

subjects of incantations and other superstitious rites performed by old women who had the reputation of being able to cure the affliction in question. Many of them came under my own immediate observation, but instead of attributing the condition to its real cause they always charged it to some enemy acting through witchcraft, or to the direct agency of the devil.

Godard * states that in Cairo he was informed that a little girl of six and a boy of five years of age had been seen in the act of sexual intercourse in the street, and that sometimes girls of three or four years old called to boys in the street to have sexual relations with them. It is not a subject for surprise, therefore, that precocity like this and other sexual excesses to which they are addicted render the men of the country impotent at an early period of their lives.

Relative to the question whether masturbation or sexual intercourse is more readily productive of impotence, different opinions have prevailed, but I think there can be no reasonable doubt that the first is more influential in bringing about the condition in question. This is not because it is in itself, so far as seminal loss is concerned, any more injurious, but for other reasons which I will proceed to state with as much succinctness as possible.

In the first place, the facilities for the performance of

* "Egypt et Palestine. Observations médicales et scientifiques." Paris, 1857, page 88.

masturbation are always to be obtained, and hence it allows of more frequent repetition than does sexual intercourse. The masturbator is always ready. He has only to retire to privacy for a few minutes and the act is accomplished. He can if he choose pollute himself a hundred or more times a day, and hence produce a degree of exhaustion impracticable if he restricted his acts to intercourse with women. If women were at his command, and he practiced copulation as frequently as he often does masturbation, there would be no difference so far as the orgasm and emission of semen are concerned. Indeed, the sexual act, as requiring a greater expenditure of muscular force not requisite in masturbation, would probably be the more injurious of the two. So far as relates to the orgasm and the seminal loss, it is a matter of no physiological or pathological importance where the semen is deposited, whether in the vagina of a woman, or in any other receptacle. It is the frequency of the act which tells so greatly as a factor for the destructive results in masturbation in comparison with those due to sexual intercourse.

Thus a young man who found himself impotent at the age of twenty-two informed me that he had begun to masturbate at the age of nine, and had often performed the act ten or a dozen times a day for a month at a time. Such indulgence in sexual intercourse would be impracticable in any civilized country. Perhaps in Turkey and other eastern countries, where large harems are kept, there would be no difficulty about the matter,

but certainly it would be impossible in London, Paris or New York, notwithstanding the facilities which these and other large cities afford for forming sexual relations with women.

For this reason, mainly, it is that most of the cases of impotence which medical men have to treat are the result of excessive and premature indulgence in masturbation rather than in sexual intercourse.

The effect of masturbation in causing impotence is greater than that of sexual intercourse for the reason that in the former the mind is more strongly brought in to assist in the production of the orgasm than it is in the latter. The mere act of friction on the glans does not suffice to produce in the masturbator the necessary degree of venereal excitement. He forms various lascivious images in his imagination, and has them vividly before him while performing the act. The consequence is that after a time the normal excitation of contact with the female generative organs does not provoke the orgasm. The reality is so far below what he has frequently pictured to himself while masturbating that it is insufficient. He soon finds this out, and therefore often renounces the allurements of women, and devotes himself exclusively to his pernicious habit, from which, for a time at least, and a long time if he is temperate in the indulgence, he is certain to obtain the voluptuous sensations of which he is in search.

Examples of this fact are constantly coming under the care of the physician or surgeon. Men who have

for many years practised masturbation in moderation, and without any notable impairment of their general health, find themselves nearly entirely impotent in the marriage-bed. Such cases are especially apt to be met with in the persons of young men of strong passions, which they have been obliged to control either from the force of surrounding circumstances or because of their own sense of propriety so far as women are concerned, but who see no impropriety or loss of self-respect in the act of masturbation; or if they do, are too weak to resist the temptation. Such men when they marry find that sexual intercourse is far from satisfying their desire, and moreover, that it is less excitant of the genic feeling than the habit in which they have indulged. They avoid it, therefore, and practise in secret the vice to which they are devoted, or give themselves up to conjugal onanism in its various forms, a practice fully as bad, if not worse for him, besides being unsatisfying, unnatural, and demoralizing to another being.

Cases of this kind are especially frequent among students and other young men, who practise masturbation in early life, ignorant that they are injuring themselves, who subsequently discover their error, and who then make a determined and sometimes successful effort to overcome the habit. More frequently they only partially succeed, and continue the vice filled with remorse after each performance, vowing never again to indulge. Such persons are generally impressionable, and endowed with a high imagination besides; and yet

are from these facts particularly liable to continue masturbation up to the period of their marriage. The idea of sexual intercourse with a lewd woman is offensive to them, an exalted feeling of erotism governs them, and they look forward to the time when they can marry and indulge their passion with a woman for whom they would entertain a sincere affection. Meanwhile they continue to masturbate, imagining to themselves that they are realizing the dreams they have long experienced. At length they marry, and to their extreme distress and surprise find that they are nearly or quite impotent, and that the material blessing which has been conferred upon them in the love of a pure woman whom they love in return is not what they were led to expect. The anticipation has been greater than the reality. Fortunately such cases are not usually difficult ones to manage.

Thus a young theological student who began masturbation at school when twelve years of age, continued it up to his fifteenth year, when becoming aware of its deleterious effects he endeavored to stop. Previously he had indulged not over twice a day, but this for a person of his age (or even one of any age) was pernicious excess. After his determination he succeeded in reducing the number to about one in a week, but in the meantime he was troubled with repeated nocturnal emissions. Some one to whom he communicated the fact of the emissions told him that they occurred in consequence of the sudden decrease in the number of acts of mastur-

bation, and that they were much more injurious. He therefore resumed the practice, and upon several occasions indulged as often as eight or more times a day. It was no uncommon thing for him to have the orgasm three times without ceasing his manœuvres. In these exercises he always had in his mind an ideal, a lovely woman with light hair and blue eyes, one who exhibited towards him the most ardent affection. Things went on in this way till his eighteenth year, when he again made an effort to stop, and this time he succeeded better than on the former occasion. He now left college, and being religiously inclined, began the study of theology with the view of entering the ministry. Entering a theological seminary, he devoted himself to hard study, and had obtained so great a mastery over himself that he had not practised masturbation for over a year. He was, however, greatly troubled with nocturnal emissions three or four times a week at least, and for many weeks in succession as often as every night. There were many occasions in which he had two in a single night.

In consequence of all this he fell into a condition of great nervous prostration, in which the chief feature was cerebral hyperæmia, and which was further characterized by wakefulness, pain in the head, twitching of the muscles of the face, noises such as roaring and hissing in the ears, and an inability to concentrate his mind on the subjects of his study. At night his condition was particularly distressing, for he was afraid to go to

sleep even when towards morning he felt sleepy, lest he should have a seminal emission. In sheer desperation he had while awake in the long hours of the night masturbated several times, one after the other, and then met with a degree of mental composure which otherwise was never present. It really seemed to him as though the act of self-pollution was, after all, the only thing that gave him relief, and but for the consciousness that he was doing wrong and the inevitable feeling of remorse which tormented him the following day, he would have given himself up without restraint to the deleterious habit. In all these acts and in all the lascivious dreams which accompanied the emissions at night it was always a lovely, pure and religious woman with light hair and blue eyes with whom the intercourse in imagination took place. Finally, after continuance of the condition for nearly four years, during which period he was several times on the point of renouncing his intention of entering the ministry, he took orders, and settled down in charge of a country parish, unfit either mentally or physically for the duties he had assumed. But he began to find that it was indispensable for his usefulness, and he was much disposed to think for his health also, that he should marry. He had never in his life had sexual intercourse, and had never experienced the erotic manifestations which some young men of vigorous health and strong sexual power are apt to feel when thrown into intimate relation with women. Still he had no reason, so far as he could determine, to sus-

pect the existence of any inability to enter the marriage state, and as there was a young lady in his congregation who very nearly fulfilled all the requirements of his masturbatory imaginings and his lascivious dreams which accompanied nocturnal emissions, he resolved to propose for her both as a measure of feeling—for he was much attached to her—as well as of expediency. He did so, was accepted, and the marriage in due time took place. The first night was passed at a hotel in the city of New York, and the next morning the young husband called upon me in utter despair and with the information that he was impotent.

At first I thought his was one of those cases so frequently met with in young married men, in which there is temporary impotence from mere excess of desire or want of confidence, and which disappears in a few days under the use of some placebo; but further inquiry, which resulted in the elicitation of the history just given, convinced me that a much more serious instance of genesic disturbance existed. I was satisfied that there was a state of great sexual debility present, which was the direct result of the excesses he had committed. Continual questioning led to the information that his desire had been moderately great, but that his sexual power had been utterly wanting. There had been no erection, or any approach to one, and the result was that after many attempts at intercourse in the expectation that success would attend the efforts, he had desisted, had gone to sleep, and during the night had had two

seminal emissions. In the morning the attempts were renewed, and again without success.

In this case there was no mental trouble, no sentimental idea to be fulfilled, no intercurrent thought rushing through his mind and abolishing all desire. So far as the mind went there was nothing except that he had to admit that the real woman lying by his side was incapable of causing the same degree of sexual excitement as had attended his mental images awake and asleep. As a strongly sapid substance destroys the perception of the tongue for delicate flavors, so the vivid images which had hitherto filled his mind had rendered the normal physiological stimulus of no avail, and in addition there was the loss of power consequent on excess, a result which is perhaps more clearly manifested in regard to the organs of reproduction than those concerned with any other function of the body.

The case was certainly a very unpromising one, but as the physical examination showed that the organs themselves were in good condition, I could not make up my mind that it was hopeless. I advised that he should at once occupy a separate room from that of his wife, that for the present no further attempts at sexual intercourse should be made, and that he should stay in New York about a month for the purpose of receiving such local and other treatment as his case required. This was, he declared, impossible, and he accordingly took his leave disgusted with himself for the hapless condition into which he had fallen and with me and the science of

medicine that he could not be cured in twenty-four hours.

But on the fifth day he returned, having in the meantime utterly failed to consummate the marriage, and ready to agree to any terms that I might impose which were at all likely to result in a restoration to sound sexual health. On my certificate that he was affected with a serious disorder of his nervous system, which required treatment, he readily procured a leave of absence from his congregation, and then he put himself definitely under my care. He and his wife occupied separate rooms in the hotel at which they stopped, and he pledged his honor that on no account would he attempt sexual intercourse till I gave him permission.

The first thing to do was to arrest the nocturnal emissions, of which he had had one, sometimes, more every night since his marriage. To this end I prohibited sleeping on the back, and enjoined the use, morning and night, of cold baths, with friction of the whole body after each with coarse towels. He was also to walk at least five miles every day, and to go to some place of amusement of a cheerful character every evening. Internally his food was to be of a highly nutritious character, of which fat in some form or other, preferably cream, was to constitute a large proportion. His dinner was to be taken not later than two o'clock and a couple of glasses of Burgundy were to be drunk with it. For medicine I prescribed the following:

R Sodii bromidi..... ℥i.
 Pepsin (Fairchild's).
 Pancreatin (Fairchild's)..... āā ℥ iss.
 Glycerinæ.
 Aquæ..... āā ℥ ii.

M. Dose, a teaspoonful in a little sugar and water three times a day after meals.

My objects in giving this mixture were to lessen the reflex and automatic excitability of the generative system, to relieve the cerebral hyperæmia, and to promote the digestion of food.

At bed-time he took a capsule of five grains of the monobromide of camphor.

Every morning I applied statical electricity to the penis and testicles, and to the whole length of the spinal cord, drawing inch sparks from the former organs, and from three to four inch sparks from the spine. This was continued for about fifteen minutes. Though painful the effect was all that could be desired: the blood-vessels of the penis became visibly distended, and the whole organ assumed a deeper red color than it had possessed, as he said, within his recollection. For several hours afterwards a warm pleasant glow was felt in the penis and scrotum.

Twice a week I applied by means of a urethral electrode a galvanic current from eight cells to the membranous and prostatic portions of the urethra, with the object of diminishing the morbid excitability which evidently existed in those parts. I may say that examination with the sound had previously demonstrated the

hyperæsthetic condition of the parts in question. I had at first thought of cauterizing them with Lallemand's instrument, but decided upon the galvanism as being the less painful and equally or more efficacious. In very severe cases, however, Lallemand's procedure is preferable.

Under this system of treatment the general health of the patient began to improve from the first. The nocturnal emissions ceased entirely on the fifth night. On the first night he had one, but without a dream; on the second, two; on the third, none; on the fourth, one; on the fifth, none, and there were no more while he was under my observation.

On every night after the second he slept for from six to eight hours, and in the morning he awoke refreshed and cheerful. On the morning of the eleventh day he had an erection, which, however, was due to a distended bladder, but which nevertheless was the first of the kind he had experienced for several years.

On the fifteenth night he had a lascivious dream in which the usual images did not appear, or, if they did—and upon reflection he was a little doubtful on the point—they were much less distinct than they had been. They were not accompanied by an emission. The next morning he had another erection accompanied by a slight desire, and every morning thereafter while he remained under my care he had an erection, sometimes with and sometimes without sexual desire.

He had now been two weeks under treatment, and the general results may be summed up as follows:

Sound sleep every night.

Freedom from pain or other uncomfortable feeling in the head.

A strong, hearty appetite, with good gastric and intestinal digestion.

Cessation of the nocturnal emissions and of the lascivious dreams.

A return of the matutinal erections, and of normal desire in connection with them.

Frequently during the day desire with erections. These, however, were not as yet strong, and I continued my prohibition in regard to attempts at intercourse.

On the fifteenth I suspended the administration of the bromide of sodium, continuing, however, the mixture with the other ingredients unchanged; and in addition I prescribed the following solution:

R Strychniæ sulph. gr. i.
Acidi hypophos, dil. ℥i.
M. ft. sol.

Dose, ten drops three times a day before meals in a teaspoonful of the fluid extract of coca.

I gave this mixture for the reason that I know of no better tonic for the sexual organs, after the abnormal state of erethism into which they get by abuse has been relieved, than strychnia, hypophosphorous acid and coca. It is necessary, however, not to give it imme-

diately before going to bed, as without this precaution it may produce seminal emissions.

From this time on his condition continued to improve. He had gained over ten pounds in weight, was getting stronger every day and more cheerful, and altogether more normal in his mind. His erections were occasionally tolerably strong, but, as a rule, though he had several every day as a consequence of the very vivid desires which he experienced, they were not yet by any means of natural strength. He was very desirous of going home, being convinced that he could carry on all the treatment but the electric as well there as in New York. This was probably true, but as I attached a great deal of importance to this part of the management of the case, I declined to give my consent. He had now been under my charge for twenty days, and I felt confident that a week or two longer would complete the cure. On the night of the twenty-first day his wife left her bed and got into his, and he, in disregard of his pledge, attempted intercourse, and with a measurable degree of success. I judged, however, that the emission was premature. The next morning he was filled with remorse, and not only renewed his pledge, but promised, in addition, that his wife should go home and prepare the house for his return. This, however, was not what I wanted. I desired her presence, under restraint, as a constant stimulus to him, but I did not want things to be carried to extremes again till he was strong enough to act his part in a physio-

logical manner. There were, I have reason to believe, no further infractions of discipline. On the night of the thirty-second day he attempted intercourse with my partial consent. I knew he would do better if I allowed him to make the attempt with seeming reluctance than if I gave him full liberty to do as he pleased. In sexual matters, as in many others, the desire and the power are stronger with forbidden fruit than with that which can be had for the asking. The end fully justified the means, for he informed me the next morning, with great satisfaction, that I was over careful with him, and that he believed he had done all that could have been reasonably expected of him.

I then allowed him to go home, but continued all the treatment, excepting the electricity and the nightly dose of the mono-bromide of camphor. I thought he ought to continue the whole system, with the exceptions mentioned, for three or four months.

And I warned him in the most solemn manner that, under no circumstances, was he to have sexual intercourse more frequently than once a week for at least a year, and perhaps even longer. More than a year has now elapsed, and I have every reason to believe that he has strictly followed my injunction. He writes that he is determined not to go beyond the limit fixed, that his happiness is complete, and that neither he nor his wife are willing to exceed those moral and physiological bounds which nature has imposed; that she is pregnant, and that they both look forward to the birth

of the child as a sign that God has forgiven him the sins and indiscretions of his youth.

I have dwelt upon this case and its treatment at some length for the reason that it is a type of a large class, showing the ordinary effects of early and excessive masturbation, and for the additional reason that it shows what are, I think, the therapeutical principles which should prevail in their treatment. It would be very easy to adduce similar examples from my own experience, but as showing that the influence I speak of is distinctly recognized by other writers, I cite the following from Deslandes, which, although it relates to a member of the female sex, is equally applicable to males:

"Masturbation," he says, "instead of the natural feeling, may induce in the sexual organs an irritability quite different from that caused by the act of intercourse, and which leads to results that are far from being agreeable. This fact was strongly impressed upon me by the case of a young woman who was often under my professional care. At a boarding-school she was taught masturbation, and gave herself up to it without restraint. At seventeen she was married, and had formed the most voluptuous ideas of the pleasures she was about to enjoy. But what a disappointment! Marriage, instead of giving her pleasure, was the source of positive discomfort and infinite pain; or rather, what was most frequently the case, she was completely insensible to the caresses of her husband. Again, a state of spasms and convulsions supervened after any attempt