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Joseph William Howe, [Photocopie]

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96 DISEASES FROM EXCESS AND MASTURBATION.

sexual indulgence and onanism certainly lower the vitality greatly and are the more frequent causes of commencing phthisis-plastic interpleural exudation in quite young men and women."

Excessive sexual indulgence often brings about similar affections of the lungs, but such cases cannot be traced as readily as those arising from masturbation. Many of the cases of phthisis occurring among young married people during the first year of their new life, are attributable to excessive cohabitation. Certainly they are frequent enough to give strong presumptive evidence that some form of excess is the primal cause of the mischief, or at least that some hereditary weakness has been assisted by their own over indulgence. Here again is another result of ignorance concerning the sexual function, and its ultimate purposes in the economy of nature. It is reasonable to suppose that even a very moderate amount of information concerning the use and abuse of the genitals—even less than advised in a previous chapter, would diminish the number of these distressing cases in every community.

EPILEPSY.

It was noticed many years ago, that patients suffering from epilepsy were in the habit of gratifying the venereal sense in many curious ways. Their erotic tendencies were developed without regard to time, place or circumstances. And it was believed that epilepsy, or the same lesions in the nerve centers which produced epilepsy, were the prime factors in disordering the sexual functions. Further investigation, however, showed that the sexual vagaries of the patient existed long before convulsions appeared, preceding them by many years, and that the epilepsy of such patients was due to over-excitation of the

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