

pagate disease. On examination, I could discover no disease. A small quantity of mucus passed from the urethra, but nothing more. However, to set his mind at ease, I prescribed some medicine, which, in the course of a fortnight, removed all vestiges of disorder, to his complete satisfaction. He left me, with the purpose of marrying. But in a few weeks he returned, to say that he had discovered indications of a return of his complaint. Though I could perceive no such indications, I again placed him under treatment, and again he was cured, and discharged. The same thing happened several times, and at length, under some provocation, I chided him for his folly and reasoned with him against it. In answer to my arguments, he quoted "Buchan," whose "Domestic Medicine" was then a popular family companion. This let out the secret. He kept the book in a drawer in his bedroom, and studied it every night; and it never failed to reproduce the disorder. I made him promise either to burn it, or to lock it up and not open it for three months. From this moment there was no return of disease, and his marriage soon diverted the current of his thoughts into other channels.\*

The experience of Rousseau is worth quoting in this place.—"Having read a little on physiology, I set about studying anatomy; and passing in review the number and varied actions of the parts which compose my frame, I expect twenty times a day to feel them going wrong. Far from being astonished at finding himself dying, my astonishment was that I could live at all. I did not read the description of any disease which I could not imagine myself to be affected with; and I am sure that, if I had not been ill, I must have become so from this fatal study. Finding in every complaint the symptoms of my own, I believe I had got them all, and thereby added another still more intolerable—the fancy of curing myself."

A large proportion of those individuals who suffer prolonged uneasiness in regard of diseases, real or imaginary, of the sexual organs, become impotent in a greater or less degree. The impairment of function is seldom permanent, under proper treatment, but disappears with the restoration of health and the withdrawal of attention from those organs. It is put to good use by advertising charlatans, who take advantage of the weakness and apprehension of such men to inveigle them into their toils. And here is often a step on the way to the mad-house.

I cannot dwell with too much emphasis on the important practical distinction between the moral treatment which inspires confidence and hope, and tends to dispel the cloud of anxiety and apprehension, and that which confirms suspicion and excites alarm;—between that which is prompted by professional and honorable motives, and which has the good of the patient for its primary object, and that which is controlled by the love of gain, and makes body and soul the sport of the vilest tricks of trade. The system of empirical advertising may be regarded as an ingenious device for robbing men of their money, their happiness, and their reason. The newspaper, going in every house, carries a flood of this poisonous literature. The newspaper makes our females familiar with the idea of the prevention

of pregnancy, demoralizing the married and corrupting the unmarried. The newspaper prompts the idea of abortion, and indirectly encourages a criminal practice so wide-spread as to disturb the foundations of society and to affect the national welfare. The newspaper furnishes the abortionist with the means of inviting all the mothers in the land to murder their unborn offspring through his nefarious agency. The newspaper is a daily reminder to every villain who plots the ruin of females, how he can accomplish his diabolical purpose without exposure. The newspaper puts in the hands of every boy and every girl, in city and country, a daily stream of impure, obscene and corrupting literature, which they could find nowhere else.

The reader will not understand me as pronouncing a censure on the conductors of the press in this relation. I remember too well the example of the knight and the windmill. The laws of trade govern the press and mould the code of morals for this, in common with other departments of industry. I will do the proprietors of newspapers the justice to declare my conviction that they well believe and know that the advertisements referred to are unfit for general reading and that they are morally pernicious. I believe further that scarcely one newspaper on this Coast would admit such advertisements, if others did not.

The same defence applies to those respectable druggists who suffer their names to be announced as vendors and endorsers of universal cures for nervous weakness and impotence and female obstructions. It is well understood that people of intelligence will not believe the statements which are made, and that only credulous and weak-minded persons, composing not much over nine-tenths of the community, will be misled and fleeced by such publications.

If writings published with the design of doing good are capable of so much evil, as appears from what I have previously said, how much more mischief is calculated to result from publications artfully prepared for the very purpose of frightening the reader into the belief that he is sick, and which are daily thrust before his eyes, so that he cannot avoid seeing them if he would! I have an earnest conviction that the literature of quackery is much more pernicious than is commonly supposed;—that few persons suspect the depth to which it strikes its roots into the corporeal, moral, and intellectual life of society, and the consequent amount of vice, trouble, disease and insanity which it produces.

In no other part of the world has *disappointment*, in one form or another, visited so large a proportion of the population as on the Pacific Coast. A few remarks on this subject, and on *nostalgia*, in their relations to insanity, will be offered in another paper.—*Pacific Medical and Surgical Journal*.

#### Rapture of the Womb—Recovery.

REPORTED BY S. A. McWILLIAMS, A.M., M.D., CHICAGO.

Dr. Davis B. Taylor, Milbourne, Lake Co., Ill., was called May 27, 1868, about 9 A.M., to attend Mrs. Hinckle, a farmer's wife living one mile distant, in her eighth confinement, at full term. All her previous labors, except the last, were severe. The

\* It is a little singular that Villermay, an old French writer, refers to the same book as one of the causes of hypochondria among his countrymen—"la lecture habituelle de Buchan."