

their distrust very soon; others have experienced it for months, but eventually have been surprised that they ever had it at all. It is the fear of failure that causes it, with these people, and when that fear is once shown to be groundless, the cure is complete. In some aggravated cases, a little medical assistance is available, but it is of a nature not necessary to point out here. I once saw a man who had been married for three years, without being able to associate with his partner, and solely from this cause. In all probability he *never* would have done so, had it not been for the advice he received, and yet there was no real deficiency of any kind. The celebrated John Hunter gives us a similar instance, which he met with in his practice. The patient was perfectly incompetent, solely from the fear of failure, which so operated upon him as to always make him fail. Hunter was persuaded there was no other difficulty, and that it was merely necessary to break this spell; he therefore required of him, as one essential requisite of the treatment, that he should remain with his companion, but on no account whatever make any attempt for six nights, let his desire be ever so strong. The result was, that before the period fixed had gone by his desires were so strong he found it difficult to obey the injunction, and feared he should have too much power, instead of too little. In fact, the cure was complete, without any further treatment. The only thing required in such cases is a judicious and honest physician, who will first ascertain that there is no real deficiency, and then explain to the patient the real nature of his case and the means by which it may be relieved. If this be done in a proper and sympathizing manner, a cure may always be effected, but by a wrong course of procedure the evil may be confirmed.

A too great intensity of the sexual feeling itself, during association, will sometimes cause impotency, by overpowering the patient before the act can be properly consummated. I have known instances of men who always became then so intensely excited that they fell into a kind of dreamy stupor, and had involuntary emissions while in that state. This, however, can always be remedied by proper treatment.

Several instances have come to my knowledge, of men being impotent at their marriage, from their first discovering some disagreeable fact respecting their partners. In one instance, the lady had a small abscess on the arm, which she had hitherto concealed, and doubtless thought it a matter of little or no consequence, as her health was good, and her appearance remarkably pleasing. Her partner, however, thought differently, and such was the effect upon his mind that he could never afterward experience the slightest desire toward her. In some cases, such simple discoveries as false hair, or false teeth, have had a similar effect. It is not so much that the circumstance is excessively disagreeable in itself, as that it is *unexpected*, and its discovery destroys the dream of comparative perfection hitherto indulged. With uncultivated and unimaginative people, such causes might operate but slightly or not at all, because they form no such ideal image; but with men of refinement it is different. There is no doubt but that a good deal of the dissatisfaction and loss of power, which many men experience after marriage, is owing to this circumstance. They are ignorant of the real physical and moral nature of the being they take to their arms, and have formed a picture of her in the imagination very different from the reality, so that when the truth is known, their feelings undergo a complete revision. This ignorance sometimes extends to the most ordinary functional phenomena of the female system, and the first knowledge even of that has, to my own knowledge, produced a very disagreeable and lasting effect. In short, it is in this, as in every-

thing else, ignorance and concealment produce evils that only knowledge and mutual confidence can prevent or remove.

It is still a question, however, whether the imagination of the mother can affect the child *before birth*, and if so in what way, and to what extent? The popular belief in its influence this way is well known to be very strong, and probably it has some foundation, though there is no question but that it is carried too far. The well known case in the Bible, in which Jacob caused his father-in-law's animals to bring forth striped young, by placing peeled wands before the mothers, shows that this notion was entertained long ago, and the wonderful *marks* attributed to *longings* which we see every day show that it still exists. (Genesis, chap. xxx.)

Hippocrates, who wrote some thousands of years ago, relates that a celebrated queen was accused of adultery, because she was delivered of a *black* child, herself and husband being white. The great physician, however, remarked that at the foot of her bed there hung the picture of a *negro*, and he at once cleared her from the difficulty, by asserting that this picture had influenced the child through the medium of her imagination, it being constantly before her. A contrary case is recorded, by the historian Heliodorus, of an Ethiopian queen, who brought forth a *white* child in consequence of looking, at the moment of conception, upon a picture of Andromedus. At the present day, such an explanation of how these cases came about would scarcely be received.

These are not mentioned here as authentic cases, it will be borne in mind, but merely to show the bent of the popular belief.

In many old works which people are still in the habit of reading, merely from the *name*, such as "*Aristotle*" for instance, pictures are given of children resembling *animals*, which are there represented to have come either from the mother seeing such, or from having actually associated with them. All these, however, are gross exaggerations, and many of them even mere fabrications. In none of these works is there anything approaching to *science*, but on the contrary the merest rubbish and trash, utterly worthless for any purpose whatever.

Among more probable cases may be mentioned that of a lady who had a child covered with hair, and with hands fashioned much like the paws of a bear, and which she attributed to having often seen a picture of John the Baptist, clothed in a bear's skin. Malebranche also tells us of another infant, which was born with all its bones broken, and its joints dislocated, in consequence of the mother having seen an unfortunate criminal broken alive on the wheel. In short, such instances are numerous, and they show how firmly this belief is grafted on the popular mind, whether it be true or false.

It is quite common to observe, on the skin of new-born infants, certain brown, yellow, red, blue, or black marks, which are generally supposed to have been produced by the mother having *longed* for something while pregnant. These marks vary much in their form, size, and appearance, and are usually of so indefinite a character that a little stretch of the imagination may easily make them resemble anything. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that there are but few females, if any, who do not *long* for something during their pregnancy, and if this cause could produce such marks, but few children would be without them, whereas they are, on the contrary, rather scarce. The fact is that when one of these marks is discovered upon an infant, the mother begins to think of something she very much wished for, and then she easily sees that the mark is like it, but it is very seldom the case that any one else

perceives the resemblance, unless it has previously been suggested to them. I have known one of these *nævi materni*, or mother's marks as they are called, taken for half-a-dozen different things by as many different people.

The real cause of the mother's marks is a disease of the skin which produces an alteration in its texture. In general they are of little consequence, and remain stationary as long as the individual lives. It is seldom that success attends any attempts to remove them, and as a general rule they are better left alone, the effects of an operation being more likely to disfigure and injure than the mark itself. There is one kind, however, which differs from all the others, and which requires attention. This kind presents the appearance of little red warts, with flattened tops, connected with the skin by small necks, and full of blood-vessels. These are called *fungus hæmatodes*, and they are caused by obstructions in the little vessels under the skin, which makes the blood accumulate in minute tumors, or *aneurisms*. These may continue to grow, or even ulcerate, and lead to serious consequences; it is therefore best to remove them. This is done either by tying a silken string round them, to gradually strangle them off, or to use a sharp knife. In many cases, however, they may be destroyed by simply washing them in alum water, or a solution of sulphate of copper, or in keeping a silver coin pressed flat upon them for some time.

The fear that many people have of causing these marks is quite amusing, and has sometimes been acted upon for particular purposes. Thus I saw some time ago, in a medical work, an account of a lady in England who induced her husband to buy a carriage and horses, which she longed for, by assuring him that if he did not do so the child with which she was pregnant would be *marked with them!*

In no case does the mother ever announce *before the birth* what kind of a mark the child will be born with, and yet if she knew about the longing that caused it, she ought to be able to do so. It is always *after the mark is seen* that its resemblance is sought for, and then of course *something* can be thought of that may at least be *supposed* to be like it.

In one of the French medical journals, some years ago, M. Girard gave a very curious and instructive instance of the fallacy of this popular belief. In the course of his practice he became acquainted with three pregnant females, all of whom had been so strongly impressed by some object presented to the mind that the children were expected to be marked, but neither of them were so. On the other hand, three others, who had experienced neither frights nor longings of any kind, had their children terribly deformed with *nævi*. And this is in fact daily seen, numbers being born *with* marks, though the mothers did not long at all, and others being free from them though they did long, and intensely too. In fact, if their longings could do what some people suppose them capable of, there would be few children without marks, for nearly all females experience these imperious desires. Another circumstance, too, should be borne in mind,—if the imagination can exert such a power over the child as to cause deformity, it can also equally cause *beauty*, or give any particular *feature*, or *sex*, so that every mother must be supposed to have the power, by her imagination, to make her child be just what she pleases. Experience, however, shows that this power does not exist, and no mother who longs for a son can be certain of bearing one by so doing, nor can she by her imagination give a Grecian nose or auburn hair. If this *could* be done, we should have none but *Venuses* and *Apollo*s born, but unfortunately for the gratification of fond mothers it cannot be, and this fact alone proves the imagination is not so powerful as some suppose it to be.

It should be remarked, however, that the generative act is certainly the most exalted that the animal organization can perform, and requires the greatest expenditure of vitality. The union of the two sexes is accompanied by an excitement more intense than is ever experienced at any other time,—in fact, it results in a positive *convulsion*, and often in partial derangement of mind, as if the two parents, while giving life to the new being, almost, for the instant, surrendered their own lives. This is the case at least when the conditions are perfect on both sides; but though this excitement must of course be always experienced by the male, yet the female may be perfectly passive. In such cases it may be questioned whether the act is really so perfect as when both are in the normal condition, and whether this remarkable exaltation and expenditure of vitality is not really necessary in both, to properly impress the new being, and make it active and vigorous. It is possible, as before explained, that conception may occur without any emotion whatever being experienced by the female, but there is very good reason for supposing that the children resulting from such conceptions are often imperfect, or deficient in mental and bodily vigor. In fact, experiments by artificial impregnation, upon animals, have proved this, and have shown that the vivid and overpowering emotion of sexual excitement should be experienced by *both* parents, in order to give that impulse to the new organization which is necessary to its most perfect development.

This accords with the popular notion respecting *illegitimate* children, who are generally believed and with sufficient reason too, to be on the average more talented and handsome than others. It is supposed that the intense warmth of temperament which, in most of these cases, leads to the breach of morality and social propriety, is advantageous to the new being, because it is conceived with more energy and power. The imagination of the parents is also more acted upon by the very circumstances of their association. The necessity for deceiving others, and of practicing secrecy in their meetings, together with the charm of mutual confidence, and perhaps the indulgence being a *forbidden* one, all conspire to produce an exaltation greater than the ordinary circumstances usually give rise to.

It is certain also that children who are conceived during sickness, or when old age has vitiated the parents' energy, are never so vigorous and healthy as others.

After fecundation, the new being remains for nine months connected with the mother, and its development within her body is as much a natural function of her organization as is digestion or the circulation of the blood. Now both these functions, in common with all others, are well known to be affected by moral causes to a great extent, which alone would make it probable that gestation is also. Thus grief, joy, or sudden fright, will often prevent digestion entirely, and so derange the action of the heart that the circulation may completely cease, as in fainting. There is every reason to presume, therefore, that these emotions can also influence foetal development, and modify the new being both in body and mind. Indeed many cases have been known which directly prove this, and no doubt the moral temperament and bodily condition of many human beings is thus in a great measure determined before their birth.

In connection with this subject, it is most important to bear in mind that the child must be formed entirely *from the mother's blood*, for there is not an atom of its material that can come from any other source. The condition of the mother's blood, therefore, is of great consequence to its future well-being, for if that be imperfect, or diseased, the body formed from it must be so likewise. Now it is well known, that

the quality, and even the composition of the blood is very much affected by the state of the mind, and by the emotions experienced. In despondency and grief it is imperfectly formed, being thin and watery, and it circulates sluggishly through the heart. On the contrary, joy makes the circulation brisk, and nutrition perfect, so that the blood is rich and pure, while anger makes it boil through the veins, and changes its very composition. In fever it is well known the blood is so altered that when drawn from the body it speedily putrefies, and it is almost the same during a violent fit of rage, as I have seen when bleeding for a fit of apoplexy brought on by that cause.

It is not bodily disease only, therefore, that can change the quality of the blood, but also the state of the mind and feelings, which must be capable, therefore, of affecting the child through the medium of the blood.

Now when we reflect how sensitive females usually are during gestation, and how many causes then annoy and disturb them, it is readily perceived that their offspring must of necessity be much under their moral influence, or in other words be affected through the imagination. This influence, however, is chiefly exerted in a general way, and not in the production of merely local effects, like *marks*.

It is deeply suggestive, also, to the reflective mind, to contemplate the fact that when a female is pregnant with a female child there are *three generations* nourished by the same blood at the same time! There is the mother herself,—the child in her womb,—and within its body the rudiments of the *ovaries* from which, if it ever become a mother, its children will be formed! Who does not see from this how literally true it is that the physical sins, at least, of the parents, are visited both upon the children and the children's children? There are conditions of the blood which no doubt can in this way affect both the child that is forming and also its future children, through the rudimentary ovæ, and those conditions may originate from the imagination. A violent fit of anger in a mother, therefore, or of any other powerful emotion, may cause suffering and disease both to her child and her grandchild.

Another fact may also be mentioned, to prove that the child can be influenced by moral emotions. It is well known that many diseases of the womb, and also miscarriage, are often caused by fright, anger, and grief, and it is scarcely possible to believe that the child in the womb is not influenced by the same causes. During times of great public excitement and danger, as in revolutions and civil wars, it has been observed that miscarriages are more frequent, and that more of the children born then are idiotic, or become insane, than is usually the case.

It is true that there has not yet been discovered any nervous communication between the mother and child, but this by no means proves that the emotions of the mother cannot influence her offspring. The blood itself is regarded by many physiologists as being truly *living*, and this certainly is connected in both. But whether it be living or not, it is certainly the material from which both are formed, and there is no question as to the emotions of the mother affecting it.

In works on medical jurisprudence many trials are recorded in which the power of the mother's imagination has been called in question, but it has never been legally admitted. About forty years ago, a mulatto female, in New York, became the mother of an illegitimate child, the father of which she asserted was a negro, named Whistelo, who was accordingly arrested and brought to trial, as he denied the fact. The child was not at all like that of a negro in any particular, being whiter, and with straight hair, but Dr. S. Mitchell contended it might have been influenced by

the mother's imagination, and that consequently Whistelo might have been the father. The court, however, thought otherwise, and it was unanimously and very properly decided that the father must have been a white man, or a mulatto, and consequently Whistelo was acquitted.

Many of these resemblances which are supposed to originate with the imagination of the mother may really arise from other causes, as shown by the case of the quagga and mare, given in the article on The Permanent Influence of the Male upon the Female. In fact, that article should be referred to in connection with the present one.

It is a familiar fact to medical men, that many diseases are transmitted from the mother to the child while it is yet in the womb, and also that many drugs can influence it under the same circumstances, but this must, of course, take place through the medium of the blood.

The ague, small-pox, and the venereal disease, are frequently given to a child before its birth, and possibly also many diseases of a more chronic nature.

To show how crude the popular notions on this subject are, and how little they are founded upon correct information, it is only requisite to state that many people believe it is the child itself that *longs*, while in the womb, and they think the *mark* can be taken away by giving the child the object it wanted immediately it is born. Thus I have known an infant of two days old given a piece of *beef-steak* to take away the supposed image of one on its cheek.

Some suppose the marks are only given at quickening, others at six months, some at three and others again at any time.

forms, *impotence and sterility*, which are frequently, but erroneously, confounded together. Sterility means a total absence of the reproductive capacity, while impotence is merely an inability to associate with the other sex.

The various kinds of deformity, deficiency, and acute disease that cause destruction of the generative power, are fully treated upon elsewhere, and we have now only to explain those mysterious sympathetic and functional agencies, which, though they are often more powerful, are yet so different in their operation, and hitherto so little studied, that but little is generally known respecting either their nature or mode of action.

In the female, though there are many causes of sterility, there is but one cause of positive impotence, and that is deformity or absence of the vagina. If this canal exists, and is of sufficient size, she can always receive the embraces of the other sex, though they may be fruitless.

With man, however, this is different; not only may he be sterile from various causes, but also impotent. Desire may be strong, and the semen abundant and perfect, but still he may be unable to convey it within the female organs. There may be no power of erection, or the passage of the urethra may open in the wrong place, or it may be obstructed by stricture; in all which cases the man is impotent, though not necessarily sterile, for if his semen could be placed, even artificially, in the female organs, it would impregnate.

All these defects are capable, in most instances, of being remedied, as I have shown elsewhere. The penis can not only be made to erect, but to grow when too small, and sometimes can even be *made*, when it is nearly totally absent. Its proper sensibility can also be created or restored, and the urethral passage can be either restored to its proper dimensions, or made to open in the right place, so that in every respect it can be made capable of performing its peculiar functions.

In like manner, the vagina can be either enlarged or opened in the female, and the only cause of impotence in her can therefore be removed, as shown in the part on *The Diseases of Woman*.

With sterility, however, it is not always so easy to deal, depending, as it often does, upon peculiar organic deficiencies, or resulting from mysterious sympathies, it frequently baffles all our endeavors to understand or relieve it.

The ancient Greek and Roman females used to hang a wood or metal image of the male organs round their necks when they desired children, as a charm, firmly believing that it had power to make them fruitful.

In the long-buried cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, many of these images are dug up, some of them being most elaborately and beautifully carved. They are generally about an inch long, though some are of the natural size. A friend of mine, a short time ago, presented me with several of them. In Cochin China, as I have been assured by a medical man long resident there, it is the custom, when a female remains long barren, for the priest to give her a wooden model of the male organ, which has been blessed by him, and which she uses herself. This is supposed to remove the sterility, and is implicitly relied upon.

Even in our own times and country, charms are often practiced for the same purpose, and medical means are employed, almost as ridiculous, and quite as useless. In some parts of the world, the waters of certain springs are supposed to make women conceive, and many resort to them for that purpose. A famous well of this kind once existed at one of the monasteries of England.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DEFICIENCY AND TOTAL LOSS OF THE GENERATIVE POWER.

THIS is a subject that has never yet been fully treated upon in a popular way, though it is unquestionably one of the most important and interesting. Dr. Curling remarks, when speaking of the testes, "Their functions are so involved in those of other parts, are influenced by such peculiar causes, and are so dependent on and modified by particular events and circumstances, that the investigation of them, when disordered, necessarily becomes of a complex and difficult character. The product, too, of these glands, is one, the qualities of which it is almost impossible to appreciate, and which during life is never afforded in a pure and unmixed state; and further, taking into account the repugnance felt to such inquiries, it is scarcely surprising that the subject has been but imperfectly investigated, and rarely treated of by the pathologist and practitioner. Indeed, the little information we possess respecting it is chiefly to be found under the head impotency, in works on medical jurisprudence, in which it is cursorily considered, principally in relation to points of medico-legal interest, and scarcely at all in relation to practice."

This is strictly true, and it will, I dare say, surprise many persons, to learn that physicians, generally speaking, pay but little attention to such matters. Such, however, is the case, as is well known to those who have occasion to apply to them, either for advice or information. I have found it absolutely necessary to set out in my investigations, on many important points, as if *nothing* were known, and hunt out the requisite information by the tedious but sure process of actual experiment and extended observation. Very many of the statements made in this work will probably surprise those who see them for the first time, owing to their novelty, and to their variance with old notions. None of these statements have been made, however, without good and sufficient evidence having been obtained of their correctness, while the old notions with which they conflict, are merely suppositions and assumptions, utterly destitute of any foundation whatever. This is especially the case in regard to the functional and sympathetic causes of *impotence*, and also its medical and moral *treatment*, which may be truly said to be, nearly invariably, of the most unsatisfactory character.

In pursuing my own investigations into these important and interesting subjects, I have left no means of acquiring information untouched. Besides studying and experimenting, as far as was proper, in numerous cases that came under my notice professionally, I have fully experimented upon hundreds of animals, to the utmost extent that humanity would allow. By these means I have ascertained many important facts, and studied the action of many powerful medical agents, which could not with propriety and safety have been tried upon human beings first.

Functional or sympathetic disability of the reproductive organs appears in two

Perhaps the most frequent cause of impotence and sterility in the male, however, is *spermatorrhœa*, or excessive seminal loss. This may arise from many different causes, but principally from excesses, and from masturbation. It may occur in two ways, either *visibly*, as in those who lose it in sleep, or during the motion of the bowels, and it may also take place in an *unseen* form, which is the worst of all.

There is, in fact, scarcely anything more important for a man to know than the causes, effects, and treatment of this terrible affliction, and there are *few indeed* who do not practically experience more or less of its consequences.

It is, undoubtedly, the most frequent of all the causes of impotence and sterility, and also of premature decay of the system generally. Every man, young or old, ought to know this; for if such knowledge was universally possessed in time, it is incalculable how much suffering, disease, and untimely death would be prevented.

It should also be borne in mind, as explained in a former article, that the male is often sterile from *imperfection of the semen*. Sometimes there are no animalcules at all, and at other times they are dead, in either of which cases he is sterile, or incapable of impregnating. If the imperfection is not of long standing, however, he may not be impotent, but may still be able to practice association; though, eventually, even that power will be lost, for the organs soon lose all sensibility if they are not stimulated by perfect semen.

In some men the animalcules disappear, or die, for a short time only, from disease, or from taking drugs, and afterward re-appear. In others again, I have found that they only appear at a *particular time of the year*, so that these individuals can impregnate then, but at all other times are incapable.

The worst cases of sterility in the male are those connected with a *wasting of the testes*, which may take place from numerous causes, some of them apparently trivial, to which all men are more or less liable. To guard against such evils, however, is easy, with proper information.

There are also certain mysterious causes of sterility, the nature of which we cannot understand. Thus some females will conceive by one man and not by another, and some men will impregnate one female but not another, which shows that there is a certain *adaptation* needed between the two, though we cannot tell in what particular that adaptation consists.

There are often cases, in both sexes, where there is neither sexual desire nor capability till some particular object is found, as shown in a former article on the influence of the mind over the generative powers, and also in the articles on the power of the imagination, and on the brain, all of which should be referred to in connection with this subject.

The principal causes of these disabilities in the female have been explained in the previous articles, particularly in those upon the *ovaries* and *menstruation*. The non-formation of the egg, its not passing down the tube in time, and the non-retention of it in the womb, are among the most frequent causes. Many married couples are also childless because they do not associate at the *proper time*, as explained in the article on conception.

At the present time there are but few causes of barrenness in females but what can be removed, except those depending upon imperfect or deficient development, and even many of these are capable of being remedied. The vagina, or mouth of

the womb can be opened or enlarged. *The Fallopian tubes can be opened*, and the ovaries can be stimulated to act in cases where they have been dormant for years. All which operations come constantly within the scope of my practice, and with very few exceptions they are uniformly successful.

In nearly all cases when a female has painful menstruation, attended by a discharge of membranes or clots, it is owing to a constriction of the mouth of the womb, which also prevents conception. The operation for opening it therefore relieves both the suffering and the sterility.

The treatment most frequently required in females is that for stimulating the ovaries to form the eggs, and strengthening the womb to retain them sufficiently long; a weakness or irritability of one or the other of these organs being the most frequent cause of female sterility known. A want of sexual feeling is also a cause of barrenness sometimes, indirectly, and the production of it leads at once to conception. In nearly all cases, however, this peculiar sensibility can be produced, to any extent that may be required, and by means comparatively simple, and perfectly harmless. Diseases of the womb and vagina also often lead to sterility, especially leucorrhœa, or *the whites*, the discharge from which *kills the animalcules*, and thus prevents conception. I have known many females barren from this cause who conceived very readily, by simply using an injection of warm water before connection, to cleanse away the acrid discharge.

Moral causes do not operate so strongly and uniformly with the female as with the male, because she is in a great measure passive, and may even be made to conceive in spite of herself.

Although impotence and sterility are usually spoken of as if they were the same thing, there is yet a difference between them, as elsewhere stated, which must not be lost sight of. Impotence is simply want of power or capability for association, which may arise from temporary or accidental conditions. Sterility, on the contrary, arises from total absence of some natural requisite to procreation. Thus, a man may be impotent from loss of the penis, because he cannot copulate; but if he still secretes perfect semen, he is not sterile, for a woman might be impregnated by his semen artificially.

In like manner, a woman may be impotent or incapable of intercourse, from the vagina being closed, and yet her ovaries may be perfect, and the ovum be regularly formed. In such a case, she would not be necessarily sterile, for on opening the vagina, to allow contact of the generative elements, she might conceive at once.

As a rule, impotence is most common in the male, and sterility in the female. Commonly, sterility is nearly always referred to the female, but it depends upon the male much oftener than is suspected, as shown elsewhere. Woman, it must be remembered, is the passive and merely receptive party, and has not to exhibit *power* analogous to that of the male, and for this reason is less seldom impotent, and never in a corresponding way.

The mental and moral causes of impotence are much more frequent than is generally known, but are principally confined to cultivated, sensitive, and conscientious people; coarse, ignorant, uncultivated men seldom suffering from them.

Many estimable men are totally incompetent for the sexual relation, from no lack of natural power or capability, but simply from peculiar nervous and moral susceptibilities. Many men are incapable merely from too violent desire, or from prolonged

over-excitement, and are surprised to find that after complete temporary exhaustion they become capable. The more frequent moral causes of incompetence, however, are all the depressing passions, fear of not succeeding or of not being loved, simple timidity, shame, some sudden disgust, dislike, hatred, jealousy, terror, surprise, and apprehension of consequences. Most of these causes, as before remarked, operate only with the most refined and cultivated people, and seldom have much effect upon those who are coarse and merely animal in their nature.

The imagination, with many men, acts more powerfully than anything else. They either fancy something wrong with themselves or with their partners, and conjure up difficulties which have no real existence; in fact, they create troubles beforehand, and having persuaded themselves that they shall meet with them, naturally do so. This is often the case at the time of marriage. I constantly see young men, a few days after marriage, in the greatest consternation and despair, fully persuaded that they are hopelessly incompetent, and will never be able to consummate the act. In such cases, it is nearly always over-eagerness, too much effort, and excited imagination which creates the difficulty at first, and then mortification and fear for the future come in to make matters still worse. The natural difficulties attendant on first associations also complicate the trouble, and utter failure results, sometimes causing such shame and despair as to lead to suicide. Many men have killed themselves, under such circumstances, who were naturally fully potent, and who would in a short time have experienced no difficulty whatever. All that they needed was to know enough of themselves, and to have the courage to wait.

Very frequently a chivalrous consideration, and tenderness for their partners, or excessive modesty even, leads to the same result, and thus it is that the best of men often suffer the most. Frequently also, such men, from over-conscientiousness, will confide to their partners that they are doubtful of themselves, and crave their indulgence for possible failure. This is a most unfortunate thing to do, for nothing disheartens a man so much as the knowledge that others suspect him or doubt his capability. The very sympathy and condolence he receives even make matters worse, by intensifying the sense of his unworthiness.

In such cases, a man should reflect that with a young and innocent woman, whatever occurs seems right, because she knows not to the contrary, unless he tells her. It is also easy for him to make it appear that his diffidence, or temporary failure, is caused only by his deference and thought for her, and not from any incapacity on his own part.

Few people have any idea of the practical value of a little information of this kind. If given in time, it would often prevent distress of the most poignant kind at marriage, and separation or life-long misery afterward.

As a practitioner, conversant daily with such matters, I may say, for the encouragement of over-sensitive bridegrooms, distrustful of themselves, that the first association seldom occurs immediately. Generally several days elapse, or even weeks, sometimes even months, and yet all comes right eventually, so that the man afterwards wonders how he could ever have experienced any difficulty.

It is some compensation that the imagination may, in many cases, help to cure these evils, as well as to cause them. When there is no real physical reason for the impotence, but only a nervous one, anything which favorably affects the nervous system may remove it at once. Immediately that a man regains confidence, and begins to see that his trouble is only temporary, it disappears rapidly.

In former times this was well understood by both priests and philosophers, and thus arose all the charms, amulets, and other such means for curing impotence and sterility, of which we read in ancient books. One of these charms, given by the priest with the assurance that it would cure, would often be effective, from the very confidence which it inspired; and no doubt the assurance felt by many a sterile woman, that she would become a mother, from the possession of a precious amulet, aided powerfully in bringing about the desired result. In the old records of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, we find much curious matter of this kind, giving strong confirmation of the power of the imagination in impotence and sterility.

Witchcraft, of course, was early resorted to for the removal of such disabilities, and even now similar superstitious observances are not quite unknown. Among ignorant people the old beliefs, modified in various ways, still remain, and the priest, or the witch-wife, is still thought, by many, more efficient than the physician.

Montaigne, in his essays, treats this subject with much skill, good sense, and acuteness. He was perhaps the first to give a philosophical explanation of it, and his remarks are well worth reading even now.

That there are persons naturally weak sexually, or partly impotent, is undoubted; and this condition they may be born with. In some cases it results from imperfect stamina, or from the unfavorable effects of certain diseases of other parts. In other cases however it is probably inherited. Boys which result from too early connection, or too late, or from the union of parents exhausted, or imperfect naturally, are very apt to lack sexual power. Such children are often of a weak, lax habit of body, with deficient hair, especially on the pubes. Their voices are often shrill, or weak, their testes small and soft, and the scrotum lax and pendulous. In short, they are largely feminine.

Mere functional impotence may arise from simple excess naturally, but much more frequently from masturbation. Of the two abuses the last is undoubtedly the worst, its effects being more permanent. A man may recover from over-indulgence, at least in part, even when it has been excessive, but prolonged masturbation causes evils irremediable. And this is why many men who have passed years in vicious dissipation end better than those who have been socially virtuous, but addicted to solitary vice.

In masturbation the act is always incomplete and unsatisfactory, and is followed by a feeling of disgust which grows constantly deeper. The orgasm being brought on by unnatural means, and by mere force of imagination, is not only more exhausting than is actual connection, but gives much less pleasurable feeling. In fact, almost all pleasure finally is lost, and the practice is kept up from mere habit, unless superseded entirely by urinary loss. As a rule, unless abandoned early, masturbation causes total impotence, or else destroys all natural propensity, so that female society becomes distasteful.

Among other results of this fatal vice may also be mentioned the want of correspondence between the orgasm and the muscular power. The emission in such cases occurs too quick, that is before erection, or it may fail altogether. Occasionally, however, the erection fails entirely, or lasts but a few moments. Not unfrequently there is neither erection nor emission, when wanted, though both may occur at other times.

Similar results, however, may follow from over mental work, worry, or anxiety of mind. Also from excitement kept up too long without indulgence, and from the