

physical cause sufficiently powerful to overcome all moral restraint and all considerations of prudence.

When there is an excessive secretion of semen, the stimulus to the sexual organs and to the brain becomes so strong that the will has no power over them whatever, and, in the absence of natural relief, they will be constantly excited in spite of all a man's efforts. It is as vain to expect it to be otherwise as it would be to expect one to become sober when constantly filled with alcohol.

Such a condition could not of course occur where marriage was feasible, and it is therefore chiefly among the victims of celibacy that satyriasis is found.

In the majority of cases of enforced and undue celibacy, however, nature relieves herself by nocturnal and other forms of seminal loss, but often at a fearful cost to the patient. Many a splendid constitution has been ruined, and many a noble mind enfeebled by these substitutes for natural indulgence. When there has to be either erotic mania, or involuntary depletion, more or less mischief must result in some way or other.

In very many cases the individual so urged resorts to masturbation, and this is perhaps the worst evil of all. From an occasional indulgence, perhaps at first as a relief only, it rapidly becomes a habit, which every day confirms and makes more dominating.

The victims of satyriasis are often among the best and noblest of human beings. It is their constant and determined struggle against nature, and their heroic resistance to all temptations for relief, natural or otherwise, which makes them finally become maniacs. Then the ignorant world, looking at them only in their fall, considers them simply as self-indulgent debauchees, who have willfully made themselves depraved.

The really immoral and the self-indulgent do not resist long enough to become maniacs, but give way sufficiently early to save themselves, and when prudent in their indulgences, they often get credit for virtue which they do not possess.

Some people are so constituted that their sexual ardor is always feeble, and it costs them but little effort to overcome it. They, of course, cannot understand the condition of those differently constituted, and are therefore unable to judge them justly. To such people these statements will appear uncalled for, if not perhaps exaggerated, but the great majority, from their own experience, will acknowledge them to be both truthful and timely.

There can be no doubt but that any conditions of society which hinder early marriages are highly injurious, both to the individual and the community; for enforced celibacy, among those who are sexually potent, means either illicit indulgence or personal impurity! It is of no use to half state a truth, and I therefore say, without reservation, that every one, on attaining full maturity, should marry; for if they do not, vice and disease are certain to result.

Too much is said about the moral benefit which follows a constant struggle against temptation; and a man who is able to contend against his natural propensities, with more or less apparent success, is said to be in a better condition than he who naturally and prudently gratifies them. I do not believe it! And I feel sure that the experience of every observant physician and student of nature will bear out what I say. The victory, if indeed it may be so called, is only in seeming, and no one but the victim himself knows all it has cost. This kind of struggle has, in fact, ruined tens of thousands of the best of men and women, bodily and mentally, even when they have escaped open moral wreck.

The burning, consuming fever of intense sexual desire, resulting from legitimate physical causes, cannot be overcome except by utter bodily prostration, or by some determination of the impulse in another direction. The constantly oppressed and throbbing brain, irritability of temper, waywardness, and tendency to eccentricity of conduct, if not downright mania, so often met with among our very best young men, result in this way. As remarked before, those who are naturally self-indulgent and who care nothing for consequences, social or individual, have no such experience, because with them no such impossible repression is even attempted.

On this point I speak strongly, because my professional experience has brought this matter very forcibly to my attention, and I feel sure that enforced celibacy, in the healthy and vigorous, is productive of most serious evils, bodily, mental, and moral.

The records of our lunatic asylums give ample proofs of this; for it must be remembered that most of the cases there recorded as due to masturbation, really result, primarily, from want of early marriage. Some result, undoubtedly, from hereditary tendency, and many from disease, bodily or mental, but many more from deprivation of natural indulgence.

Actual mania, from intense and ungratified desire, is not at all uncommon in those who rigidly deny themselves all modes of relief. It must be remembered that it is not a mere moral condition, or one resulting from ill-regulated thoughts, though this may of course exaggerate it; but the real foundation of the desire is a *bodily need!*

Nature has attached to certain organs peculiar sensations, which are always felt in proportion to the activity of those organs, and which can no more be totally subdued by any moral effort, than can the feeling of hunger or thirst. These sensations when too intensely felt, or for too long a time, always affect the brain and nervous system generally, besides causing serious derangements in other organs.

This is frequently seen in animals. The elephant, in captivity, is often subject to *mad fits*, as they are called, when he becomes dangerous. These are due entirely to want of sexual gratification. The same thing is seen in the males of other animals, when kept too long from female association. Monkeys, it is well known, will practice masturbation in such circumstances, and so, probably, would other animals, if they had hands.

The peculiar madness in dogs, which we call *hydrophobia*, is only sexual madness; where the male and female are always with each other, it is never seen. In Constantinople, for instance, where dogs breed and live in the streets by thousands, the disease is unknown.

It is not necessary, however, to pursue this matter further; enough has been said to show that it is a subject more for the physiologist and physician than for the mere moralist and preacher alone.

CHAPTER LI.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE SEXUAL POWERS.

It is unfortunately the case, as our previous articles have shown, that the sexual power is liable to be impaired, or even totally lost, from a variety of causes, and that it is exceedingly difficult of restoration. There are, however, many apparently simple rules which, if duly observed, would prevent much of the injury now experienced, and there are also many others, equally simple, which will often materially assist in restoration. The object of this chapter is to point out many of these, chiefly in the form of suggestions and hints; the strictly medical treatment having been fully entered into already.

It is very essential to the preservation of the sexual power that the general health should be good, and that there should be no serious derangements of any of the vital functions. When the general health is impaired and the vital energies are low, the sexual organs are sure to be weakened, and usually more in proportion than any of the others. Owing to their extensive sympathies also they are sure to be affected by the diseases of all the other organs, and not unfrequently this sympathetic injury becomes very serious. The stomach particularly exerts a great influence over the generative organs, both beneficial and injurious. Long-continued dyspepsia is nearly always accompanied by weakened sexual power and desire, and even temporary attacks of indigestion will, for a time, produce similar effects. On the other hand a healthy stomach, with perfect digestion and nutrition, is highly conducive to sexual vigor. We may even go much further, and show that high feeding is nearly sure to over-excite the genital organs, or in other words that gluttony leads to licentiousness. This is a truth too often lost sight of in the education of children, many of whom, though predisposed to sexual ardor, are stimulated with rich food and exciting drinks till their passions become overpoweringly strong. In short the stomach exerts a most decided indirect influence over the generative organs, and we are thus enabled, by proper attention to the diet and drink, to either increase or weaken their power to a great extent.

Next to the stomach, it is important to attend to the state of the bowels, as they exercise considerable influence over the generative organs, and may affect them in a very injurious manner. The bad effect of piles has already been alluded to, and also constipation, but this last disability is of more consequence than it has perhaps been represented to be. No person must expect to escape seminal weakness who is habitually constipated, no matter how vigorous and healthy the genital organs themselves may appear to be. It is, therefore, very important, as a means of preserving sexual vigor, that the bowels should be always properly regulated, and frequently a little attention to this point is all that is needed to complete a recovery. The opposite

state, diarrhœa, though of course weakening, is not so decidedly hurtful as constipation, and its effects are sooner recovered from.

Next to the stomach and bowels the *urinary organs* may be mentioned as exerting great influence over the sexual system. The proof of this has already been given, but I think it necessary to call attention to the fact here as one of the very first importance. If the kidneys or bladder be affected in any way the genital organs are sure to be affected likewise, and if the urine have an irritating quality it is nearly certain to act on the urethra and ducts so as to cause sexual excitement or spermatorrhœa. This is particularly important in regard to children, many of whom are disposed to precocious virility, or to masturbation, simply from being affected with gravel or with some disease of the kidneys or bladder. Those children most liable to such troubles usually find it difficult to hold their urine during the night, and it is very high colored, with a strong odor. Such children are very apt to be subject to spermatorrhœa in after-life, and also to be addicted to self-abuse; it is, therefore, very important that all such affections of the urinary organs should be promptly attended to. At every after-period of life also such matters require serious attention; for many a man is kept diseased and impotent by the same causes, which may operate so powerfully as to neutralize all attempts at cure while they remain. When any of these diseases exist, at any period, it is requisite, of course, that the diet and drink should be regulated especially in reference to them, the urinary organs being readily affected by those agents.

Constant and healthy exercise of the whole *muscular* system is also of great importance to the preservation of sexual power. It is true that if a man takes little exertion, particularly if he lives high, he will be apt to exhibit an unusual tendency to amorous indulgence, because, as before remarked, gluttony and idleness lead to licentiousness. This effect, however, is only a temporary one and sooner or later the individual finds that he has *permanently exhausted* his vital energy and that his health and strength are seriously impaired. The vital power that may be *safely* expended in sexual indulgence is only the *surplus*, after every part of the system has appropriated its due amount, and if more be so expended some part must suffer. In other words we may suppose that every healthy man has a certain stock of vital energy, which we will call his *capital*, to which he keeps adding, more or less, by the function of nutrition; this addition may be compared to *interest* which may be expended without any loss of capital, and of course without making him any poorer. If, however, by any *excess* he expends more than this addition the capital is proportionably diminished, *and permanently too, for it can seldom be again made up.*

Now, the idle man does not expend enough vital energy on his muscular system to keep it healthy, but at the same time gives a superabundance of it to the sexual organs, so that they are over-stimulated, and suffer from excess, constantly causing a drain on the vital power that soon exhausts both principal and interest, and leaves the individual completely exhausted.

The philosophy of this has been frequently alluded to in the course of the present work, but it is so important that I wish to present it in a strong light. I am fully persuaded that there is no case of precocious or excessive sexual propensity, unless caused by disease, that cannot be easily subdued by *muscular exercise*. No matter how vigorously the seminal glands may act, in a state of leisure, they *must* become less active if the body be exhausted by active exertion, and to this rule there is scarcely any limit. One of the Reports of the Massachusetts Lunatic Asylum

strongly impresses this truth, and shows conclusively that we have, in *hard labor*, a *certain means* of subduing this propensity to its proper limits under any circumstances. The application of this truth to young persons is obvious, numbers of whom are made licentious only by bodily inactivity and over-feeding.

The invalid, or the man whose powers are impaired, must of course husband his strength, because he does not require exhaustion, but only sufficient exercise to insure health.

Exercise of the *mind* is also equally as important as exercise of the body. The man who is mentally idle is nearly certain to experience too strongly the force of the animal propensities, and licentious thoughts are too often indulged merely from the absence of better ones. It must be recollected, however, that too much mental exertion, particularly if attended with care and anxiety, is most destructive to the sexual power, and frequently leads to impotence, as many of our cases have shown. Those who wish, therefore, to preserve their virility should endeavor to maintain a happy medium, laboring with the mind sufficiently for health and utility, and endeavoring to preserve perfect calmness and equanimity.

PLATE XXXVI.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SCROTAL HERNIA OR RUPTURE.

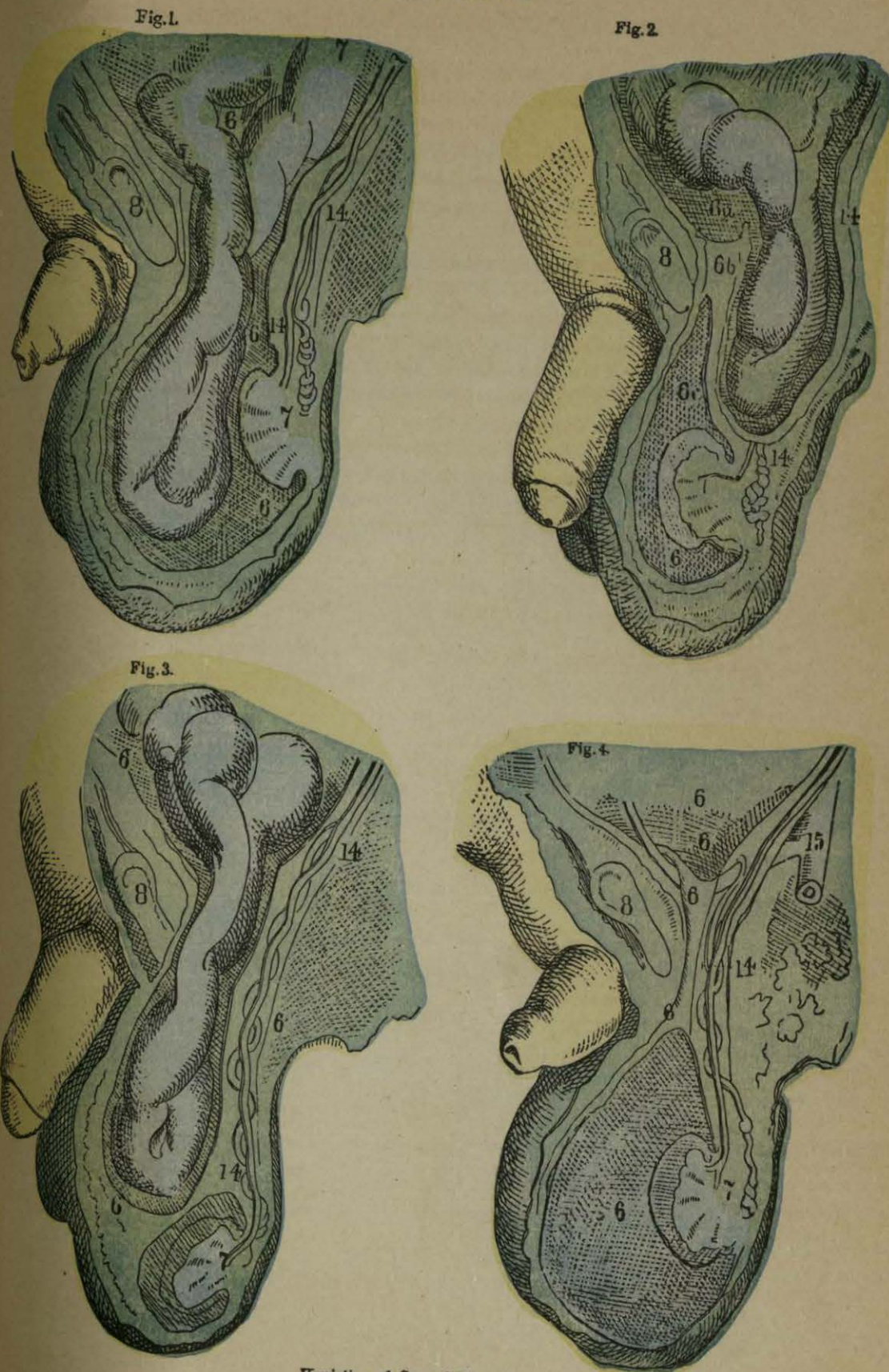
Fig. 1. Hydrocele, or formation of water in the scrotum. 7. The testicle. 6, 6, shows where the testicle came down. 14, is the spermatic cord. 15, the large artery.

Fig. 2. Hernia, or rupture. Descent of a part of the intestines into the scrotum, in front of the testicles (7).

Fig. 3. Infantile hernia. Partial descent of the intestines, on top of the testicle.

Fig. 4. Oblique inguinal hernia, or descent of the intestine into the scrotum, as seen in the adult.

Hernia, or rupture may either be *congenital*—that is, caused by imperfection of the parts at and before birth; or it may occur in after life, from violence, or from hard lifting and straining.



Varieties of Scrotal Hernia.