

and its effects on the person. Unless the system be much diseased or debilitated, however, there is no particular cause for fear. It is true that every one feels more or less indisposition for a time, which may inconvenience and alarm, but which can nearly always be relieved by judicious treatment, and frequently prevented entirely by timely attention.

The usual age when the change commences is from *forty* to *forty-five*. It is sometimes, however, protracted to *fifty*, and even *sixty*, and in this country it not unfrequently takes place as early as *thirty-five*, or *thirty*! It may come on suddenly, so that the female, after having a period as perfect as usual, never menstruates again. Most usually, however, it is established by degrees, the quantity either becoming less and less, or the time between longer and longer, or both. Sometimes it will stop for a long period, and then appear again, as in the case of a lady whom I know. She ceased menstruating when she was *forty-two*, and commenced again when she was *forty-six*, and continued quite regular till she was *forty-nine*, when it ceased again; she is now *fifty-three*, perfectly healthy, and with no signs of its re-establishment.

When any especial disease arises at this period, it must, of course, be treated the same as at any other, always remembering that it may disappear of itself, when the change is fully established. This is particularly the case with many of the slighter disturbances, such as headache, palpitation, dizziness, dimness of sight, and nervousness. We should not be too much in a hurry, therefore, to commence any strong treatment, but rather wait and observe, and assist nature when the indications are obvious how to do so.

It is particularly desirable that females should not resort to *medicine*, as many do, to make the change take place safely. Numerous preparations are palmed upon them by interested persons, which they are told, and believe, will save them from all danger. No specific of the kind is known, and in the nature of things cannot exist. The only precautions that are necessary and proper, are those which tend to preserve and improve the general health. These should be rigidly observed at all times, but particularly so now.

The body should be warmly clad, and regularly bathed, out-door exercise should be habitually taken, the diet properly regulated, so as to be nutritious, but not stimulating, and the mind should be kept tranquil and cheerful. In short, much the same regulations should be observed in this respect as those we advised at the commencement of puberty. With women of a full plethoric habit, there is danger, when the excitement subsides in the womb, that it may take place in some other organ. In this way apoplexy is frequently produced, and palpitation of the heart, or various congestions and inflammations. The way to avoid this danger is for the female to lower the tone of her system by adopting a spare simple diet, cool acid drinks, and the shower bath, and to constantly exercise in the open air, so that the blood may be equally distributed over the body. She should avoid all intense mental application, or strong emotions, and not think of the change that is taking place. Some persons make themselves very unhappy in this way, and greatly increase the danger of their situation. They cannot help thinking of their past condition, and dreading the future. Their thoughts, especially when associated with others *peculiar to certain temperaments*, keep up the excitement in the womb, and protract the struggle. Such persons should recollect that the change may be *the very reverse of what they fear*, providing they observe proper precautions, and keep themselves tranquil. As already observed, many females regain their health, and *improve in appearance*, and suffer

no deprivation but that of fruitfulness! Proper advice, acted upon in time, will effect this great change safely in most cases.

For some time previous to the critical period, or at least as soon as she feels intimations of its approach, the female must be particularly careful of catching cold, or of exhausting herself by late hours, or by breathing a close atmosphere. She should attend carefully to her diet, eat nothing indigestible, and use no spices nor alcoholic drinks. She should also avoid *all kinds of excitement*, and accustom herself, in every particular, to a regular and calm mode of life. Cold bathing, followed by good friction with rough towels, should be practiced, with sea-bathing at intervals, if practicable.

If there should be any congestion or inflammation in the uterine organs, it must be subdued by injections and fomentations, and other means pointed out in the article on metritis. The headache and dizziness is usually amended by a few purgatives, or low diet, and the shower-bath. Constipation of the bowels, which is a very constant and troublesome attendant at this time, should be combated first by change of diet and friction over the abdomen, and if these do not relieve it, injections of starch and olive oil may be used, or a seidlitz powder taken every other morning.

In conclusion, I would wish particularly to impress on my readers the fact that this change is not, necessarily, a dangerous one, but that most of the evils usually attending it arise from irregular modes of life, improper diet, and *excesses* of various kinds! A more strict observance of the laws of health would either prevent them altogether, or, at least, much mitigate them.

USEFUL HINTS FOR ALL AGES.

Women are in every way more sensitive than men, and require more precaution to preserve their systems in health. Want of knowledge respecting themselves also makes them more inattentive, and silly fashions often force them to adopt habits of the most injurious kind. Many causes of discomfort to them, and even of serious disease, are apparently so trivial that they remain unsuspected, or at best they are merely acknowledged. Some of these will now be pointed out, and commented upon.

There can be no doubt but that many young females suffer much from being pent up in ball-rooms, and other such places of resort, where the air is hot and unwholesome, and the associations productive either of excitement, questionable as to its good, or of envy, pride, and fretfulness. This is not, of course, meant to apply to rational, innocent, and exhilarating amusement, which is most beneficial under proper arrangements, but to those assemblages where amusement is the excuse, and rivalry, jealousy, and all kinds of unhappiness the actual realities.

In leaving these heated rooms, flushed with the exertion of the dizzy waltz, it is seldom that any precaution is taken by females, unless some one else advises it. They rush into the cold air with their arms and bosoms uncovered, drink ices while streaming with perspiration, and walk on the cold, damp ground with shoes that afford no protection. The consequences are they take cold, suffer from irregular menstruation, leucorrhœa, metritis, or consumption. All such obvious improprieties might easily be avoided, and are more productive of disease than is usually supposed.

As a general rule, females should wear flannel, particularly around the pelvis, to guard against sudden changes. This is particularly desirable when puberty is

about being established, during menstruation, and at the change of life. Those who accustom themselves to the shower-bath, however, will not be nearly so liable to take cold as those who do not.

Bad air, and strong odors of all kinds, have great effect on most females, particularly on the nervous. For this reason it is injurious for them to frequent crowded assemblies, or to sleep or live in ill-ventilated apartments. In like manner, the use of scents, which is so general, is very objectionable, or even the smelling of flowers, if too long indulged. We are told of a lady, daughter to one of the Counts of Salin, who died from inhaling the odor of a rose, and of another who was found dead in her bed from having left a bouquet of lilies in the chamber. A celebrated literary lady also nearly met her death from a quantity of flowers, which her friends had left on her birth-day, as testimonies of esteem, being placed in her bedroom. And many instances have occurred of fainting, hysteria, and even *miscarriage* from similar causes.

The philosophy of this apparently singular phenomenon is easily seen, when the extreme sensitiveness of the female nervous system is called to mind. The olfactory nerves are irritated by the odorous substance, and the irritation is conveyed by them to the brain, which again transmits the disturbance to the uterus and every other part of the body. In short, the odor acts through the sense of *smell*, the same as a disgusting object does through the sense of *sight*, or a disagreeable sound through that of *hearing*.

Too frequent warm bathing is an injurious habit, though a warm bath about once in a fortnight is advisable, and it should always be followed by a cold shower. The plentiful and regular use of *cold water*, both on the surface of the body and by vaginal injections, is one of the best preservatives of female health. By cold water I mean that which is about the temperature of the body, or nearly as we find it when exposed to the atmosphere during summer. *Very cold* water is apt to cause colds, leucorrhœa, and other disorders. This part of the female *toilette* is too much neglected in this country, and many evils arise in consequence of that neglect. In several of the preceding articles it has been shown how excoriations, inflammations, and adhesions, arise from a want of habitual bathing of the parts, especially in young persons; and how these physical annoyances lead frequently to *moral evils*! This subject I wish to direct particular attention to again, and to remind females that the most scrupulous attention to cleanliness, in this respect, should be observed, both in the young and in adults. I have no doubt but that many cases of leucorrhœa, pruritus, prolapsus, and other evils, are produced by neglect of it. The French article of furniture, called the *bidet*, should have a place in every lady's dressing-room, and will be found a source both of comfort and health. The female syringe should be of tolerable capacity, but small in the part to be introduced, and *curved*, and the end should be pierced with several small holes. These may always be obtained at the instrument maker's or druggist's. Napkins used by females should be of soft linen, and never employed roughly, and for particular purposes, should always be well aired and warmed when worn.

In regard to female *dress* there are many things merely *absurd*, and which, therefore, need not be noticed here, though their correction is desirable, but there are others positively *injurious*, and which on that account require to be mentioned. The use of *thin shoes*, particularly at certain times, has already been adverted to, and cannot be too strongly condemned, and also the practice of exposing the bosom

and arms to the cold air, after having been in a hot room. Close or heavy bonnets, and those of materials that will not allow ventilation through them, are decidedly injurious, by heating the head, and so is the habit of twisting and tying the hair into a hard knot. The use of *corsets* has been so frequently deprecated, and its evils so forcibly exhibited, that any special notice here is unnecessary. Suffice it to say, that there are few more fruitful causes of disease, particularly of prolapsus uteri, hernia, dyspepsia, liver complaints and consumption. The corset, in short, destroys both *health* and *beauty*, by interfering with the functions of the different organs, and by *deforming the body*! It is strongly to be hoped that a better *taste* is now arising, and that the female body will no longer be thought so *imperfect* naturally as to require crushing and squeezing *into shape*!

Around the body the dress should be perfectly loose, and no tight garters, bracelets, rings, shoes, or straps, should be worn. *Tight shoes* frequently cause headache and redness in the face, by preventing the proper circulation of the blood to the extremities, and *tight garters* cause numbness and weakness of the limbs. It is desirable, also, that the dress should not press the breasts too hard, particularly at the menstrual period, or during pregnancy or nursing; but it is advisable for it to support them a little when relaxed.

In the article on *the causes of disease*, in Copland's Dictionary, I find the following apposite remarks, strongly confirmatory of what I have stated, and containing many valuable hints besides:

"Dress, even, has a very evident influence in creating a predisposition to disease. Too little clothing, particularly in females, favors the occurrence of difficult and suppressed menstruation, pulmonary disease, and disorders of the bowels. It was remarked during the French revolution, when it was the fashion to dress classically, —which was almost a state of semi-nudity, and more appropriate to the warmer climates of Athens and Rome than to those of the north of France and this country, —that pulmonary diseases, rheumatism, suppressed menstruation, bowel complaints, catarrhs; and amongst the children, who were exposed with naked busts and thin clothing, croup, and other diseases of the air-passages and lungs, were uncommonly prevalent. On the other hand, *too warm clothing* is a source of disease, sometimes even of the same diseases which originate in exposure to cold; and often renders the frame more susceptible of impressions of cold, especially of cold air taken into the lungs. The remarks now offered may be applied to overheated sitting and sleeping apartments, and to warm soft beds and bed-clothing. These relax and weaken the frame, dispose to disorders of the kidneys, urinary and sexual organs, and render the system much more susceptible of injurious impressions from without. A predisposition is thus produced, not only to catarrhs, inflammations, affections of the lungs, and rheumatism, but to irregularity in the menstrual discharge. It has been remarked that the females in Holland, who generally use very warm clothing, warm apartments, and warm beds, are very subject to excessive menstruation and fluor albus. Females, also, become disposed to various diseases, particularly those affecting the pulmonary organs and heart, from wearing very tight-laced and unyielding corsets. Indeed, those dressed in this manner can scarcely call the intercostal muscles into action, and can breathe only by means of the diaphragm. The mechanism of respiration being thus impeded, the requisite changes are not fully produced upon the circulating fluid; and congestion supervenes in the lungs, right side of the heart, and parts situated below the seat of pressure. This cause is

especially injurious to females during growth and pregnancy; for the chest should be fully and freely expanded, especially at these periods, in order that the circulation through the lungs and heart may be unimpeded; and that the blood should experience those changes without interruption, that are required for the development of the body and of the fœtus. The functions, not only of the lungs and heart, but of the liver, stomach, and bowels, are materially interrupted, and even these organs themselves are removed from their natural positions in respect of each other, by this cause. This is more remarkably the case as regards the colon, which, by the squeezing together of the hypochondria and lateral regions of the abdomen, is thrown into unnatural duplicatures; the passage of fœcal matter along it being thereby impeded, and habitual costiveness, with all its consequences, produced."

Exercise in the open air is as indispensable as proper food, and no female can long remain healthy in body, or comfortable in mind, without it. There are hundreds of women who pass whole days and weeks in the house, and sit, or lie in bed, nearly the whole time. The consequence is they are always sickly, low-spirited, irritable, wearied, and often *wearisome*. They become dyspeptic, sallow, and weak; their hands and feet are cold, and their heads are continually aching, dizzy, or confused. Those who understand the simplest principles of physiology will see the reason for this, and if those principles were more generally understood there would be less of this irrational conduct seen. In the course of my practice I frequently find it necessary to speak upon these subjects, and have known many cases in which my remarks have worked a reform. The exercise of females, however, should be less violent than that of men, and never carried to the extent of producing much fatigue. It should be varied as much as possible, and adapted to the wishes and wants of the individual, and should invariably be pleasing and agreeable. Tending the flower-garden, seeking plants for the study of botany, or rambling in the fields or by the sea-shore, and riding on horseback, particularly in cheerful company, are all excellent. So is dancing, but not in a close hot room, nor late at night, nor when the body is bound up in a tight dress, or the feet pinched in tight shoes. Under these circumstances the mere exercise will not counterbalance the other evils. With young persons real *play*, or even actual *romping*, is required, to exhilarate both mind and body, and send the blood bounding to the utmost extremities of the system.

A celebrated French physician, M. Tronchin, used to command his nervous female patients to *scrub the floors, wash the clothes*, and perform every other menial labor, and such was his influence that ladies of the highest rank would be seen on their knees, and at the wash-tub, working like their servants, and eating the same food. Though this treatment was unneccessarily harsh, yet its good effects were so palpable, in numerous cases, that none refused to follow it. In Russia, at the present time, when a fashionable lady is worn out with dissipation, and wretchedly nervous from idleness, it is customary to take her to the cottage of one of the poorest peasants, in the forest, and there she wears the same clothes, eats the same coarse food, sleeps on the same kind of bed, and performs the same labor as the peasant women. This is continued sometimes for months, without any relaxation, and usually effects a complete cure.

Copland's remarks on the influence of external circumstances, of various kinds, on the bodily and mental health of young females, are very excellent. In the article on "Age" he says:

"PERIOD OF GIRLHOOD.—From the seventh or eighth year to the epoch of com-

mencing puberty, is chiefly characterized by the continued growth of all the structures, and the development of the manifestations of mind. Toward the middle and end of this period, the physical and mental distinctions of sex become more and more apparent. The frame, when free from disease or hereditary taint, evinces a sthenic diathesis, a predominance of the sanguine, or sanguineo-nervous temperament, and a liability to nearly the same diseases, particularly those proceeding from infection and inflammation, that prevail during childhood. There is a greater liability to be affected with idiopathic continued fever; with scrofulous enlargements and inflammations, particularly of the lymphatic glands; with various nervous affections, as epilepsy, convulsions, chorea, etc.; with cutaneous eruptions; with inflammations of the throat and air passages; with tubercles, especially in the lungs and alimentary canal; with flexures of the spinal column, and with verminous diseases. The nervous system possesses great susceptibility of impressions, moral and physical; and inflammatory action has a marked disposition to give rise to new formations, unless when appearing in the advanced stages, or as a sequela, of eruptive or infectious fevers, when it generally occasions serous or sero-albuminous effusions.

"These diseases of this period generally require antiphlogistic remedies and evacuations, especially purgative, either alone or in suitable combination, unless proceeding from depressing causes, particularly those of a specific kind; and even there the necessity of resorting to alvine evacuations, by means of laxatives, or purgatives combined with tonics, is imperative. The vital resistance is usually well marked, excepting in those who have been deprived of wholesome nourishment and pure air, or whose constitutions are radically in fault; and in these, whilst tonics and other means of restoration are required, the due evacuations of morbid secretions and accumulations is equally necessary. Care also should be taken during this, as well as in the preceding period, not to allow the young to sleep in the same bed with the old, nor even with those advanced in age or debilitated, nor with too many—not more than three—in the same sleeping apartment, which ought to be large and well aired. Want of attention to this is one of the chief causes of disease in early life in London, and other large towns. Academies and boarding schools for both sexes are continually furnishing numerous proofs of this too generally overlooked cause of disease, not only at this, but also at a later stage of life. Attention is also necessary to the exercise of both the mind and the body. Active amusements in the open air are now particularly required. As this period advances, the mental powers acquire such a degree of development as to admit of their further improvement and active exertion, not only without risk to the organization with which they are related, but with the certain prospect of advancing them nearer to the perfection to which our natures may attain.

"During this and the earlier terms of life, frequent changes of locality and of air, particularly from one healthy and open situation to another, and especially to one which is more salubrious, where this can be obtained, are extremely beneficial, both in promoting the development of the frame and in removing diseases, particularly those of a chronic kind, or which affect the digestive and assimilating organs. In many of these diseases, more advantage has been derived from change of air than from the use of medicine. But, during advanced convalescence from these and febrile diseases, the benefit obtained from change of locality is most remarkable."

"THE PERIOD OF ADOLESCENCE, commences with the first appearance of puberty, and extends to the twentieth year of females, and the twenty-fourth of males.

Puberty appears at various ages, according to the climate, the circumstances connected with education, and the constitution of the individual. The usual period, in this country, is from the twelfth to the fourteenth year for females, and from the fourteenth to the sixteenth for males. In the northern parts of the island it is often a year or two later, in both sexes. It is frequently observed earlier in boarding schools, both in respect of males and females. In the latter (in London or its vicinity), I have not infrequently met with instances of menstruation at ten and eleven years; especially in sanguine and plethoric constitutions, and where the apartments, particularly those for sleeping, have been crowded and close.

"This is one of the most important epochs of human existence; for during it the natural development of the sexual organs imparts a healthy and tonic excitement throughout the economy; bringing to their state of full perfection all the organs of the body and all the manifestations of mind, excepting those that are derived from experience. The organs of respiration and voice have acquired their full growth and tone, the muscles their due proportion, and the cerebro-spinal nervous system its beautiful organization; placing man, by the exercise of its admirable functions, at the head of all animated creation, the dread of all other animals, the wonder of himself. It is chiefly during this period of life that the mind becomes stored with ideas, derived both from the learning of the ancients, the science of the moderns, and the arts and accomplishments of highly civilized life; and is more particularly and more ardently engaged in decomposing the information thus acquired, and recombining it in new and useful and attractive forms.

"As the functions and destinies of this period are important, so they require the supervision of the experienced and the good. For, with this development and activity of both the physical and mental powers, the instinctive feelings and emotions of our nature have also reached the utmost limits of their activity; and many of them, particularly those which are related to the perfect condition of the reproductive organs, acquire an ascendancy, that both the dictates of reason and moral restraint are required to control. Hence the propriety, both at this and the preceding period of life, of improving the moral affections of the mind; of inculcating sound principles of action and conduct, founded on moral and religious obligations; and of placing them in such relations to the feelings, the intellectual manifestations, and, moreover, to the accomplishments, the elegancies, and the endearments of life, as to render them attractive to a state of mind and constitution which is more easily allured by example than taught by precept.

"The evil practices which both sexes are liable to acquire at this period of life, and to which they more commonly become addicted when they associate in numbers at seminaries and academies, demand the strictest prevention. They have been too generally overlooked, both morally and medically, from the circumstance of their consequences having been imperfectly appreciated. There is no practitioner of observation and experience,—none even of limited knowledge,—who is altogether unacquainted with the physical exhaustion, the mental torpor, and all but annihilation of existence, which is the ultimate result of indulging them. From this source frequently spring, impotency hereafter; the extinction of families and hereditary honors—honors which such persons are incapable of achieving; the infliction, during after-life, of many of the diseases which proceed from debility, and the exhaustion of the nourishment and vital energy of the various structures and organs; numerous nervous and convulsive maladies, as hysteria, epilepsy, neuralgia, chorea,

melancholia, mania, idiocy, etc.; the dangerous or fatal visitation of fevers, diseases of the heart, disorders of the digestive organs, premature baldness and old age, the formation of tubercles, and the production of pulmonary consumption; and, lastly, the transmission of weak and decrepit bodies and minds to the offspring, of scrofula, rickets, verminous complaints, marasmus, hydrocephalus, convulsions, tubercles, chorea, etc.; the curse is visited on the children to the third and fourth generation, until the perpetuated punishment extinguishes the very name of the transgressor."

Many of the occupations in which females pass much of their time are decidedly hurtful to them. Sewing, and other kinds of work which require them constantly to sit, with the head drooping forward, are among the worst. Sad proofs of this are seen in numbers of poor dress-makers and milliners, who are constantly complaining of headache, dizziness, dimness of sight, ringing in the ears, difficulty of breathing, and palpitation at the heart; without enumerating more serious disorders, which, however, are common enough among them. One hour at a time is long enough for any female to sit with her needle, and that should always be followed by some active exertion.

In regard to *food*, enough has already been said for general directions, at each period of life. It is advisable to add, however, that women, owing to their comparative inactivity, require simpler and less stimulating diet and drink than men, and that they suffer more from excess or impropriety in eating and drinking. Every individual should carefully observe for herself how she feels after different kinds of food and drink, and by such means she can establish much better rules, in regard to her diet, than any physician can do for her. There are few women that are not injured by the habitual use of spices and pickles, or strong coffee or tea. In fact, both drinks should be used sparingly, and very weak, especially by the nervous and by those who wish a clear complexion. White bread is neither so wholesome nor yet so *nourishing* as that with the *bran* in it, though a mistaken notion prevails to the contrary. Bran bread contains more of the elements required for the support of the body than pure flour bread; it also relaxes the bowels in an easy and natural manner, while white bread almost always constipates them.

Constipation of the bowels is a very general complaint among females, and produces the most disastrous results. It should always be attacked by change of diet, exercise, friction over the abdomen, enemas, or galvanism, rather than by purgatives, with which many women seriously injure themselves.

The state of the mind and feelings has a very important influence on female health. Cheerfulness and contentment keep the nervous current equable, dispose to activity, and favor the proper performance of all the functions, while discontent, fretfulness, and irritability have precisely the contrary effects. Many females, owing to a fault in their education, are constantly tormenting themselves, and displeasing others, by getting irritated or fretting about mere trifles of no real consequence whatever. Such persons are always nervous or miserable, and constantly disposed to ill health in consequence. They should endeavor to school themselves into a little more indifference about such things, and remember that putting themselves about over a little annoyance only makes it greater, without doing any possible good. This tendency to distress themselves about small evils, and to fix their inclinations so strongly on trivial things is extremely unfortunate, both for their own welfare and for the comfort of others. It arises entirely from the trashy education which most females

receive, and from the frivolous nature of their occupations. By directing their thoughts to more ennobling objects, expanding their minds, enlarging the sphere of their observations, and by extending their sympathies, this tendency is removed.

All powerful emotions, as those of anger, envy, jealousy, and hate should be carefully avoided. They derange the stomach, liver, womb, and other organs, and destroy the equilibrium of the nerves. A fit of anger will cause vomiting, diarrhoea, flooding, miscarriage, fatal apoplexy, and other serious results; and habitual ill temper, envy, and dissatisfaction will produce sallowness of the skin, melancholy, or hysteria.

The celebrated *Tissot* gives us an instance of a female who was taken with convulsions whenever she heard her rival's name mentioned, and history tells us of a French princess who died from jealousy when she heard that her husband had become attached to another lady. An Athenian lady is recorded to have lost her speech from anger, and another, we are told by Buchan, died from the same cause. Grief has produced similar results, and so has shame, and even avarice, of which we have an instance in the niece of the celebrated Liebnitz. He had left her all his fortune, and immediately on his death she broke open his trunks, which were filled with gold, and died almost immediately from joy at the sight. Had there been nothing, she probably would have died from her *disappointment*. The only way to avoid these evils is to keep the mind occupied with some useful and pleasing pursuit, and strive to be cheerful, contented, and calm, and never to worry about trifles, or what cannot be avoided.

In regard to the smaller matters connected with the toilette, it may be thought by some that they are unworthy of notice in such a treatise as the present. I think differently, however, and for these reasons: many preparations are used by females which have an injurious influence in various ways, and many others might be used that would have a contrary effect. The objects in view in employing these articles are, the removal or concealment of defects, and improvement of the appearance, which, in themselves, are laudable enough, and I consider it my duty to assist in accomplishing them. A pleasing appearance is desirable in all persons, but especially in females, and it is advisable, within proper bounds, to encourage their efforts to produce it.

There are few among the thousand and one articles prepared for the toilette that are useful, and very many that are positively hurtful. Among these may be mentioned the different cosmetics for whitening and smoothing the skin, which almost invariably produce the contrary effect. Nearly all these preparations are composed of oxides of mercury, antimony, arsenic, and other poisonous substances, and they frequently cause eruptions, palsy, convulsions, sore eyes, and salivation. The distilled waters are perhaps the least objectionable articles of the kind, though I scarcely think any of them equal to clear soft water alone. The ordinary metallic *rouge* is decidedly hurtful, and when persons *will* use something of the kind, the *vegetable rouge* had better be substituted. This is extracted from the red sanders wood, or alkanet wood, steeped in alcohol, and also from cochineal. Instead of pearl powder there is the preparation of *steatite*, or French chalk, which may be used for whitening the skin, and which is not likely to do any injury.

The only real beautifiers of the complexion are a regular life, proper diet, exercise in the open air, and pure water. Health of body, and cheerfulness of mind, will send a healthy glow to the cheek, make the skin clear and smooth, and impart

vigor and elasticity to the limbs. When the skin becomes harsh and discolored from dissipation, exposure, the use of paints and washes, irritable feelings or other causes, there are few external applications that will do it any good. Some preparations will certainly make it appear for a time clear and ghastly white, but they do so by partly destroying its vitality, and eventually leave it discolored, eruptive and wrinkled, *thus accelerating* old age instead of retarding it. M. Colombat de L'Isère gives the following recipe for a lotion, which will soften and otherwise improve the skin without doing it any injury:—Balsam of mecca, ten drops; sugar, one drachm; the white of one egg; rose water, six ounces. Mix all these articles well together, and strain the liquor if necessary. A soft linen rag may be used to rub it on the face at night, and it must be carefully washed off with clear soft water and some mild soap in the morning. Sweet almond ointment is also very good, if fresh and pure; but the best ointment is made from cucumbers. Equal parts, by weight, of thin sliced cucumbers and pure lard should be boiled together till the cucumbers become crisp; it should then be strained and set aside to cool. This is an excellent application for the skin, and may be advantageously used for various eruptions. It may be colored, if desired, by putting in a little alkanet root while it is boiling, and scented by a few drops of essence of roses. For chapped or discolored lips there is nothing equal to this ointment.

Many of the soaps sold for the toilette have a bad effect on the skin, from containing too much alkali. Those that become hard and crack should be particularly avoided. Almond oil soap, properly prepared, is tolerably good; but the best appears to be a preparation made by the French perfumers, called *liquid soap* or *oleine*. Glycerine soap, tar soap, or that containing carbolic acid, are also excellent. All those *chemical soaps* for cleansing the skin and removing spots, etc., so much vaunted, should be shunned like the plague. They are chiefly composed of arsenic and other poisonous substances. Borax soap, however, is both harmless and beneficial; or a weak solution of borax, not stronger than half an ounce to the quart of water.

The employment of *depilatories*, or preparations to remove superfluous hairs, is exceedingly dangerous. These articles chiefly consist of quick lime, arsenic, and other caustic substances, and frequently produce ulcerations, palsy, paralysis, blindness, and various organic derangements. Their use must also be constantly persisted in, because, though they remove one crop of hair, they cannot prevent others from appearing, so that the use of them must keep the skin continually covered with a paste of virulent, caustic poisons.

Most of the preparations for dyeing the hair are also poisonous, and sufficient injury has been done by them to warrant us in decrying their use. The hair itself is a great ornament to the head, and most females feel desirous, and very properly, to have it soft, clean, and abundant. There is no doubt but most of the pomatums, greases, and other articles sold for the purpose of making it so, not only fail, but even produce the contrary effects. The head and hair should be frequently well washed with the solution of borax above given, or with tar soap, and when dry thoroughly combed with a very fine comb. This will not only cleanse it, but also polish it, and make it soft and glossy. A little clear perfumed oil may be used, mixed with cologne, but no paste or pomatum. If there be dandruff, it should be removed with the comb and brush, and after the head is well washed and dried a little of the cucumber ointment may be rubbed on the scalp occasionally. The chief causes of dandruff are heat of the head, by study or excited feelings, the use of close bonnets,

or the habit of keeping the hair constantly twisted up very tight, and the want of regular washing to cleanse the skin and open the pores. Calmness of mind, regulation of the bowels, and the shower-bath will frequently remove this troublesome disorder, without anything else. Pure *bay rum* is an excellent preparation to rub the scalp with when there is dandruff. It should be well rubbed in the roots of the hair. The article called *vaseline*, made from petroleum, is a very excellent thing for the hair or skin.

The use of hot curling-tongs makes the hair harsh, and spoils its color, and even disposes it to turn gray. Metallic combs are apt to cut it, and should therefore not be used. It is an excellent plan to stroke it downward frequently with a horse-hair glove, which will soften it and give it a high polish.

The *teeth* we need say but little about, if they are decayed, as it would be better for ladies, in that case, to apply at once to some *good* dentist. I would caution them particularly, when needing assistance, not to resort to any of the empirical nostrums advertised, but seek assistance at once from some really scientific man. There is no doubt, however, but that a vast deal of the decay in the teeth, so universally found, might be avoided. General good health, maintained by proper diet, exercise, and other means already pointed out, would prevent much of the evil, particularly if the *inside* of the face was as regularly cleaned as the *outside*! Most persons leave their mouths entirely untouched, so that the decaying food and the vitiated fluids are constantly acting on the teeth, and soon corrode them. A soft brush and clean tepid water, used night and morning *freely*, would prevent much of this decay; and if half a teaspoonful of fine chalk were well washed round the mouth and teeth for five minutes before the brush is used, it would come, as near preventing it *altogether* as probably anything can. Many of the tooth powders used contain acids and other injurious substances, and none of them are a bit superior to fine chalk.

The mouth should be carefully rinsed after taking any acids or medicine, and very hot or very cold substances should never be introduced, as they injure the teeth by sudden contraction and expansion of their substance. *Magnesia* is an excellent substance to use, either as a tooth powder or to rinse round the mouth at night, as it neutralizes any acid that may be found; or the solution of borax mentioned above. Good mild soap, especially borax soap, is, perhaps, the best thing of all to brush the teeth with, both to cleanse and to preserve them.

CHAPTER LVII.

ON SOLITARY VICES, AND OTHER ABUSES.

It is seldom the case that this subject is broached to females in any form, but every person at all acquainted with it will admit that it *ought* to be so, and perhaps more especially to them than to other persons.

It is not only necessary on account of females themselves being often the victims of these vices, but also because, as *mothers*, they of necessity exercise a supervision over the conduct of their children of *both sexes*, and they therefore ought to be acquainted with every matter of importance to their welfare.

I am convinced that much of the evil we see arising from this cause, in children, would be prevented if *mothers* were better informed about it, and had their attention properly awakened in time.

Some persons suppose that solitary abuse is altogether confined to *males*; but this is a great mistake. It is doubtless most *frequent* with them, and in general affects them most injuriously; but it is useless to deny that it is extremely prevalent even with the other sex, and likewise leads in them to the most serious consequences.

The nature of my professional experience necessarily brings me much in contact with peculiar cases of this kind, and I feel it my duty to refer to this subject in the most emphatic manner, more especially as it has hitherto been generally overlooked.

In no other place could it be so appropriately treated upon as in a work of this kind, intended for the special *instruction* and *warning* of both males and females.

From various causes, many of which have been alluded to in our previous articles, and others which will be as we proceed, the sexual instinct or desire is often awakened at too early a period, or excited to a most immoderate degree. Sometimes, even in mere *children* it is strongly developed, so as to lead to unnatural practices at the most tender age, and at other times it becomes so ungovernably intense that everything is forgotten or disregarded in the blind craving for its indulgence.

In our *boarding schools* for young females, it is well known to medical men that these vices are fearfully common, though from their nature they are seldom alluded to. The physician contents himself with treating the *effects*, but never alludes to the *cause*! I have known cases where *every pupil* in such establishments has been led astray in this manner, and to the most alarming detriment of their health.

From vicious association, or some other cause, one among the number learns the habit and teaches the others, till all become contaminated, and usually without suspecting either any great *impropriety* or any injurious result.

I know that many of the most pure-minded and virtuous young females have been thus led astray, and when made aware, either by proper instruction or by dear-bought experience, that they have been doing wrong, they often experience the most

poignant remorse. It is their fault, however, in only a slight degree, for most of them are kept so entirely ignorant of all they ought to know respecting themselves, that the wonder would be if they kept in the right path. Parents have much to blame themselves for in connection with this subject, particularly mothers; and I trust these few remarks will awaken their attention to a matter of such momentous importance.

Some time ago, I made an allusion to this subject in one of my lectures to females, and was surprised at the number who afterward spoke to me corroborating my statements. Many aged persons, and mothers of experience, voluntarily testified to the truth and value of what I had said, and urged me to press this matter still more than I had done.

One venerable lady, particularly, confessed to me that when she went to a boarding school, in her young days, these vices were so prevalent, and the effects upon the health of the scholars were so alarming, that it was thought some epidemic disease must prevail, and they all went home.

Another lady informed me, with the greatest agony of feeling, that her daughter came home from school to die from these practices, and confessed it to her parent on her death-bed.

I have also received numbers of letters, from females of all ages, making similar confessions, and asking what they must do to recover from the effects of their thoughtless practices. Among them, I select the following one, as the writer is now no more, and I know that no one can even suspect who she was, nor indeed would any of her numerous friends and admirers believe the possibility of her ever having been the victim she was:

“DEAR FRIEND:—It is with feelings of deep shame and remorse that I sit down to make this confession; but in the hope that it may save others from the abyss into which I have fallen, and also be the means of some little good to my own unworthy self, I feel that I ought not to fail in doing so. You, I know, can both sympathize with and excuse me—perhaps more so than I deserve; and I will, therefore, unburden my mind of a terrible weight which has lain heavily upon it for years.

I am now advanced in life, being fifty-one years of age, and the mother of two children—one, alas! a sufferer from his mother’s folly while she was yet a child.

I was first taught the nature of sexual feelings, and how to excite them, by a servant girl, when only eleven years of age; and being naturally of a warm and excitable temperament, the gratification was very great, and was frequently indulged in. I had not the slightest idea, when first commencing this disgusting practice, that it was wicked or hurtful, nor did I even suspect so till my health began to fail. Fortunately, an old medical book fell in my way, which spoke upon these matters, and that first opened my eyes to the sin of my conduct. Oh! that such books as yours had then been written, and that one had fallen in my way; years of suffering and mental anguish might have been spared me, and my dear child would not have been a living memento of his mother’s folly.

The symptoms which I first began to experience, when about fourteen or fifteen years of age, and which increased as I advanced in life, were of the most distressing character. Extreme languor and weakness, with a disinclination to either bodily or mental exertion, accompanied by a miserable lowness of spirits that nothing alleviated, were my constant attendants. I hated myself—I could not enjoy life—and I feared death. My head was always heavy and full, and my eyes often red as if with

constant weeping, while my judgment became gradually weaker, and my memory failed, till I could neither decide what to do in future, nor remember what I had done. Fortunately, I was so circumstanced that others took care of me, or I know not what I should have done.

My physicians attributed my sinking health to dyspepsia, to the change of life, and various other causes, and prescribed medicines and change of air, but not one seemed to suspect the real cause of the evil.

For years I struggled on in this way, striving against the demon of strong desire with all the strength I had, but only to fall at last. Each act of gratification seemed to become more urgent than the former, and also to prostrate me, both bodily and mentally, still lower than before. At last I became utterly prostrated, and lay for many weeks at the point of death, from mere weakness and exhaustion. Providentially this was the means of my salvation. The bodily exhaustion seemed to weaken my morbid excitability, and my fear that I really should die gave me new courage, so that with returning strength I broke the shackles which had hitherto bound me, and became free. From that time I never once debased myself with the degrading practice again, and my health and appearance so improved, that my friends could scarcely believe it was me they saw.

I, however, still suffered from a shattered nervous system, and though well, compared with what I had been, felt that, more or less, the consequences of my fault would follow me to the grave. At times I would be attacked with fits of melancholy and extreme depression of spirits, without any apparent cause, and would become so wretched that death would have been a relief. My old weakness of the limbs would also come on occasionally, and my mind, I feel convinced had not its natural power.

At twenty-two years of age I was married, and lived happily with my husband for twenty-one years, having during that time three children, of whom one died. The youngest of those living, from his birth, exhibited the same unfortunate tendency of the nervous system as his mother, and, with horror I confess it, was evidently born with a disposition to the same evil habits. Oh! the hours of watching and intense mental agony I endured while rearing up that dear child, and oh! the bitter accusations my own heart brought up against me, for I could not doubt that his moral infirmity was inherited from myself.

As soon as he could understand, I hesitated not to speak to him openly and candidly about it, and by gaining his confidence and love, was enabled to save him from certain destruction, though not altogether from suffering.

For myself, I still suffer, though none suspect the cause, and I daily see, among my dear young friends, many bright buds of promise withering away, as I did, and no one dreaming why.

Wherever I can I speak on this matter, in such cases; but the ignorance of parents is so great, it is not always possible to do so with advantage. I have the satisfaction, however, of knowing that many have been saved by my efforts in this way, and thus my own fall has perhaps been the means of keeping others in the right path.

Oh, with what delight I first heard your lectures, and read your books! At last, said I, a better day has dawned, and females will no longer be compelled to suffer and die from mere ignorance. May you be spared to complete your work, and may the satisfaction of feeling that you do good, ever attend you.

Most truly yours,