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No. 5.

For the CANADA HEALTH JOURNAL.

The Great Crime of the Age.

BEHIND the half-transparent curtain with which modesty attempts to conceal from public gaze the mysteries of the sexual relation, there are follies and crimes enacted, pregnant with evil to the individual and to the race. Their existence is no secret, though their extent is scarcely conceived, except by those whose profession brings them into daily and hourly contact with disease and death. At their roots lie passion and ignorance. Christian and philosopher alike proclaim against the first; but it is equally necessary to disseminate knowledge of the immoral nature and the evil results of those acts which many deem at worst trivial, while others fancy them beneficial.— There has been too much silence on these important points. The pulpit, in general, has but little idea of the extent of these evils; and if it had, dare not proclaim too loudly against them. The congregations would rise in horror at such *immodest* preaching. Better for body and soul to die, than that our delicate ears should be offended. So, also, is the public press debarred this subject. The newspaper that will print with disgusting minuteness, cases of rape, seduction, incest and adultery, would be horrified at the thought of giving a word of warning against the social evils. Perhaps, even a journal like this, will meet with rebuke from the over-modest, for daring to print what I am about to write.

Of several evils, in this connection, I have designated one the Great Crime of the age. That one is the willful destruction of the unborn infant, or

FŒTICIDE.

The practice of abortion has existed from time immemorial, like every other form of wickedness and vice. But along with it there has existed, to check its increase, among barbarians and civilized people alike, love of offspring, and public and private honour for those who become mothers. So the evil was of slight extent, till of

late, when, in this most Christian country, among the enlightened people of this Western continent, it has grown to be "a monster of such hideous mien," that those who see it dare no longer keep silence. It is a noticeable fact, plain to all, that the birth-rate of our native population is continually decreasing, and that, too, among our better classes—socially speaking. Statistics show conclusively that any apparent increase comes altogether from the emigrant population, and chiefly from the poorest class. Have our women lost the power to conceive, or our men to procreate? Or have the sexual passions grown weaker within us? Neither. But of the conceptions that occur, one-half (some good statisticians judge two-thirds) are wilfully destroyed, and many others are blighted by accident and disease.

Do you say this is an extravagant statement? No one is qualified to judge save physicians; and they see its vast proportions only as they come in contact with its frightful effects, and investigate the causes of the thousand ills that woman's flesh is heir to. And this is their general opinion. Those who make a specialty of woman's diseases, learn more of it than the average physician, and their estimate of its extent is proportionately greater.

But though physicians see more, no one can shut his eyes to its existence. It has become a regular business. "Periodical Pills" have agencies in every city, and are advertised almost in every paper—religious as well as secular. How can a conscientious man or woman read without a blush such expressions as these: "Safe except in certain conditions," "Pregnant women are cautioned against their use?" Yet it is a fact that men read them without offense, and women purchase them with avidity. So callous has the public conscience grown in this respect, that desire for offspring has no place in the preparations for the conjugal relations, and the murder of offspring unborn, whether by drugs or mechanical violence, is recognized as the legitimate occupation of many, and the occasional practice of three-fourths of our matrons. The bridal couch is approached with dread of the possible result; impregnation is regarded as a calamity, to avert which the advice of more experienced women is sought. Those who have escaped maternity are eagerly importuned for their "receipt," drugs and patent-medicines are readily swallowed, the professional abortionist is consulted, and sometimes even the family

physician is besought to lend his aid. Alas! that some of these, through hope of reward or fear of losing patronage, should ever have given their consent to this foul crime!

WHY IS THIS CRIME COMMITTED?

Trivial excuses, at best, are given. I speak not now of the unmarried, in whom dread of exposure is the prevailing motive. It is with the married I am dealing.

They plead poverty at times; they are not able to support an infant, though it often costs more to pay the expenses of the evil results that follow an abortion, or for the indulgence in many needless luxuries.

Ill-health is sometimes the excuse. She thinks she is too delicate, and that the birth of a child would be the death of her; and so she procures an abortion, which is far more dangerous to health and life than a birth at full term.

Other reasons, of a meaner nature, are not so frequently disclosed, though they are oftener the real cause. Fear that she will lose her beauty, though nothing contributes so much to its loss as the practice of abortion. Love of the pleasures of life; balls, parties, and social enjoyments are apt to be interfered with by the cares of maternity; and the trifling butterfly of fashion thinks more of her own present amusement than the future well-being of both soul and body.

All these causes, and perhaps others, tend to make abortion a thing to be desired in the eyes of our married women; and ignorance of its moral and physical nature encourages its practice. On these two points let me speak. Abortion is

A CRIME AGAINST THE LAWS OF GOD.

It is murder! I know some women think it is not. Some think there is no life till the child breathes; others that there is no life before the period of "quickening." Both are alike in error. Quickening and birth are but the progressive stages of the embryo's development. The first is but its instinctive movements within the mother's womb, occurring at varying periods of pregnancy, and sometimes not at all. The second is but the period of its detachment from the mother's body. They mark the stages of its progress in life, but not the beginning of life; that dates from an early period. *It dates from the very moment of conception.* From that moment *it lives.* For nine months it is attached to its mother's body, drawing its sustenance from her veins. Then it is expelled from her womb, and for perhaps

a year longer obtains its nourishment from her breasts; and then begins to depend on its own resources. It may live for 100 years more, but it is not more really living at thirty than at one; no more at one than at birth, for even then it was nine months old. All scientific research, all analogy, all reasoning, prove this beyond doubt; and it is accepted as the voice of truth by all who study the phenomena of life.

Let me quote the words of an able colleague. "The point and time where and when the work of independent organization begins is from the fusion or junction of the male and female principles, represented by the ovule and the spermatozoa. From that hour, soul and body, the subjective and the objective, in their mysterious union, are being created. The pure instinct of primal Christianity voiced itself in the grand words of Saint Augustine—'Homo est, qui futurus est.'—'What will be a man, is a man.'"—(Dr. W. H. Holcombe.)

In view of this great truth, every wilful abortion is a murder. Alas! that mothers should plot against and destroy the precious life which God has bestowed, and which He alone can take away! Some do it in ignorance; but there are those who do it despite of warnings and of better knowledge. How will they dare to lift up their eyes in the Great Day, before Him who has said, "Thou shalt not kill!" while their hands are reddened and defiled with stains that "Neptune's ocean cannot wash, nor all the perfumes of Arabia sweeten!"

IT IS A CRIME AGAINST HEALTH.

There are some, devoid of principle, to whom a more selfish plea must be presented. If you doubt the truth, that abortion is murder, or believing it still heed it not, then know this, to which every physician of experience can testify, that abortion is ruin to health. Here are two facts which physicians *know* to be true. More women die during an abortion than in consequence of delivery at full term; and a much larger proportion become confirmed invalids. Do you say you never heard of a woman dying in abortion? Very likely. Is the sick woman going to trumpet to the world the cause of her sickness? Are those who aided her, who are cognizant of her condition, and *who are liable to a criminal prosecution* under the laws of the land, going to speak of it to any one? Of course not. She is supposed to die of hemorrhage, dysentery, peritonitis, inflammation of

the bowels, or of the womb, cancer, tumour, anything but the real cause. *That* her God, herself, and her physician know—but the public know it not.

To give a sample: thirty-four cases of criminal abortion, of which the history was known, are reported by Tardieu, a French physician; *twenty-two* were followed by death.—(*Dr. H. R. Storer*).

Of course death does not always follow. If every woman who aborted died, the funeral bells would never cease to toll. But there are other results which make life a burden, and death a welcome visitor. Diseases of women are so prevalent in this age that the treatment of them has become a specialty with many physicians. There are journals devoted to that alone. Every college has a lecturer on that branch, distinct from other diseases. And the majority of these cases in married women can be traced to abortion. The public cannot discover this; but the physician in his confidential relations with his patient, and his necessary investigation of the causes of her complaints, sees it daily. He finds directly traceable to abortion, displacements of the womb, tumours, abscesses, cancers; and in their train, "lame backs, supposed to be consequent on spinal disease; neuralgic breasts; disabled limbs, pronounced affected with sciatica, cramps, or paralysis; impatient bladders, from whose irritability the kidneys are supposed to be diseased; obscure abdominal aches and pains, which often unjustly condemn the liver or the ovary: constipation, which is thought to argue stoppage from stricture or organic diseases; intractable headaches, that resisting all forms of treatment, are supposed to indicate some incurable affection of the brain; easily deranged stomachs, so suggestive of ulceration or malignant disease; general hypochondria and despondency, that of angelic dispositions make shrews, and sometimes even suicides."

Does this look over-drawn? Physicians *know it to be true*, and they alone can judge. And it is quite natural that these evil results should follow. Nature does all her work in order, and as perfectly as we will let her. Pregnancy and labour are physiological functions, intended to be harmless—beneficial. While one is progressing the other is in preparation; and it is only when the first is completed that she is ready for the second. *Then* to a healthy woman labour is harmless; but to induce labour before the system is prepared for it is to interfere with nature's arrangements, and to cause a disturbance which she is often powerless to overcome.

One more result and I close. Every abortion pre-disposes the woman's system to another. The habit is easily established. Let her wilfully destroy the product of her conception a few times—perhaps only once—and she may find it impossible ever afterwards to give birth to a living child. She may subsequently earnestly desire children; but every succeeding conception is lost, despite all efforts to save it. Even the power to conceive may be lost, and she become sterile, barren, childless. If she reaches old age, it is an age of loneliness. The friends and companions of youth have passed away. Society cares for her no more. Its pleasures are enjoyed no more. And in her solitude and infirmity, there are no loving hearts of fond children to bear her company, no strong arms of manly sons to support her tottering steps, no gentle hands of daughters fair to smooth her dying pillow. Childless, infirm, alone—to die! Fitting punishment for one who, Esau-like, has sold her blessing for a mess of pottage. He, too, when “he afterwards desired the inheritance was rejected, and found no place of repentance though he sought it eagerly with tears.”—C.

For the CANADA HEALTH JOURNAL.

The Laugh Cure.

WE hear often about the movement cure, the water cure, and lately the grape cure; why does not somebody talk about the laugh cure? The idea is not altogether new. Said the wise man of old, “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,” and if he had lived in these latter days he might have had a still higher opinion of its virtues. One Dr. Tissot professed to cure consumption and liver complaints by making his patients laugh. Sydenham declared that the arrival of a clown in a village was more beneficial than the entrance of twenty donkeys laden with drugs; and Stern, who wished laughing added to the *Materia Medica*, scarcely exaggerated in writing, “When a man smiles, and much more when he laughs, he adds something to his fragment of life.” Of course it is not the bare laugh—the outward expression—that is such a good thing. You can make a man laugh, frown, sneer, and go through all kinds of facial gymnastics by the aid of electricity; but no one would consider the smile developed by a galvanic battery proof positive of good nature. And it is the good nature—the cheerful spirit—the

merry heart" of Solomon—"the inward spiritual grace" of which the laugh is "but the outward visible sign," that is so beneficial to health of body and mind. Irritability, fretfulness or ill humor is a symptom of disease. Mirth and laughter are the opposites of disease—the indications of health.

Good-humoured people, when they fall sick, get well quicker than other folks. There is nothing a physician detests so much as to have a sallow faced, lantern-jawed dyspeptic come into his office, with the corners of his mouth drawn down, and looking as though he had not laughed for an age, and did not intend to do it again as long as he lived. These melancholy people are hard to cure. Disease finds in their bodies congenial soil, and takes root, and is harder to get rid of than an acre of Canada thistles. And yet some people think it a sign of intellectual dignity and moral greatness to wear a face as long as a tombstone. Something like Cato, of whom Plutarch tells us that "scarce anything could make him laugh, and he was seldom seen to wreath his face in a smile." No wonder he committed suicide. There is a morbid principle—the germ of disease, mental or physical—in those extremely sober and melancholy people, which not only makes life a burden and saps its enjoyment, but shortens its duration as well. Long livers are seldom gloomy and sad. Even though they may not laugh very loud, they possess a spirit of content and of cheerfulness which is not ashamed nor afraid of a smile. The evil passions of men's nature have to be struggled against by the health-seeker. The virtues have to be cultivated, and they dwell with that opposite of evil which we call "good nature."

Indications of Longevity.

HUFELAND, who wrote a book on the art of prolonging life, describing the man who has good prospects of living long says that he has a proper and well proportioned stature, without, however, being too tall. He is rather of the middle size, and somewhat thick set. His complexion is not too florid; at any rate, too much ruddiness in youth is seldom a sign of longevity. His hair approaches rather to the fair than to the black. His skin is strong, but not rough. His head is not too big; he has large veins in the extremities; his shoulders are round rather than flat. His neck is not too long; his abdomen does not project; his hands are large, but not

deeply cleft. His foot is rather thick than long; and his legs are firm and round. He has a broad, arched chest, a strong voice, and the faculty of retaining his breath for a long time without difficulty. There is harmony in all his parts. His senses are good, but not too delicate; his pulse is slow and regular. His stomach is excellent; his appetite good, and digestion easy. The joys of the table are not to him of importance; they tune his mind to serenity, and his soul partakes in the pleasure which they communicate. He does not eat merely for the sake of eating, but each meal is an hour of daily festivity. He eats slowly, and has not too much thirst—the latter being always a sign of rapid self-consumption. He is serene, loquacious, active, susceptible of joy, love and hope, but insensible to the impressions of hatred, anger, and avarice. His passions never become violent or destructive. If ever he gives way to anger, he experiences rather a youthful glow of warmth, an artificial and gentle fever, without an overflowing of the bile. He is fond also of employment, particularly calm meditation and agreeable speculations. He is an optimist, a friend to Nature and domestic felicity. He has no thirst after honour or riches, and banishes all thoughts of to-morrow.

PATENT MEDICINE CERTIFICATES.—Clergymen and other good men often do much harm, of which they never think, from the readiness with which they testify to the value of quack preparations. Unnecessary suffering, and sometimes death, are traceable to the drug compositions recommended by "Revs," "D.D.'s," etc. If people were made responsible for all the evil resulting from any thing they might recommend, they would probably be more cautious.

BREATHING.—Breathe through the nose, as was originally intended, and not through the mouth. Those who sleep with the mouth open, wake with a parched throat and dry cracked lips. They are easily attacked by infectious diseases, are subject to colds and pulmonary complaints. The mouth was intended for eating and talking; when not engaged in these occupations, keep it shut.

WHEN my druggist poisons me," says a French journalist, "they only fine him; but when I poison my druggist they send me to the guillotine."

Our Canadian Poets.

ODE TO MAY.



SING and rejoice!
 Give to gladness a voice:
 Shout a welcome to beautiful May!
 Rejoice with the flowers,
 And the birds 'mong the bowers,
 And away to the green woods away.
 O, blithe as the fawn,
 Let us dance in the dawn
 Of this life giving glorious day;
 'Tis bright as the first
 Over Eden that burst—
 O welcome, young joy giving May!

The cataract's horn
 Has awakened the morn,
 Her tresses are dripping with dew;
 O hush thee and hark.
 'Tis her herald the lark
 That is singing afar in the blue;
 Its happy heart's rushing,
 In strains mildly gushing,
 That reach to the revelling earth,
 And sink through the depths
 Of the soul till it leaps
 Into raptures far deeper than mirth.

All Nature's in keeping,
 The live streams are leaping
 And laughing in gladness along;
 The great hills are heaving;
 The dark clouds are leaving;
 The valleys have burst into song.
 We'll range through the dells
 Of the bonnie blue bells,
 And sing with the streams on the way;
 We'll lie in the shades
 Of the flower-covered glades,
 And hear what the primroses say.

O crown me with flowers,
 'Neath the green spreading bowers,
 With the gems and the jewels May brings,
 In the light of her eyes,
 And the depth of her dyes,
 We'll smile at the purple of kings!
 We'll throw off our years,
 With their sorrows and cares,
 And Time will not number the hours
 We'll spend in the woods,
 Where no sorrow intrudes,
 With the streams and the birds and the flowers.

—ALEX. MCLACHLAN.

Editorial Department.

Short Sightedness.

IN Phillip's Ophthalmic Surgery, there is some good advice on this subject which we give our readers, as they are not likely to see the original book, or read it if they saw it. The writer describes *myopia*, which is the technical name for this condition, as that state of vision in which a person can see objects perfectly only when they are at a very short distance from the eyes; nine inches, or less, being the greatest distance at which objects can be plainly seen.

Near-sighted persons are apt to stoop while engaged in study. To avoid a practice so injurious to the figure and health, they should use a high desk when reading or writing; and if glasses are indispensable, such only should be used as just suffice to enable the parties to pursue their occupations at the ordinary reading distance, that of fourteen inches. Small type, sketches, microscopical pursuits and objects, requiring close inspection, should be avoided; the individual should overcome his natural tendency to a cramped hand, and write boldly and freely; and be the pursuit what it may, in which he is engaged, the greatest possible distance should be maintained between the eye and the object.

In all cases of myopia, or short-sightedness, and especially in early life, or when the affection is just commencing, it is highly important that any tendency to an over-supply to the eyes should be counteracted by a proper amount of bodily exercise, and every opportunity should be embraced for exercising the eyes on distant objects. Near-sight is comparatively rare in persons engaged in agricultural pursuits, and is almost unknown among those uncivilized nations whose eyes are constantly practiced in nomadic warfare or the chase.

Near-sight may be acquired in early youth by the habit common to infants of approaching their eyes very close to any object on which their attention may happen to be engaged. Observe a group of children learning to write or draw, almost all their faces sideways and their tongues in one corner of their mouths, nearly touching with their cheeks the paper or slate on which they are laboriously accomplishing their task. Many infants have been rendered short-sighted, and many have acquired squints, from constantly playing with toys;

as the visual axis converges when objects are held near the eyes, frequent repetitions of this may end in strabismus. And I may here remark that strict attention should be paid to the position of the infant's sleeping cot, and to the attitude in which it is placed in its nurse's arms. The eyes of the infant ever seek the light, and many an unsightly cast has been entailed on a child by its being always placed with one and the same side to a candle or window. The light in the nursery should not be too much on the one side of the cradle, nor should a candle or lamp, in the evening, be so placed that the eyes of the child are distorted when looking at it. There is sound judgment in printing children's books in good bold type, in encouraging them to observe distant objects, and in inviting them to describe what they see in landscapes.

Near-sighted children are often fond of books, and love to pore over some favorite story in a quiet corner, for hours together. They should be watched and compelled to hold their heads ten or twelve inches from the page; and the same in the school-room. Such children are obliged, during music lessons, to lean forward in a very unseemly manner, to distinguish the notes. To obviate this, a sliding bookstand should be attached to the piano, and should be drawn forward when the child is practicing. As, however, some musical instruments will not admit of such an arrangement, spectacles of a low power may be used at that time, and at that time only, and the lesson should not exceed half an hour, without a pause of a few minutes for the eyes to rest.

Insufficiency of light in rooms where children receive instruction, or where they are taught mechanical work, is a cause of near-sight, and, occasionally, even more serious mischief. Care should, therefore, be taken that school and working rooms should be properly and sufficiently lighted.

Clean Water.

NOTE that Dr. Letheby, an eminent English authority on sanitary science, whose views on drinking water have been summarized by the *British Medical Journal*, considers moderately hard water better suited for that purpose than that which is very soft—an opinion which is confirmed by that of the French authorities, who took the Paris water from chalk districts instead of from sandy strata.

He also states that a larger percentage of French conscripts are rejected from soft-water districts than from neighborhoods supplied with hard water, and that English towns supplied with water of more than ten degrees of hardness have a mortality of four per one thousand less than those whose inhabitants use soft water.

But whether hard or soft water be used, great benefits result from its filtration. Dr. Frankland has shown by numerous experiments that this process does not merely mechanically separate substances suspended therein, but effects oxidation of organic matter held in solution. In filtering ordinary London sewerage through common soil, or a mixture of sand and chalk, Dr. Frankland found that the resultant liquid was as free from organic substances as the water commonly used for domestic purposes, and in some instances even purer.

Another method of purifying dirty water for household and manufacturing purposes is recommended by Dr. Dunning, of Amsterdam. He advises the addition of half a grain of chloride of iron to each quart of the water. By this means the foreign constituents are deposited, and by a further addition of about one and a third grains of soda to a quart of water, the iron is precipitated. Experiments made on a large scale in Holland, upon impure river water, gave the most satisfactory results.

To Correspondents.

"A. C. H."—As a general rule it is quite safe to take chloroform. The exceptions are certain diseased conditions, especially of the heart. If you are in good health, you may take it without fear, from the hands of a competent physician. The shock to the nervous system from the pain caused by extracting a large number of teeth is of itself injurious, and should be avoided, whenever possible.

"J. D."—Your trouble is, as far as we can judge from the description, a stricture of the nasal duct—the tube through which the tears run from the eye to the nostril. Its cure is chiefly mechanical, for which you must apply to any surgeon in your neighborhood.

THE product of pale brandy is often a red nose.

Literary Notices.

TALKS TO MY PATIENTS, HINTS ON GETTING WELL AND KEEPING WELL; by Mrs. R. B. Gleason, M.D.—Wood & Holbrook, N. Y., pp. 228, \$1.50.

Mrs. Gleason, who, with her husband, conducts the Elmira Water Cure, has been putting in a book the substance of the advice she has been accustomed to give her patients. Her "talks" are very sensible. The book is not intended for a scientific work or for a "domestic physician," but is a simple compend of motherly hints to women in their different relations of maid, wife and mother. In her treatment, as might be expected, she appears specially in love with water. The book is well worth the price to any mother of a family. It may be obtained directly from the publishers, No. 15, Laight St. N. Y., or through any bookseller.

THE CHRISTIAN UNION, published by J. B. Ford & Co., 39 Park Row, N. Y. and edited by Henry Ward Beecher, is rapidly becoming one of the most popular religious papers. Its articles are spicy and readable. Mr. Beecher's peculiar vein runs through it, and does not detract any from its good qualities. It will be seen from the advertisement on another page, that the publishers offer a large engraving as a premium for new subscribers. Not having seen it, we are unable to judge of its beauty; but it is spoken of highly by art critics over the borders.

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING A FATAL CASE OF PLACENTA PRÆVIA, ETC.

This pamphlet, coming to us from Boston, gives evidence of a state of affairs existing between physician and patient which is neither rare nor creditable. A prominent physician, a professor of midwifery in Harvard University, attended a lady in her confinement. The case, presenting certain serious complications, proved fatal. Some six weeks after, the husband of the deceased concluded, from statements made by persons with whom he talked, that his wife had not been treated properly, and propounded a series of questions to the physician as to why this and that mode of treatment had not been adopted. A lengthy discussion followed, the physician declining to answer these questions unless in the presence of two other physi-

cians, chosen by both parties, and then only in case the accusation of malpractice was withdrawn.

The circumstances of the case are of no interest to us at this distance, but the moral we wish to draw is, that even physicians are not always able to judge of the propriety of the treatment of a case which they have not seen; while for non-professional people it is impossible—even though they have seen the case. When a disease terminates fatally, the attendant physician is certain to be blamed for it by somebody. He will be considered incompetent by some—he did not know what was the matter—or he did not know what to do for it. He may think himself fortunate if he is not accused of having wilfully murdered his patient. As to his treatment, that will be always criticized. Why was not this done? or why was not the other done? I never heard of a doctor doing such and such for a case of this kind. I had just the very same thing once, and my doctor did this and that for me, and I got well right away. Talk like this will sound from all sides. Other physicians also, actuated by jealousy or personal enmity, will give their opinion against the attendant; until we hardly know whether to consider him most scoundrel or idiot.

Now we object to such a harsh sentence. It is to a physician's own interest to use all possible means for the recovery of his patient; and he does it to the best of his knowledge and ability. But he must judge for himself as to the mode of treatment. And therein lies the science of medicine. The same process may be necessary to make two pine tables; but very different methods may be required to make two sick people well. Even in cases of disease bearing the same name, there often are found conditions which call for difference in treatment. Of this it is not to be expected that persons uneducated in medicine can be proper judges. But it is certain that every old granny, and some who are not old, will claim to know more about the treatment of the sick than the educated man who has spent a life-time, it may be, in investigating diseases and their cure. The physicians who are present, and see the various features of the case, are most likely to understand it.

§TALE dry bread is a very effectual check to juvenile consumption.