

[Tissot, Onanism, London, 1766 - suite]

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tation of the organs of generation produces a disorder, in its way, analogous to that. It is therefore not surprizing if the concurrence of these two causes, moral and natural, combined, should throw one into that horrid disorder: and how powerful ought this idea to be, for inspiring a salutary terror to all in any danger of being in this case, and who have as yet any traces of reason or shame left!

A fourth cause to self-pollutors of their waste of strength, is, that independently of their frequency of emissions of seed, that frequency of their erections, though imperfect ones, of which they complain, considerably exhausts them. Every part, that is in a state of tension, produces an expence of the vital forces, and they have none to spare: the animal spirits crowd thither in the greater abundance, and dissipate themselves. This is a great cause of weakness: they are proportionably deficient in the other functions, which are, in course, thereby imperfectly executed; and the concurrence of these two causes has the most dangerous consequences.

Another mischief, to which this fourth cause subjects self-pollutors, is a sort of paralytical affection of the organs of generation, whence follow impotency, incapacity of erection, and the simple gonorrhœa; for, the relaxed parts suffer the true seminal liquid to come from them as fast as it arrives, and
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the humor separated by the prostates to keep continually oozing, and, in short, all the internal membrane of the urethra acquires a catarrhus disposition to furnish a gleet, much of the same nature as the *fluor albus* in women: a catarrhus disposition, which, let me here somewhat digressively remark, is less rare and more general to the parts of the human body than is commonly imagined; not being confined to the membrane that invests the nostrils, the throat, the lungs, but which often attacks all the cavities of the intestines, where the disease is not discerned, because not suspected, and must, for want of that knowledge, be improperly prescribed for: nor would it be difficult to collect, from various medical observations, examples of this disorder having been mistaken for some other, and attempted to be cured accordingly.

An able surgeon, once, mentioned to me a man, who, from a singularity of taste, used to indulge his debauchery with the lowest street-walkers, and being accustomed to satisfy his desires with them, in a standing posture, against some wall or bulk, fell into a wasting, accompanied with the most cruel pains of his loins, and with an atrophy or shrivelling of his thighs and legs, combined with a palsy in those parts, which seemed to be a consequence of the attitude in which he used to indulge his dirty amours. After

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