

# SPERMATORRHOEA OR SEMINAL WEAKNESS.

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When one looks out in the morning upon the streets and fields of a country borough after a snow storm, he sees the lone tracks of pedestrians, pursuing more or less devious directions, until some hours after, when the organized activities of the denizens proceeding, in well-defined routes, show that there is a common understanding and a disposition to pursue, harmoniously and methodically, the paths of industry.

In looking out upon the fields of human suffering, so far, especially, as they relate to the diseases of the sexual organs, just such diverse foot-prints are observable as those which have been pictured in the foregoing at the dawn of day, and it is only with the eye of faith and hope looking forward to a more rational future that we prophetically discern the world's medical humanitarians uniting, with so much earnestness, truthfulness and accord, as to present to mankind well-defined paths which shall lead unmistakably from the slough of disease to the attractive heights of mental and physical soundness. In the few treatises on the subject of spermatorrhoea which have thus far been published, we find the lone tracks of some practitioners of all schools, but especially of the old, who tenaciously hold that the involuntary losses of the seminal secretions are but natural; that a life of continence necessarily causes their occasional emission; that if they do not happen oftener than once or twice a month no injurious results are liable to follow. In the same field of investigation we find foot-prints of a few practitioners of all schools, but largely of the new, who regard the involuntary losses of these vital fluids as evidence of disease of the sexual system which threatens, in time, to undermine both mind and body, unless this drain upon the nervous and vascular systems is arrested. Again, in the same field of honest research we discern the club-footed, bow-kneed and sharp-toed tracks of the unlearned and of the sharp predatory practitioner who may be called the alarmist, and who, from ignorance or mercenary motives, magnifies the symptoms of the disease, and makes any one who discovers a white sediment in his urinary deposits, or an exudation of clear, transparent mucus from the urethra, believe that he is a fit subject for medical treatment. Now, while I can hardly hope to lay out a path so clearly and cleanly cut that all will follow therein, I shall try to trace upon the almost pathless field of inexperience such lines as may, some time in the future, with the amendments which abler minds shall suggest, make safe paths for the feet of

medical men when they go forth to extend a helping hand to those who have fallen victims to self-abuse or sexual excess. To attempt such a gigantic project in medical engineering with the meager material at hand, would, perhaps, be presumptuous, were it my intention to depend at all upon the little which has been already written upon the subject; but having been deeply interested in this department of medical science for the past twenty years, having been consulted by thousands who were the real or imaginary victims of spermatorrhœa, having attentively listened to the recitals of their varied experiences, and, finally having succeeded in administering relief in the most of them, either by medical treatment or considerate counsel, I shall make mainly my own foot-prints just as a few others have made theirs, leaving it to the discrimination of the profession at large whether mine are the most direct and promising of satisfactory results, or the most devious and misleading. Time will determine whether they are worthy to become the well-marked paths which will be deepened and widened by the footsteps of other members of the profession. Let me further say that it is not so much my confidence in my abilities which leads me to act the part of a pioneer in this almost unexplored and vice-blighted wilderness, as it is my, perhaps, fool-hardy disposition to venture openly where many of infinitely greater ability steal forth so masked and muffled to evade the gaze of the prudish public that they render themselves practically blind and deaf, and as such, simply "blind leaders of the blind." To enter upon our inquiry let us first examine the reasons for asserting that

#### INVOLUNTARY LOSSES ARE AN EVIDENCE OF DISEASE.

In the first place, then, I shall remind the reader that if it be claimed that their occasional occurrence is but natural, we find no analogous function in the human system, male or female. If they were found in a majority of cases to occur with some degree of uniformity and regularity once in twenty-eight days, like the catamenia of women, examples of which, in a limited number, have never presented themselves in my practice, it would be entirely admissible to call attention to the dissimilarity in point of *vital quality* of the discharges, the one freighted with cells capable, if distributed under favorable conditions, of creating hundreds of human beings, and the other of a material which, if retained, or if it could be returned, would poison the crimson currents of the vascular system and sow the seed of death rather than of life. Where, let me ask, is the parallel? It is conceded by the profession that the menstrual product is entirely unlike the blood circulating in the arteries and veins of the human body, so much so, indeed, that the former might be designated by some other name more appropriate than that of blood, a term which at once suggests to the mind all those vital elements which go to build up the wonderful machinery of the human system. The actual fact is that involuntary discharges of semen only have their analogy in the human economy in what are known as hemorrhages. There are those who have frequent attacks of nose bleed, some

indeed who have them with an approximate measure of regularity, but no one would think of attributing them to any other causes than those resulting from physical injury or diseased action. There are, however, cases in which epistaxis seems to give relief—some in which the attacks are invited rather than dreaded. So, too, there are rare instances in which involuntary seminal losses seem to make the head feel clearer and the spirits more buoyant. Albeit such examples of either are not numerous and diseased conditions are the cause in one case as much as in the other. Involuntary seminal losses really have their analogy more in uterine than in other hemorrhages, the organs involved in the latter corresponding in character with those which are effected with the former and the debilitating effects resulting from either being more uniformly certain though by no means precisely similar. And here we may again recur to the dissimilarity between menstrual blood and that which comes from hemorrhage. The physician finds no difficulty in distinguishing between the natural menstrual flow and the weakening discharge attending uterine hemorrhage; nor does the patient herself, if ordinarily intelligent. When, then, the occasional loss of pure blood is so readily recognized by its characteristic appearance and still more by the characteristic effects attending that loss, shall we hiddle over the question whether the occasional involuntary losses of the most vital elements of the body are less injurious than the losses of those which are less vital? Shall we say that that form of protoplasm which is capable of imparting nutriment to the already living body is richer in material than that which is freighted with the germs capable of actually creating life? Certainly no one will say this. Nor will the majority of those subject to hemorrhages find by comparing experiences with the mass of those who have involuntary seminal losses, that they are the greater sufferers. And here we approach the climax of our argument. Here we come to the injurious effects of involuntary losses which must stamp them as the final witnesses against those who would consider them lightly and pass them by as unworthy of the earnest investigation of the humane physician. And what are the symptoms that rise up like phantoms and shadows distorting the imagination and darkening the pathway of life to those who suffer such losses? The voices of millions answer: hypochondriasis, with its army of imps whispering words of despair and painting to the imagination pictures as weird and woeful as those which came from the pencil of Gustave Doré, when he sketched the blood-curdling designs of Dante's *Inferno*; loss of nerve power if not of nerve substance, rendering the mind fickle, the memory feeble, and the resolution unstable; general physical depression with its concomitants of morning lassitude; absence of both mental and bodily energy, with circulation impaired. And here let me digress sufficiently to say that it is noteworthy that all diseases of the sexual system seem to invariably affect the mind, giving rise to peculiar mental manifestations. It has been observed that well-marked affections of the lungs render the patient cheerful and hopeful, but equally so it is an indisputable fact that all

diseases of the sexual organs, in male or female, produce directly opposite results, and frequently cause the sufferers not only to be despairing, but irritable, capricious and unreasonable. Dr. Lewis A. Sayre who, in his surgical practice has been perhaps, more observing of the effects of congenital phymosis than many, published a pamphlet some time since giving remarkable illustrations of how simply elongated, constricted or adhering fore-skins have produced idiocy, insanity and all species of mental unsoundness, and how so simple an operation as circumcision has cured a majority of those upon whom he has operated, which facts all go to prove how slight a departure from the normal condition of these organs may disturb the mental equilibrium. The same monograph, if I remember rightly, gives examples of cures of mental disorders in cases of women, by some minor surgical operation upon unal-formed organs of the sexual system. Every physician who has had much experience in the treatment of what are popularly called the "diseases of women," must have observed their effects upon the minds of such patients. The writer certainly has, and many marked instances rise in his memory, while he is penning these lines. Just as the brain seems to be the nerve center of all intellectual impressions, so the sexual system seems to be the nerve center which at least reflects all feeling and emotion, and gives to either a light or somber hue, according to its healthy or diseased condition. It is not necessary, however, to dwell upon these facts, for I question if any medical man or woman of experience, will deny their correctness. Conceding them, how can any one escape the logical conclusion that involuntary losses of semen are the results of diseased action, when a class of disorders almost identical, in many cases precisely so, with those which present themselves in recognized diseases of the sexual organs, are almost invariably found to exist in well-marked cases of spermatorrhœa? Leaving such hard-shelled shack for those to crack who have heavier hammers, we will proceed to consider

#### THE PATHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS WHICH ARE THE PREDISPOSING CAUSES.

I think I have been the first to attribute nocturnal involuntary emissions of the most marked character primarily to a *too active condition of the testes*; that form of spermatorrhœa, which is characterized by diurnal involuntary exudations of the spermatic secretions being pretty well understood to result mainly from relaxation of the fibers and tissues which control the outlets of the spermatic vessels. In support of the first proposition, we have before us the physiological fact that all the organs of the body may be thrown out of their normal balance by causes which may induce either undue activity or apathy; there is no valid reason for believing that the testicular glands are alone an exception to this rule. Conceding that they are governed by the same unvarying law, there is no way in which these peculiar nocturnal explosions, sometimes accompanied with amorous dreams, and sometimes not, according probably to the recollection of the patient, can be so clearly accounted for; at least the mind of the writer is so impressed after giving much thought and attention to

their phenomena. Through self-abuse, sexual excess, or some other cause susceptible of denouement in any given case which exhibits frankness in the presentation of facts, the testes have been rendered morbidly active. In this condition they work too hard, secrete too much, and passing their products through the vasa deferentia congest the spermatic vessels. The latter, distended to their utmost capacity, awaken in the mind of the sleeper those erotic emotions which give rise to amative dreams, and in the delirium of the moment the ejaculatory ducts are goaded to action; or the spermatic vessels overflowing to the extent of invading the ejaculatory ducts, excite them to spasmodic contractions which cause the nocturnal pollution to take place without a dream. This last explanation is intended to account for those, if such there be, which take place without amorous dreams. But it is the opinion of the writer that the amorous impulses are invariably enkindled, and that the imagination is always weaving a romance which fades from the recollection when no dream is recalled in examples belonging to this class. One argument in support of this view, is, that such involuntary explosions never occur diurnally, except under excitement induced by coying with an object which naturally awakens uncontrollable erotic feeling, or some other nervous or magnetic irritation. One case has come under my observation wherein the manipulations of the head by the hands of the hair dresser, would occasion erotic sensations, accompanied with spasmodic contractions of the spermatic vessels and an abundant flow of semen. Except under some such provocation, the wide-awake individual pursuing his studies, or his professional or business avocation, controls his emotions and retains his spermatic secretions just as he does the contents of his bladder sometimes for hours after this organ has clamored for relief. The child, seemingly healthy, who wets the bed by copious micturition, usually does so, dreaming that he is in some convenient place where he is proceeding to relieve an overloaded bladder.

While the morbid activity of the testes is the primary cause of nocturnal pollutions, there are a variety of conditions which may aid in provoking them, such for instance as irritation of the spermatic vessels and ejaculatory ducts resulting from diseases of the bladder, affections of the prostate gland, or even from the presence of piles, or ascarides in the rectum. Again, the fullness of the overloaded spermatic vessels may be aggravated by pressure from a distended rectum in one of costive habit, or by the pressure of the bladder in one who, subject to these pollutions, fails to exercise prudence in voiding the bladder on retiring or as often during the night as it may become unduly distended. And, finally, to say nothing of those excitements which may result from spending the evening in speech or diversion which awakens the sexual organs to a greater degree of activity, exciting food or drink taken in the afternoon or evening, or overloading a weak stomach which may send fermenting or unduly heating elements into the circulation will as surely affect and stimulate these unduly active organs as: cold is sure to affect the weakest spot in one who contracts it.

In that form of spermatorrhœa which occurs diurnally and is characterized by a leaking exudation of the seminal secretions, the individual affected may or may not have that over activity of the testes which has just been considered. If it takes place while under undue amative excitement, then it is evident that the testes are morbidly active. But when such losses are observed at stool or during micturition they may or may not be; if copious, quite likely they are; if slight, it is not so certain that they are. Some careless and ignorant writers have intimated, if not in so many words said, that when the urine, after standing, deposits a whitish sediment or exhibits a suspended whitish mucous substance, the one voiding it may conclude that he is a victim of losses of semen with the urine. Such pseudo-medical scribblers overlook the fact that urine in its normal condition contains alkaline phosphates and sulphates, chloride of sodium as well as the phosphates of lime and magnesia, which are liable to be so precipitated, to say nothing of mucus and pus which may come from affections of the urinary apparatus without any involvement whatever of the procreative organs. If one observes either at stool or while voiding the water the passage of a semi-fluid substance, having the exact characteristics of the semen, on close scrutiny, then he is able to diagnose his own case, and may directly conclude that he is a victim of diurnal losses of semen. Otherwise he may, if he suspects such an affection, better leave the question to a physician of experience and discretion, and especially to one who has established a reputation for integrity. If the urine is to be examined it can only be properly done for this purpose under the microscope, and then only by one who has had some experience in microscopy. The human family is sufficiently beset with ills to make it absolutely barbarous and cruel to administer in the least degree to a diseased imagination which sees, or thinks it sees, a threatening evil in some of the most natural of our physical processes. The humane physician will exercise great caution in doubtful cases, to the end that he may neither pass over too hastily those who have incipient disease, or unduly awaken the fears of those who are simply the victims of a diseased imagination. Indeed, in any case of spermatorrhœa, incipient or well-defined, hypochondriasis is so apt to be a concomitant symptom, the apprehensions of the patient should be quieted by every assurance that can be truthfully given. It would be quite safe to say that a morbid state of the mind is in many cases a powerful accessory to a morbid condition of the genital organs in producing nocturnal emissions. The very dread of them, in some cases, keeps the mind so agitated as to render it sensitively susceptible to the influences which ascend through the system of nervous telegraphy from the over-charged seminal vessels to the disordered brain. Here, then, is a double-headed pathological disturbance, which must not be overlooked in diagnosing, as well as in treating, a given case. It possesses the subtle characteristics of an echo, and the plane of reflection must be as faithfully looked after as the seat of the impulse.

Extreme propositions often create and precipitate prejudice upon theories otherwise so self-evident as to carry conviction. Whether or not my views thus far have been expressed in such a manner as to carry the weight of conviction, I am not unconscious of the fact that I am, in some measure, about to jeopardize whatever of favorable consideration I may have been fortunate enough to obtain, when I assert that every male child that reaches the age of puberty, attains this stage of development with such diseased conditions existing in his genital organs as to make him a comparatively easy victim to spermatorrhoea, and that one of the predisposing causes of this disease is born with him, and ripens in the years of his adolescence. *I refer to over active testes.* Placed under the microscope a single drop of what is called normal semen, exhibits hundreds of spermatozoa, or their cells, every one of which is believed to possess fructifying power! Why all this waste! Some one will reply "that just such waste is observable in all nature." "Look," he will add, "at the floral kingdom; mark the abundance and waste of pollen." Is it not obvious, however, that an infinitely larger per centage of these vegetable cells are utilized than of those of the fructifying secretions of man, even in individuals who resort to no means whatever to limit reproduction while indulging in sexual commerce? Look, too, to the mollusca; observe what millions upon millions of created germs are produced, but do not fail, at the same time, to take cognizance of the fruitfulness of this lower order of animal life. Indeed, as you descend from the human family down through the various orders of animal and vegetable life, you find evidences of increasing multiplying power, of fructifying germs, and with these, mark, increased reproduction where the conditions for the same are at all favorable. If this were not the fact in regard to our common oyster, how soon it would disappear from our markets, when it is considered that millions upon millions are consumed annually. The wholesale trade in New York, in oysters, is estimated at \$25,000,000 per year. And this sum must represent an annual sale in this market alone of over 2,000,000,000 of these bivalves!

It is not, however, wholly upon the facts that this line of investigation evolves, that I base the seemingly presumptuous proposition under immediate consideration. It is not simply because we might expect, as we ascend in the various orders of life, to find the germinal cells steadily, numerically decreasing, until, in man, we should find them in his supposed normal condition at their minimum (whereas we do not); but it is because we cannot look back upon the history of the human family, nor open our eyes boldly upon its present status without being startled with the extent to which the reproductive organs are abused. In the early ages, while the religious world fostered a polygamy which assigned hundreds of wives and thousands of concubines to one man, portions of the pagan world professedly upheld a monogamy which maintained, side by side with it, female prostitution and youthful self-abuse. Other portions, and, perhaps, of remoter ages, though, at times and in places, cotem-



poraneous with the former, worshiped at the shrines of Phallus and Priapus, and, while worshipping idols made in the image of the genital organs of both sexes, abused these organs by the most revolting excesses that it is in the power of the human imagination to picture. A sentiment which, in view of the origin of the term asceticism, it were a misnomer to so denominate, sprang up in the midst of this debauchery, and, though pagan at its birth, became the adopted child of Christianity in the fourth century; and this Hercules in appearance, but "What is it" in fact, has been trying to grapple with what is commonly known as "sensuality" for hundreds of years. During the middle ages its head was elongated far above the possible attainments of the masses, while its caudal extremity was plunged deep into the sickening excesses which were reveling beneath. And, notwithstanding the fact that the church has been greatly enlightened by genius which has been nurtured at her own bosom, and by the votaries of science who have lighted candles in her chancels, this creature of paganism, this adopted monstrosity of Christianity, this sentiment we call asceticism, still holds sway; and while physiological ignorance envelops peoples of all climes and all religions, abuses of the sexual organs still go on in marriage and out of marriage, in the harem, in the secret chamber, and in the abode of the harlot, and while nature is pronouncing her implacable woe upon those who violate her statutes, the upholders of the false sentiment misnamed asceticism pronounce a woe and a penalty upon those who seek earnestly to make known the provisions of her inevitable laws. Turning our eyes, therefore, from the excesses and abuses of the past, we have only to lift the veil which conceals the mysteries of human inexperience at this very moment to shrink with a sense of horror from the abuses inflicted upon those organs which are the physical sources of our being; organs that it will not do to think about, talk about, or write about; organs that preside over those wonderful processes which create a human soul, but which, at the same time, are so disgusting, or, to be more forcible, are so downright nasty as to excite the greatest sense of shame and moral nausea in the minds of those who come into life and being through their instrumentality! And, to cure all the ills growing out of their abuse, forsooth, the old doctrine of silence and ignorance is enjoined right in the face of the fact that everywhere we look we find that this pernicious doctrine fosters rather than eradicates such evils! Why not, in this age of the world, make a moral "departure;" bring the light of science to bear upon the sexual system and its functions, and invite the whole world to come to the feast of knowledge which shall invigorate them with regenerated protoplasm, and bring the reproductive organs to that possible condition which may work out the salvation of the race through the simple yet wonderful process of generation? Cannot the votaries of religion be persuaded to go hand in hand with the devotees of science in this great work, remembering that the injunction of Jesus of Nazareth, that "man must be born again," in no way conflicts with the thus far unheeded demand of nature, that



man shall be physiologically born right at the very outset? And, now, after this more seeming than actual digression, let us, in view of the known sexual excesses and abuses, through all ages to the present, and at this very juncture, ask the question—how, in the very nature of things, could the human testes fail to have acquired an abnormal activity which might, with good reason, account for the presence, in a single drop of the seminal secretions of hundreds of germinal cells, and in the whole product of a single emission, millions of them, each one capable of fecundating an ovule and producing, under natural conditions, a human being?

### THE STAGES OF MORBID CONDITIONS.

The first stage, as may be obviously implied by what has gone before, is that one which is handed down by heredity, and which it may, with reason, be conjectured, hastens the age of puberty in the young; *the predisposition to abnormally active testes*. It is impossible to know the precise average age which nature designed should usher in pubescent development. The "table of the commandments has been broken," and only a thorough study of nature's laws, a familiar knowledge of the sexual organs and their functions, a faithful observance of such rules as these investigations shall evolve, can restore it.

The second stage is that which in nearly or quite every male born child supervenes upon the attainment of pubescent age: *the undue secretion of sperm cells*.

The third stage is that which is quite common, even in manhood's prime, and which proceeds from too active testes and consequent undue congestion of the spermatie vessels: *insufficient control of the orgasm and premature emission in coition*.

The fourth stage is that which is so much the curse of young men, and proceeding from the same cause, aggravated by secret habits or excesses: *nocturnal involuntary pollutions*.

The fifth stage may be stated as that which proceeds from not only too active testes, but from an atonic condition of the seminal vessels and ducts, and, in some rare cases possibly, from atonic conditions alone: *diurnal exudations of semen on exertion, with excitement, or in the urine*.

### HOW TO OVERCOME MORBID CONDITIONS.

It is usually too much the study of the physician to cure diseased conditions, and too little his effort to devise means for preventing them. Even at some risk of offending the conservative mind, I shall outline some methods which might, if pressed upon the attention of the public, gradually, very gradually, say in the course of a few generations, eradicate those morbid conditions which are now born with every male child, and which come in at the birth of every female offspring, though influencing it in a somewhat different way. One of these is to not only thoroughly teach the child the construction and offices of the generative organs, but to impress him and her with the necessity after arriving at the age of manhood and womanhood

In no case to exercise them, except under the stimulus of powerful attraction, and then only when the object sought is impelled to participation by a like overpowering impulse. One of the greatest recognized evils in intemperance in drinking is that one denominated "social tippling," wherein an individual, without consulting the needs of his body, or even the dictates of his appetite, sips some stimulating beverage simply because he is cordially invited to "take a drink." A like evil exists in all social life in the matter of refreshments at social gatherings where people get together, some ready for the delectables which are served from salvers or from a bountiful table, and others indifferent or absolutely preferring not to taste any of them. Nevertheless, all partake, paying no heed to the promptings of appetite, or the physical needs, and, by so doing, take into the system elements which clog the vital machinery and impair health. Precisely so in matters appertaining to the sexual act. Out of marriage we have millions of courtesans, who habitually hire out, as it were, these sacred organs, not heeding their impulses, even if they mentally revolt at their misuse, and never, of course, consulting their sexual needs; in marriage we have the sovereignty of the husband over the wife and the gratification of selfish lust in millions upon millions of instances when her soul shrinks from the profanation of organs over which she should have supreme control. In both instances it is popularly supposed that the women are the only ones to suffer unless in the dens of harlotry venereal diseases are contracted, but when the sexual organs and their natural uses come to be understood a different conclusion will be reached. It will be found that sexual appetite is not alone the offspring of sensual nature, but that it springs up from masculine isolation on the one side or feminine isolation on the other, in which every part, the moral, intellectual, and physical being is starving as it were for an element, an aura, a nerve stimulus or a magnetism, or call it by any name you will—a something at any rate necessary to harmonize a dismembered half, the complete whole being permeated and unified by both the masculine and feminine element. This harmonization—this unification, can only take place under such conditions as tend to draw two persons irresistibly together; conditions wherein there is the most perfect mutual attraction and reciprocity. These conditions seldom obtain in the brothel where the starving masculine pursues a blind impulse which the greedy feminine is willing to indulge for a consideration in money; they are never found in the marriage bed where the wife submits simply because she must; they are even absent in wedlock when the amiable wife, desirous of gratifying every wish of a kind husband, yields an apathetic sexual organization to his uses. As well seek to appease an appetite for food with saw-dust pudding or empty husks as to attempt to realize an agreeable sense of sufficiency with one who is indifferent, repellant, or sexually apathetic. The kernel of the wheat is not there. Moreover, when the sexual act is carried so far as to produce the orgasm in one it should be so complete as to induce it in both, or one is defrauded. There are magnetic or nerve bolts as well as

thunder bolts, and the former are as effective in their way as the latter are in theirs. In the sexual act they seem to be compensating and harmonizing to the female organization after great nervous agitation; and to the male I believe it will yet be found that they impart those subtle nerve forces which, uniting with other elements in the nervous and vascular systems, re-create in him the vital sperm material which has been for the moment depleted. Whether, or not, however, this philosophy be correct in explaining the injury which clearly results in sexual unions in which the female is for any reason irresponsive every physician of experience knows that such injury does manifest itself sooner or later in the male when such unnatural practices are for any length of time continued. In my own practice some of the most marked cases of spermatorrhoea have been revealed among men who have been living for years in uncongenial marriage or among those having affectionate but sexually apathetic wives. One requisite, then, for the prevention of morbid sexual conditions is the avoidance of sexual indulgence when either of the parties concerned is liable to be repellant, indifferent, or apathetic.

Another requisite is presented in a way to somewhat stagger us, and still we gain nothing and perhaps lose much, by closing our eyes to it. It involves a change in our social system, if not in our civilization. Puberty usually dawns upon youth before the age of fifteen, while custom—the inevitable expenses attending marriage, and a variety of weighty considerations—defers ten or twenty years the time when the passions and desires arising therefrom, should have natural and honorable gratification. Admitting what is probably true, that the period of pubescence is anticipated a few years by morbid sexual conditions, which have been handed down by our ancestry, what is to inaugurate a change in this respect? Prematurely ushered into pubescence, the youth, full of hot blood, if he be aware of the evils of self-abuse, struggles almost ineffectually against the ever-present temptation, and if his will-power be not stronger than his impulses, he yields often enough to increase the morbid conditions which impel him; if will-power be deficient he plunges into the debasing and destructive vortex of secret indulgence; and if ignorance of the sexual organs be added to the overpowering impulse and the lack of self-control, there is hardly a bottom to the wretched experiences he will reach ere he is rescued, if saved he ever be, from his downward course. Then these victims of self-abuse finally marry and reproduce offspring of like infirmity, if indeed, the same morbid impulse be not intensified. Is the offspring of such parentage to establish the normal pubescent age? In view of such considerations and others, which readily suggest themselves to the mind, it seems self-evident that to have a healthful race—a people free from morbid sexual conditions—our social system should be modeled upon a physiological basis. All the mysteries of the sexual organization and its functions should awaken in our minds a determination to solve them, and as rapidly as we attain knowledge, it should be put to practical use in making our social and legal enactments conserve the purity and the physical and moral well-being of every man, woman and child.

Neither the family nor the State can, in the long run, be benefited by imposing social regulations which are opposed to nature, no matter how attractive they may be in the conventional garb of external virtue and morality. The lead and line just now cannot touch bottom, whether it be dropped into the pool of self-pollution, the maelstrom of prostitution, or the turbulent waters of uncongenial marriage. Each of these pits is so deep no bottom can be found. The only remedy is in seeking nature's institutes and conforming strictly to natural laws, whether or not they seem to conflict with the teachings of theology or morality. Science is the seer to solve this problem.

#### THE TREATMENT OF SPERMATORRHOEA.

In order to approach this division of our subject understandingly, it is necessary to look first into the changed pathological conditions which are liable to exist not in the sexual organs alone, but in the system generally. To do this I will liken the human system with all its organs to the factory with all its machinery and wheels. In the former, what is called nervous force is the motor power, and in the latter it is usually steam. In both all goes on smoothly while the motor power is equally distributed. In the first, if you quicken the action of one organ as a rule you will find that some other organ or organs are commensurately deprived of power, and to the extent that the latter are robbed, the unduly active one is driven to almost destructive activity. In the shop you have only to throw off the leathern bands from some of the wheels to make the remaining ones buzz with redoubled velocity. Restore the bands so that the power is equally distributed, and all the machinery turns with agreeable and uniform motion.

Now, in nearly all cases of spermatorrhœa it will be found on examination that some organ is suffering from lack of nerve stimulus; sometimes more than one. The testes have reached a degree of abnormal activity which robs some other part of its nervous force. In one case it may be the stomach; in another the liver; or it may be, and generally is, whether other organs are involved or not, that wonderful reservoir of nerve force, the brain. Albeit the heart is quite apt to participate in the abnormal activity existing in the genital organs; the same causes which induced the latter have, by momentarily quickening arterial activity brought the heart into a condition which predisposes it to palpitation. In the absence of this complication, the muscular system is likely to suffer by the unequal distribution of nervous force; but with it, muscular exercise becomes disagreeable, and from want of exercise as well as of nervous stimulus the muscular system loses its tone; the limbs become weak; and muscular as well as mental prostration supervenes.

To treat a case in which such complications exist, it is necessary to administer not only such remedies as are calculated to restore the sexual organs to their normal balance, but the cure will be facilitated, if indeed it will not depend, upon auxiliary remedies intended to arouse the dormant organs or parts to the faithful performance of each of their individual functions. Hence, while sedatives, nervines

and anti-spasmodics, such as Bromide of Potassium, Bromide of Ammonium, Humulus Lupulus, Gelseminum, Macrotys Racemosa, Cerasus Virginiana, etc., etc., are administered to quiet nervous excitability as is usually supposed, *but really for the purpose of lessening testicular activity and vesicular sensibility*, approved remedies must be given to awaken action and restore tone to other organs which may be enfeebled. If the liver be torpid, alternate with remedies suitable to awaken that; again, if the stomach be weak, make the treatment comprehensive enough to restore active digestion and, so on, giving due attention to any and every organ or part which may be suffering for the want of its due proportion of nervous stimuli, for by so doing the excess of motor power which is playing the mischief in the reproductive machinery will be proportionately diverted therefrom to carry on functional activities which have been in a degree suspended. It is like adjusting the thrown-off belts to the quiet wheels, thereby relieving the single one which is buzzing with lightning velocity. This suggestion the writer considers of fundamental importance in the treatment of spermatorrhœa. Success in many cases is impracticable if it be disregarded.

When the urinary organs are involved it is usually found that local irritations or possibly inflammations are present, affecting either the bladder, urethra or both, for which Hydrastis Canadensis and Populin are almost specifics if they be combined with suitable diuretics, such as the symptoms and idiosyncracies of the patient seem to indicate. The combination of Populin and Gelsemin is excellent for overcoming such urinary affections as are attended with scalding or suppression of the urine, for the Gelsemin at the same time that it assists in allaying urethral irritation, lessens the morbid activity of the testes. In complications of this character the blood must necessarily receive its due share of attention to make the cure permanent, for it will almost invariably be found that such local irritations or inflammations are perpetuated by acrimonious humors derived from vitiated blood.

When spermatorrhœa is characterized by involuntary nocturnal emissions it is not only necessary to arrest the over activity of the testes by some such means as have been suggested, but, after they have been brought under partial-control, to administer some such anti-periodics as Salicin, Cornin, or possibly Quinia. This method will be like clinching the nail after it has been well driven in. Nor should I omit in this place to mention a plan which I have pursued with success in treating this form of the disease, viz.: Administer *in the morning* tonics, or in some cases medicines approaching the character of aphrodisiacs, for the purpose of changing the excitability of the sexual organs from nocturnal paroxysms to diurnal, in order that the patient may control such erotic emotions with the wide-awake will, instead of having them steal upon him during the night watches when his intellectual organs are slumbering. Give tonics, aphrodisiacs, or diuretics if the latter are needed in the forenoon, and follow in the afternoon and evening with some such quieting remedies as have already been recommended. Changing the periods of paroxysmal congestions from night to the hours when the patient is stir

ring about in attending to his usual avocations the erotic desires are greatly modified while the activities of the body in the waking state are better calculated to promote the reabsorption of the contents of over-loaded seminal vessels.

When spermatorrhœa is of a diurnal character or in other words, when the seminal losses consist of involuntary exudations on the slightest excitement, as when lifting or straining or passing urine, something like Ergot or *Ustilago Maidis* in moderate doses, or electro-magnetism, is necessary to tone up the lax fibers of the seminal vessels and ducts so that they will recover the power to retain their secretions. When this treatment needs to be administered the early part of the day is the most favorable time for its administration, for the reason given in the preceding paragraph.

The value of tonics admitted, those should in all cases be selected with reference to the complications which exist in a given case. There is an unlimited opportunity for selection, and such tonics should be chosen as will best meet all the indications. There are those which act favorably upon an inactive liver; those which are valuable in pulmonary diseases; those which produce a favorable effect upon a weak stomach, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*; and then the profession are familiar with those which act with more or less directness upon the sexual organs. Combinations of the latter with the former are often suggested by the evident needs of the patient. Electro-magnetism is a tonic which admits of a wide range of application. It may not only be directly applied to the genital organs to impart improved tone to them, but it may also be applied over the region of the liver or stomach, or other inactive organ to arouse it to that state of normal activity which will enable it to claim and receive its share of nervous force. Water may be applied both as a local tonic and local sedative. A cold sitz-bath in the morning and a warm sitz-bath at night; or, when this is not practicable, sponging the genital organs on rising with cold water, and with hot water when retiring, may materially assist recovery; and this kind of hydropathic treatment, which, so far as I am aware was first prescribed in my practice, is in perfect keeping with the plan of the employment of tonics in the morning and of sedatives at night. From the local application of cold water comes the reaction of heat and the presence of a larger supply of blood; from the local application of hot water comes a reaction of coolness and less determination of blood to the parts and consequently less activity of the testes. The application of the spirits of camphor to the sacral plexus at bedtime will be found to exercise a useful sedative influence over the nerves terminating in the reproductive organs. When the nocturnal losses are provoked not only by surcharged seminal vessels, but by a constipated habit, ascariides in the rectum, piles, or disease of the prostate, the treatment must be comprehensive enough to rectify any or all such complications. Treating the spermatorrhœa alone cannot in such cases result in a cure.

Some hygienic rules may be properly prescribed to the patient subject to nocturnal emissions. In keeping with the plan of treatment

hereinbefore suggested, oysters and other shell fish, heating food, condiments, coffee, chocolate, vanilla cream, and stimulating drinks, and all eatables and drinkables which are known to have a partial aphrodisical effect upon the sexual system, should be used, if used at all, in the early part of the day, and as carefully avoided in the latter part of the day or evening. Even fruits, cooked or uncooked, taken in the afternoon or night, are usually found to increase the liability to involuntary emission. This may be due to the exciting effects of some fruits, but, in most cases, it results from the impaired digestion of the patient, in consequence of which a fermenting process ensues, filling the blood with a material no less heating than that obtained from the most objectionable condiment. In the early part of the day a free use of fruits, perfectly masticated so as to rupture the fruit cells and mingle their contents with the saliva, is usually found to be advantageous even in cases having dyspeptic complications. Feather beds, and an excess of bed-clothing, are to be avoided. The temperature of the body should be kept as low as possible, without incurring the risk of taking cold. Lying upon the back is a habit not at all conducive to the recovery of one affected with the disease under consideration. In such a position the spine and sacral plexus become heated. This heat is conducted to the genital organs, which are in a morbid state of activity. A common spool fastened to the bare back by a piece of tape passing through its center and tied around the body, will usually prove efficient in keeping the patient off his back. One who secretes urine freely, and at the same time sleeps soundly, may prevent the distending bladder from pressing unduly upon the seminal organs by setting an alarm clock to awaken him at a timely hour to get up and void his water. The morning, by most people, is selected for defecation; but for parties affected with spermatorrhœa it is well to attend to this important matter at some regular hour not remote from the usual bed-time, for the reason that all pressure upon the spermatie vessels from an otherwise distended rectum will be prevented.

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### Concluding Notes.

**SELF CURE.** Unfortunately so many conditions must be apprehended and provided for, self-cure is hardly possible unless the reader have considerable knowledge of pathology and medicine. In very mild cases attention to some or all the hygienic rules given in the foregoing may however succeed. The author gives free advice in person or by mail in all difficult cases, his office being permanently located at 120 Lexington Avenue, New York.

**THE ENTIRE CURABILITY OF SPERMATORRHŒA OR SEMINAL WEAKNESS** is demonstrated in a pamphlet entitled *Evidences of Dr. Foote's Success*. [See *Diseases of Men*, page 20.] This pamphlet is sent free on receipt of one letter stamp.

**THE OLD SCHOOL WAKING UP.**—Since this pamphlet was first printed, in 1878, several old school writers have been giving attention to spermatorrhœa in *The Medical Record* and other old school publications. They admit at last that it is a wasting disease requiring the careful consideration and skill of the practitioner, instead of a natural relief, which may visit the youth once a month for his benefit. This late



concession compensates Dr. Foote in a measure for the abuse he has received at their hands while he has been giving to the public during the past 20 years the results of his investigations in this department of medical science.

**PHIMOSIS.**—One of the common forms of congenital troubles affecting the generative organs of man is phimosis, or a contraction of the foreskin, which renders it impossible to expose the glans, and which is therefore a hindrance to proper cleanliness as well as an infirmity inappropriate to marriage. The method of relief hitherto employed has always been that of circumcision, an operation by the knife, which though of but slight importance during babyhood, is attended with some difficulties and loss of time when practiced upon adults. The author of this pamphlet has devised a new method of "self-cure" for such cases which is painless and remarkably simple and efficient. Those especially interested are invited to write for further information. Correspondence should be addressed to Dr. E. B. Foote, Box 788, New York City.

**VENEREAL DISEASES** are maladies which every young man should avoid as he would avoid a stain upon his reputation by theft or arson. Those, however, who have been so reckless or unfortunate as to contract these affections, should have such treatment as will not leave an enemy in the system almost as troublesome as the one which has been dispossessed. The author of this pamphlet has methods peculiarly his own, which exclude the use of mercury and all pernicious drugs. He has successfully combated diseases of this character for twenty-five years without ever once administering mercury.

**YOUNG MEN** who would like to acquire in an easy and pleasant way a true knowledge of their physical organizations should read Dr. Foote's Science in Story. This work, although written for juveniles, is full of pleasantness which amuses the adult mind; and its physiological information being prepared for the young is even still more comprehensible to those who have emerged from their teens. In one volume at \$2. In five neat volumes at \$5. By mail, postage prepaid. It has been favorably commended in the book reviews of over 500 of our best journals. Murray Hill Publishing Co., 129 East 25th Street, New York City, N. Y.

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THE MURRAY HILL PUBLISHING COMPANY issue all of Dr. Foote's physiological dime publications, and also the following from the pen of Dr. E. B. Foote, Jr.: **Health in the Sunbeam**, 64 pages, price 10 cents. **Synopsis of the Development of the Ovum**—a concise and methodical account of the important embryonic changes—for medical students and physicians; price 10 cents. Also Dr. Foote's **HEALTH MONTHLY**, edited jointly by Drs. Foote senior and junior, at only 50 cents per year. Sample copy free. For any or all of these publications, or for particulars concerning them, address Murray Hill Publishing Co., 129 East 25th Street, New York City, N. Y.

# SPERMATORRHŒA OR SEMINAL WEAKNESS.

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When one looks out in the morning upon the streets and fields of a country borough after a snow storm, he sees the lone tracks of pedestrians, pursuing more or less devious directions, until some hours after, when the organized activities of the denizens proceeding, in well-defined routes, show that there is a common understanding and a disposition to pursue, harmoniously and methodically, the paths of industry.

In looking out upon the fields of human suffering, so far, especially, as they relate to the diseases of the sexual organs, just such diverse foot-prints are observable as those which have been pictured in the foregoing at the dawn of day, and it is only with the eye of faith and hope looking forward to a more rational future that we prophetically discern the world's medical humanitarians uniting, with so much earnestness, truthfulness and accord, as to present to mankind well-defined paths which shall lead unmistakably from the slough of disease to the attractive heights of mental and physical soundness. In the few treatises on the subject of spermatorrhœa which have thus far been published, we find the lone tracks of some practitioners of all schools, but especially of the old, who tenaciously hold that the involuntary losses of the seminal secretions are but natural; that a life of continence necessarily causes their occasional emission; that if they do not happen oftener than once or twice a month no injurious results are liable to follow. In the same field of investigation we find foot-prints of a few practitioners of all schools, but largely of the new, who regard the involuntary losses of these vital fluids as evidence of disease of the sexual system which threatens, in time, to undermine both mind and body, unless this drain upon the nervous and vascular systems is arrested. Again, in the same field of honest research we discern the club-footed, bow-kneed and sharp-toed tracks of the unlearned and of the sharp predatory practitioner who may be called the alarmist, and who, from ignorance or mercenary motives, magnifies the symptoms of the disease, and makes any one who discovers a white sediment in his urinary deposits, or an exudation of clear, transparent mucus from the urethra, believe that he is a fit subject for medical treatment. Now, while I can hardly hope to lay out a path so clearly and cleanly cut that all will follow therein, I shall try to trace upon the almost pathless field of inexperience such lines as may, some time in the future, with the amendments which abler minds shall suggest, make safe paths for the feet of