable that happy wives, strong in the affectionate regard of considerate husbands, rarely attempt this violence. There is but one stronger element known to society than that of a true woman's love for a worthy husband; one who is careful for her comfort and her preferences. It is generally admitted that women are not more selfish than men; that they are as ready to sacrifice comfort, to yield to inconvenience, as quick to appreciate consideration and to requite it, as men. Let such a woman, be she ever so slight and fragile, ever so much averse to motherhood, let her but be convinced that her husband would be happier with little voices singing in his home, and let him sustain her, and *pity her*, and she will bear it all, even to the end, cheerfully. No complaints will be heard, and the influence of that household will be pure.

Do not accuse me of justifying abortion, or of seeking to lay blame upon innocent shoulders. Abortion is a crime, and women are guilty of it, but they sin not alone. While attention is being called to the fact, why not also to the cause? Wives' burdens are too heavy, as blanched cheeks and early graves continually testify, — and the more intelligent they are, the more they recoil in disgust from the life they are led; for, mark it, it is not the ignorant class who are guilty of procuring abortion.

But what shall we say for the unhappy, unfortunate women, by no means few or inferior, who are victims of selfish and gross husbands, who are allowed no choice of time or convenience, whose hearts ache with disappointment and degradation, who find the heaviest burdens of life heaped upon them without feeling, who go almost into the shadow of death, and yet return to

make the pilgrimage again and again — what shall we say for them, if they do, in their desperation, find an escape from the consequences of what was unwillingly forced upon them? Will the Father of the sorrowful have no mercy on them? Surely they are in evil case, and their numbers are manifold. Thank God, there are yet some royal souls true to principle.

If Dr. Storer will perform as noble service for our brothers and husbands as for ourselves, and send the two books out hand in hand, they will bring him back a rich harvest of gratitude, and amendment in morals. Let women feel that they are honored and appreciated, *really*, for their worth, not for their convenience, and the mass will not attempt to defeat the purposes of their being. For those to whom fashion is god, I have not a word to offer. Let them plead for themselves.



# WHY NOT?

A BOOK FOR EVERY WOMAN

BY

*PROF. H. R. STORER, M. D.*

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## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

THE American Medical Association have done a good work in authorizing the issue of this essay for general circulation. To the majority of medical men, of any large experience, of course the subject is sufficiently familiar, and the evils of forced abortions, independently of the moral obliquity of the act, are well known. But those most directly interested — the women of the country — are, as a rule, ignorant of their evil effects, and all the influence of their medical advisers has hitherto proved ineffectual to put a stop to the lamentable and criminal sacrifice of fetal life. Curiously enough, any moral considerations of the question have little or no weight with those determined to prevent any further increase of their families, — for it is among the married that the practice obtains to the largest degree, — and it is only by direct appeals to the common sense of females, and by convincing proofs of the long train of diseases that are so sure to follow this unnatural crime, that any good results can be hoped for. This point Dr. Storer has forcibly considered, and placed the matter in its true light so far as relates to the subjects themselves.

The opinion has somehow gained credence that induc

#### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

abortions are not unfrequently effected by the better class of physicians. Dr. Storer, while repeating this gross misrepresentation, and claiming that physicians are unanimous as to the sanctity of foetal life, admits that they have, to a certain extent, innocently and unintentionally given grounds for the prevalent ignorance on this subject, and lays down as a fundamental principle that abortion, no matter how indicated, should never be induced by a physician upon his own uncorroborated opinion. The law should provide this safeguard against the destruction of foetal life. As in insanity, where, in some of our States, the certificate of at least two physicians is required before a legal commitment to the asylum can be obtained, so here the law should provide at once the safeguard against the destruction of foetal life, and extend to the physician its protection against the claims of pity, or personal sympathy, or importunate entreaty, to say nothing of direct offer of comparatively enormous compensation.

We cannot follow Dr. Storer in his arguments. They are so concisely stated that to give even a fair exposition of them would necessitate the quotation of a large part of the work. — *New York Medical Journal*, Sept., 1866.

Such a production from a physician of character and eminence has long been needed, for the extent to which the crime to which it relates is practised, even by women holding respectable positions in society, is fearfully great; and we rejoice that Dr. Storer, with such manifest intrepidity, learning and thoroughness, has done his full duty to humanity in the preparation of this paper. "Why not" should the subject be discussed? — for nothing is so intimately connected with the health

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

and happiness of women, the welfare of the community, and the greatness of the nation, as the birth of vigorous children. The present edition is a neat and convenient volume, and just the thing for a present to every young wife. — *Boston Commonwealth*.

“Why Not? a Book for every Woman,” cannot be too universally read. It is a prize essay on criminal abortion, which has become so alarmingly common, and is brief, concise, plain, free from technicalities, earnestly written, and calculated to do much good. It is high time that physicians “spoke out” in regard to this crime, and Dr. Storer, from his great experience, and the large attention he has given to this subject, seems to be the one above all others from whom a recitation of the evils of abortion, and an appeal to the women in behalf of themselves and their offspring, would have the most weight. No false modesty or squeamishness should prevent the advocates of a reform of this evil from assisting to give this little book a wide circulation. — *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*.

Dr. Storer evinces high moral courage in addressing the public upon a subject which it would be more agreeable to most men to pass without observation. But having become familiar, in his medical studies and practice, with causes which he believes are not without a baneful influence upon the constitution of many of the female sex, he ventures to present for their consideration this chapter of medical science and ethics. He is plain, direct, and earnest in the presentation of his views upon a subject which, we believe, he is the first to make the theme for public disquisition. — *Worcester Palladium*.

#### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The subject of this essay is one, we believe, which is largely engaging the attention of the medical fraternity, as well as that of many others at the present time. Few have cared to investigate the full extent of the evil. Those who have done so, find this system of abortion, especially on the part of married women, a great and growing danger. Already in many parts of our country the number of foreign births is largely in excess of native ones, and the large families of our ancestors find no counterpart in our day. Without passing judgment upon all of Dr. Storer's conclusions, or claiming that his argument is altogether sound, as that of few enthusiasts is, we yet recommend to every woman a perusal of the work. — *Northampton Free Press*.

Dr. Storer has given more attention to this subject than any other professional man in the country; and he is so deeply impressed by his knowledge of the frequency, criminality, immorality, and dangers of the practice in question, that his appeal to "every woman" is most direct, forcible, earnest, and eloquent. Many readers will be astonished at the evidence adduced by Dr. Storer to show the increase and frequency of this crime in our country. But few will wonder at the earnestness and even intense feeling with which the author presses this subject home upon the feelings, the consciences, and the fears of his readers, after they have read his startling exposition of the evils, dangers, and fatal results which are produced by this great offence against the laws of God and man. — *Salem Observer*.

We commend this essay to every wife, and to all women about to be married. The subject is treated with commendable fidelity to the good of humanity, and

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

a genuine zeal for truth, and at the same-time with all due delicacy, and no false modesty should prevent any pure-hearted woman from seeking to know its contents. *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, as the French say; or, as the highest authority saith, "To the pure all things are pure." So let no one object to this notice, but forthwith read and circulate the book, that erring, mistaken, guilty ones may know "Why Not?" — *Ladies' Repository*.

This elegantly written little book, unexceptionable in tone and singularly free from pedantry, discusses the subject of criminal abortion in all its bearings. The moralist and politico-economist will find much that will awaken thought, if not arouse to action, while the very large class to whom it is addressed cannot fail to be convinced — and may we not hope *converted*? — by the stern logic of its well put scientific truths. — *American Homœopathic Review, Detroit, Michigan*.

The evidence adduced by Dr. Storer is unanswerable. Every married man and woman in the land knows its truth. He does not exaggerate, but rather under-estimates the evil; and were it possible to make extracts from a work of this kind in a newspaper, any page out of the hundred would blanch many very respectable married people's cheeks with righteous shame. It is the best antidote to quack pills and vile "French inventions" that has been issued within the century. — *Waukegan Gazette*.

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