

[Tissot, Onanism, London, 1766 - suite]

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old men, to whom it had been prescribed; why that process weakens the young person, who loses, without receiving any thing; or rather receives, in return, faint, sickly, corrupt, putrid exhalations, which cannot but be noxious.

Now, in the time of coition, people perspire more than at any other, the force of the circulation being augmented. This perspiration is also, probably, more active, more spirituous, than at any other time: it is a real loss that is, on that occasion, sustained, and which takes place, in whatever manner the emission of the seed is made, as it depends on the agitation that accompanies it. In coition it is reciprocal, and then, the one inhales what the other perspires. This exchange stands unquestionably proved by sure observations. I saw myself, not long ago, one, who having no gonorrhœa, no cutaneous symptom of the *lues*, had given the venereal distemper to a woman, who, at that instant was giving him the itch in exchange. In coition, then, there is a sort of mutual compensation of loss on both sides. But in the case of self-pollution, the person guilty of it loses; and in lieu of his loss, receives nothing.

An observation of the effect of the passions discovers a seventh cause of evil, in the difference between those who indulge themselves with women, and the self-pollutors;
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a difference which is intirely to the disadvantage of these last.

That joy which is allied to the soul, and which it is so very right essentially to distinguish from that merely corporal pleasure, in which the man shares but with the brute, and from which it is totally different; that joy, I say, aids the digestions, animates circulation, favors all the functions, restores the vital forces, cherishes, and supports them. Where it is found combined or united with the pleasures of love, it contributes to repair that strength which those pleasures may have diminished or exhausted. This stands proved by observation. SANCTORIUS has remarked it.

“A man (says he) after an excessive coition with a woman he loves, and has passionately desired, does not feel that fatigue
“of weakness which one would naturally
“suppose would be the consequence of such
“an excess; because the joy of the soul augments the power of the heart, favors the
“functions, and repairs the losses.”

It is upon this principle that VENETTE, in whose work there may be seen a good chapter on the dangers of pushing the pleasures of love to an excess, establishes it as a maxim, that an union with a beautiful woman is less apt to exhaust the strength, than with a homely one.

