

tain limits to increase the activity of the organ, even to exaggeration of its original activity. Beyond these limits it tends to distort the functions and ultimately to destroy the function altogether. Possibly some functions have fallen into a rudimentary state not through disuse, but over use and ill use.

The intensely artificial conditions of society at the present time, and the absurd and entirely unnatural basis upon which the sexual relation is now resting, has produced a condition of mind and a psychical posture towards the function altogether abnormal. The first results of this abnormal condition which has endured now for several centuries (but a short period in the life-history of our race) are the isolated cases of disease or perversion which we find about us. The very fact that such a gallimawfry of filth as Kraft-Ebing's book should be read, is a clear hint that the race has reached an abnormal condition. The social has been confused with the physiological. That is bad. The religious has been confused with the physiological. That is worse. These things may lead to the tragedy of our species.

In conclusion, it only remains to advert to a very common form of perversion affecting the psychic or the emotional nature. The religious instinct seems to be innate in the species, and, in one form or another, inevitably manifests itself in even the rudest communities. At a very early period in the world's history, however, one will perceive a certain confusion of the erotic instinct with the religious, and as a result many primitive religious rites and ceremonies are found to have been based upon animal love. Indeed, from the very earliest dawn of history up to a time comparatively recent, Phallic Worship was very common among all races.

The ecclesiastical rite of marriage, as it exists to-day, is doubtless the modern relic of an ancient symbol. Moreover, all the mysterious and dramatic incidents of the human life, as we will notice, are still a sacerdotal possession and presided over by the priest. But it was the early Christian Church which led, or more probably encouraged, the revulsion of feeling which the civilization of the time may have begun to feel against the sickening abuses of physiological laws; but the early Christians, instead of being satisfied with the beautiful simplicity of the Homeric period which would have been possible, aimed after an ideal almost grotesque in its impossibility and antagonism to natural laws. The suppression of the erotic instinct altogether was regarded as the great desideratum, and a large part of every religious tradition consists of a repudiation, as degrading and impure, of the ineradicable sexual instincts of the species. The results have been, I think, unfortunate.

An unconscious simplicity would, I think, have been better for the race than the morbid tendency to self-examination and dissimulation which the existing ethical fabric almost presupposes. The neophyte, nursed upon a dogma which teaches him to regard with shame and fear the instincts which are the mainspring of the exist-