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SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS OF IMPOTENCE.

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Sexual impotence, be it real or imaginary, be it permanent or only temporary, or be it due to some physical imperfection, or to a mere disturbance of function, or present in any form or degree, is always a most fruitful source of dire anxiety and apprehension to its victim, while it furnishes to the unscrupulously thrifty and the ingenious, a most lucrative field for the exercise of their peculiar talents. It is not the highly wrought neurotic or neurasthenic of our civilization who alone falls under its blighting spell, as history relates that during the rude and rugged dark and middle ages, relative impotence, or that form of the disorder which is mostly due to some reflex actions of the various senses, the emotions, or of the mind, was even more widely prevalent, common and persistent than at present. The Roman Emperors Nero and Honorius, the Frankish monarch Charlemagne, the Gothic King Theodoric, and the Egyptian King Amasis were victims of this disorder in the relative form. Superstition is, in this regard, in connection with the apprehensive fear that too easily seizes upon some minds, a most prolific source for the engrafting or entrance of the disease, just as the same causes tend through suggestion, but too often, to inaugurate almost every conceivable form of disease in the too easily impressed. Even with the most intelligent there still lurks a trace of superstition or apprehensive impressionableness that neither reason nor mature judgment can prevail against, hence

it is from every walk of life that these various suggestive disorders and their curers find their victims.

Sexual impotence may be consecutive, as when due to some physical malformation or imperfection, or it may be symptomatic, as when present owing to some temporary disease of some parts of the genital apparatus, to excessive venery, intemperance, gluttony, or as a result of too protracted mental or physical labors, a prolonged course of medicine of an anaphrodisiac order, or as a result of a wasting and debilitating disease; then again, the disease may be purely relative or sympathetic, this being that form of the disease wherein the mind or some of the senses conspire to make the individual a paragon of continence, however much it may be against his temperament or will and desires. These various forms of impotency may be intercurrent, as for instance, a person with some slight harmless imperfection will often indirectly fall into some persistent form of the sympathetic order of the disease, when in fact the imperfections should in no sense affect him physically or physiologically in any direct sense, while the victim to an impotence that is often purely imaginary may, in time, become permanently impotent through a too prolonged disuse of the sexual functions and a consequent atrophy of some of the important parts.

For the relief of impotence every field of medicine may be employed. Some cases may require direct surgical interference, and others may be relieved by mechanical means; hygienic treatment may be all that will be required with many, while medication may be imperative with others. In the majority, however, these being mostly victims of the relative or sympathetic order of the disease, suggestive therapeutics will be found the most beneficial. It is with this form of the ailment that this paper will deal. To fully explain the meaning of the terms relative and sympathetic in connection with impotence, the relation of a case in point will do more to elucidate the subject than pages of elaborate definitions.

Several years ago a professional friend had a very nervous patient, who, having gone in the ways he should not have gone and browsed in forbidden fields, was then afflicted with a severe attack of gonorrhœa. The depressing effect upon his moral stamina incident to the presence of the disease, was, owing to his highly nervous condition, very great. Upon his final recovery, however, owing to the use of camphor and bromides,

employed to reduce the sexual nervous irritability, he found himself in a comparative but most decided state of anaphrodisia or impotence, a condition that threw him at once into the very wildest state of alarm and utter demoralization. The medical attendant being off on a vacation, I inherited this neurotic wreck who led me anything but a happy existence for the next six weeks. I found that he had taken but sparingly of the anaphrodisiacs, and then only when necessary. The doctor had, however, acquainted him with the nature and object of the remedies, and this was even now bearing its fruits, weeks and weeks after their intrinsic therapeutic actions or effects had been dissipated. The parts when examined presented a normal physiological appearance, and there existed no reason—apart from his mental and moral panic and trepidation—why he should not be able fully to acquit himself. At first I tried reasoning with my patient, pointing out to him that after the siege through which he had just gone it were better for him to undergo a season of rest and recuperation, and further pointed out to him that kind providence was doing its level best for him by sparing him the annoyance and temptations that a rigid continence would have to suffer were he subjected to the torments, prickings, and demands of the flesh. I also took occasion to point out to him that he was also a financial gainer by the rest, besides avoiding for the time being chances of any further or more serious infection, risks that his late escapade should have forcibly impressed upon his otherwise obdurate understanding. My sermonizings and moral and economic philosophical dissertations on the advantages to be derived by man through a beneficent attack or state of temporary relative impotence were all lost on my would-be billy-goat of a patient. I might as well have written my advice with a pointed stick on the shimmering sands of the seashore in the face of a rolling billow. He would simply mope and stare into vacancy with an idiotic and fatuous glare, and lament over the flaccid state of his organ.

I next attempted the guarded employment of nervous tonics, and later on the use of mild aphrodisiacs. I loaded up my imbecile but frantic patient with a varied cargo of *cannabis indica*, *damiana*, *strychnia*, phosphate of zinc, with ballasts of codliver oil and iron; I put him through various gymnastics and hygienic recreation, cold douches, massage, forcibly fed him, and then starved him, enjoined long walks, and horseback exercise, inter-

spersed with periods of protracted rest, had him walk out in the early morning *a la* Father Kneipp, bare-footed and bare-legged, clad only in a highland skirt to give him all the vivifying influence of the fresh air, and the slanting rays of the rising sun. I enjoined perfect continence and purity of mind and thought, as well as an utter avoidance or ignoring of anything bearing upon either his condition or upon sexual matters in any form. To these latter restrictions I could not obtain his full sanction, as he argued that, being on the continued watch for the first returning signs of virility, not dwelling upon the matter in hand was out of the question, besides, in common with the laical mind, he was further impressed with the insane idea that the opposite from the beatific and pure condition of mind was absolutely essential if he ever expected to recover. He called to my mind the almost asexual condition of many of the members of religious orders who, from a too utter neglect of things worldly and a too deep abstraction in things spiritual and celestial, had in the end become as virtually eunuchized as a Cybelian priest, or as a New Mexico *mujerado*. My patient had considerable of old Adam in his head and did not propose to make this world a sterile waste by totally giving up the devil and the flesh and living a pure and holy but insipid life. What am I working for anyhow? What answer could I make to such an abandoned son of Belial with all sense of morality blunted as that in a dog during the rutting season. It was useless for me to point out to him that I only desired him to retain his mind and thoughts in pure and virtuous channels for the time being, at least long enough to give the nerves that conveyed impressions from his afflicted parts to his head, and from his dome of thought back again to the organs that engrossed all his time and attention, that much required sufficient rest and chance to recuperate which they so sadly needed, after which, I assured him of a complete recovery, when, if he wished, he might emulate the orgies of a George IV, and, owing to his lacking the stamina of the aforesaid George, drop limp and listless into a premature grave. That was the kind of death he wished to die, he replied, so that any further expostulations on my part were useless.

At last I reached the end of my therapeutic rope. Everything had been tried and everything had failed, and my patient was, if anything, more suggestively impotent than ever, and in a

frame of mind and nervous trepidation as well as moral panic that threatened soon to land him as a demented man in a lunatic's cell. He was fast becoming a wild eyed paranoiac, and was beginning to cast out dark hints of vengeance upon the doctor who had thus unwittingly wrecked his manhood—this was the way he called or termed his impotence or anaphrodisia. That he might in a moment of wild delirium commit murder and possible suicide was daily becoming more apparent. In this extremity of my means and of his condition, I felt that, unless I could bring about a prompt change in some visible degree, some catastrophe would occur. I determined upon a bold move, jesuitically allaying my conscience as to any moral qualms it might oppose by the axiom that the end in view and the apparently hopeless condition of affairs with the possible dire consequences fully justified the means.

Upon the next visit I inquired of my patient whether he knew of a voluptuously developed girl, young and good looking, and of sufficient elastic morality to play a passive role in a physiological experiment. I proposed that he should secure the services of such a person—who would of necessity be highly magnetic—for three successive nights. They were to sleep in an insulated broad bed, glass disks being used to insulate each bedstead leg to the floor. The bed itself was to be two feet removed from the walls, the head to the east, and my impotent invalid to occupy the southerly edge of the bed and the experimental maid the northerly side, the parties not to approach each other nearer than two feet. The maid, it was further stipulated, should disrobe on her side of the bed—the patient might look on on this disrobing if so inclined—but that on no condition or for any purpose whatever should my impotent patient transgress or trespass even a finger beyond his boundary of the neutral zone of two feet that was to remain between the two persons. The treatment was to be platonically moral as well as magnetic, the impotent receiving the full current of magnetism as it left the maid's body in its southwardly journey, while the insulation of the bedstead enabled him to store up the much needed magnetism in his body. Three nights were to be devoted to this treatment, at the expiration of which time I assured my patient that he would be as puissant as Daniel Webster or an Augustus the Strong. I left him a book wherein he was to record the noticeable physical changes during the night—if any should take place

—in his condition, which he was to bring to my office daily for my inspection.

The upshot of the treatment reminded me greatly of the closing paragraph of "Sterne's Sentimental Journey." I need hardly say that my notebook was utterly forgotten in the immoral turmoil that followed, and that my former impotent forgot to record the changes as they occurred. It must be said, however, in defense of my patient, that whatever changes and events took place, did so so suddenly that it left him no time for any clerical work. My patient turned up at my office next morning with his former lacklusterless eyes beaming like two shiny jet beads, a flushed nose and an expansive smile. He had within ten minutes after the initiation of the treatment thrown all stipulation and technical direction to the four winds and undertaken his cure according to his own notions, assuring me that the cure was perfect and complete and that he would certainly have exploded from the storing magnetism as it traveled from north to south, had he been compelled to undergo three nights of such storing.

Mondat relates a peculiar case—the classical case that figures in about every work on psychopatia sexualis—wherein the subject could not entertain any relations with a female unless she were a blonde, fully dressed in a silk dress with corsets and wearing laced boots. The patient could not under any circumstances entertain the idea of intercourse with a brunette, and above all, with a female in a state of *deshabille*. By treating and improving his self confidence he was finally cured of his relative form of impotence, so that he happily married a brunette with whom he had fallen in love, but for whom, strange as it may seem, he had not until the time of his cure, been able to entertain anything else than a purely platonic passion. The progress of the case was necessarily slow and the treatment, although not exactly what would be termed strictly on moral lines, was, nevertheless, on such lines as are dictated by common sense and scientific ingenuity and accomplished the desired object.

There are no limits to the capriciousness that attends some of the various degrees or forms of relative impotence. Descourtiz, in his work on anaphrodisia, relates the case of an old debauchee who could only be aroused in a sexual sense by the most peculiar method. The most seductive female was power-

less to affect him either to a desire or to a capacity for intercourse, and it was only on seeing a woman in the act of cutting off the head of a fowl and the flow of blood that his sexual instincts could be aroused. His impotence or anaphrodisia, therefore, was anything but real, only that the channels through which his passions had been formerly aroused were now closed thoroughfares, and neither the sight of a beautiful woman or the contact with one had any effect upon him, and we have in his case an extreme example as to the wanderings that this peculiar functional derangement will lead its victim.

A mathematician is reported as being rendered relatively impotent from the fact that he could not abstract himself sufficiently from his problem to finish the act. His wife consulted a physician who advised her to ply him with wine just enough to create a feeling of joy and disturb his mathematical calculation. This produced the desired effect, and the professor's wife was soon in a condition to anticipate the joys of matrimony.

Literature on this subject gives the history of two cases who were sterile from excess of priapism during the act, the priapism effectually preventing the ejaculation of the semen. Purgatives, local depletion and dieting effected a cure in one of the cases.

A rebuff, a slighting remark, indifference on the part of the female, anything that will offend the sensibilities of any of the senses, will often be the initial point for the departure in an individual of an insurmountable case of relative impotence respecting the woman which nothing in the future can efface. Broken marriage engagements occur from such trivial causes, and the woman is really never able to fathom the cause or understand the sudden refrigeration on the part of her lover. Jealousy is here a most peculiar factor which reverses the currents of both love and passion, a sudden and even ill-founded case of jealousy often changing the most violent passion into feelings of the utmost indifference and even hate. Married women, by their carelessness of the care of their person,—especially if, in the lower walks of life, where obliged to do drudgery, it is not always convenient nor even possible for the housewife to devote the time or care to her person that the retention of her charms requires—often lose the passionate affection of their husbands without knowing why, and really putting the husband in a certain degree of relative impotence in that regard. At first comes

indifference, then a disinclination, then a positive aversion, and it only requires that another more attractive female should enter the field to make the estrangement complete.

The same devious and almost incomprehensible rules that govern the production of relative impotence elsewhere are, in many cases of divorce, the secret and unconscious causes that bring about the final catastrophe, against which either better judgment or moral ideas may struggle in vain.

While authorities make a distinction between simple anaphrodisia and impotence, classing the first named ailment as a mere disturbance of function or an absence of passion, and impotence with agenesia or sterility proper, it must not be overlooked that the former condition is by no means always removable, so that, practically, it may amount to agenesia in every sense. The causes that have brought about the condition of anaphrodisia often bear a direct relation to its curability.

An anaphrodisiac, wherein the factors consist in overwork, either mental or physical, resulting in anæmia too long continued, disuse of the organs of reproduction, or from a too long abstinence from intercourse, is comparatively more easily curable than a like condition resulting from onanism or sexual excesses, wherein a certain degree of permanent local nerve exhaustion may be present, as in many of these cases, similarly to those cases resulting from premature decrepitude or aging, certain pathological changes may have occurred that place the patient in another category than that of the functional, and beyond the help of either medicine or surgery.

A patient may be agenesic and yet not anaphrodisic, as in the case of Velluti, the eunuchized operatic singer, whom I mention in my "*History of Circumcision*," who literally came to a premature death in London through the seeming impossible cause of sexual excesses. Velluti had been castrated as a child for the improvement of his voice, being then destined as a choir singer; his natural talent as an actor and artist, united to a fine personal appearance, however, led him into the operatic field. While in London he was so lionized by his admirers of the opposite sex that it ended in his sudden decay and death from over indulgence at the shrine of Venus. I have in my experience come across a number of patients far advanced in years who belonged to this class of the disorder, being aspermic, but not by any means in a condition of anaphrodisia. One old man,

whose wealth permitted the humoring of his whims, was so much the contrary of an anaphrodisiac that in his advanced age he on three different occasions married young women who were obliged to desert his bed and seek for a divorce to save their lives, but like a pugilistic champion who sooner or later finds his master, this aged Don Juanic hero at last met a robust Juno who was more than his match, and in the unequal struggle he lost his life, although, be it said to his credit, he died in harness, and, as he expressed it, the death he had always wished to die. Had the man only been a Mahomedan and believed in the existence of a series of heavens destined by the great prophet for the reward of the faithful, his removal from this earth, wherein his peculiar order and measure of bliss was sadly edged in and limited by our Christian customs, would otherwise have been a most happy translation.

The old gentleman above mentioned belonged more to the satyriasis class, an extreme example of which is mentioned by Rony as having occurred at Caderousse, in France. M. Chauvel, the physician called to the case, was met by the wife as he entered the house who complained of the violent sexual passion exhibited by the husband who, during the previous night, had copulated with her no less than forty times. She was suffering from this violence, being greatly swollen and in great agony as a result. The man had fallen into this condition through a potion administered to him for the relief of a tertian fever from which he suffered. The neighboring priest had been summoned and had utterly failed to exorcise the devil out of him, as it was the belief of all the neighbors that he was possessed of his satanic majesty. The violent erection and desire at length culminated in a wild frenzy and he was wrapped up in clothe soaked in water and vinegar to allay the great heat from which he suffered, tied hand and foot and strapped to the bed. By morning he was found stark dead but with a happy smile fixed on his face. His penis was already in a state of gangrene.

Mohammed certainly displayed great philosophical tact by the manner in which he removed the sting from death, as well as from old age, as no one can be said to die a more blissful death than the Turks or Arabs, especially those who fall in battle and thus gain a right to an immediate translation to the inner and holiest of the Mahomedan heavens, where sexual recuperation is eternal, and that without the need of opium, amber

and musk, or any of the aphrodisiacs that after the age of thirty-five are the constant stimulants of the enervated and anaphrodisiac Turk, provided the latter happens to belong to the well-to do and independent class, who are most decidedly polygamous.

City dwellers among Europeans and Americans, in comparison to those who lead a country life, enjoy a much shorter sexual existence, and the inhabitants of the degrees of latitude as they near the tropics reach the acme of their sexual life much sooner than those in the more northerly latitudes, although there is nothing in the temperate or semi-tropic zones that can equal the intensity or vehemence of the passion of the dweller within the arctic circle, whose passion surges within him like a Kansas tornado during the short season that "Old Sol" peeps above the horizon to stimulate the animal life of that region. Were the short summer to be prolonged and the long arctic night with its quieting season of rest removed, one year would probably make the Esquimaux race extinct, as, like Richard the lion-hearted when wounded with the arrow, the vehemence of their passion at this period of their short summer is such as would make them prefer death to the practice of self-denial. Richard died from this cause, the arrow wound being merely a predisposing cause, while his ungovernable sexual passion was the real determining cause of his death.

As already observed, relative impotence—this applies more particularly to that temporary impotence or anaphrodisia that results from the interference of the senses and imagination—is by no means a stranger to medicine or legislation, as its existence is as old as recorded history. Among barbarians and semi-civilized people, as well as the more modern, where benightedness of a certain order and superstition have held their sway, it was not uncommon for man in the lust and vigor of manhood to find himself suddenly stricken with an unconquerable attack of anaphrodisia. In the middle ages and even down to the beginning of the present century popular belief in witchcraft and occultism gave life and existence to a class of beings who were believed to possess the power of producing impotence in persons whom they wished to injure, by the means of incantations, charms, or by the repetition of some cabalistic formula. These sorcerers were believed to be in league with the powers of the upper and nether world, and were credited with powers

equal to those who possessed the evil eye. The persons believed capable of exercising this evil power were such as were reputed as sorcerers or witches, and the practice was and is still known as *nouer l'aguilette*, a mixed term that partly denoted the manner of performing the charm, in the course of which several knots were gradually tightened in a thread of wool, silk or flaxen material; this was the *nouer* or tying up of the *l'aguilette*, the latter denoting the male member which, through the method of pronouncing the cabalistic words during the making of the knots, was believed to be helplessly "tied up" as far as any priapic rites or worshipping at the shrine of Venus was concerned. The utterance of the formula was pronounced by the witch or sorcerer during the performance of the nuptial ceremony, and it thus happened that if the bridegroom noticed any old hag or sorcerer in the church or at the door at his entrance, so greatly was his imagination seized with panic that it was safe to say that the bride would remain a virgin for an indefinite number of days, as the groom could be said to be sexually paralyzed.

The church, medicine and the occult sciences were very naturally called upon to offer some preventive or remedy for this very annoying and demoralizing affliction. The church decidedly hated to permit belief that the devil possessed any power that it could not overcome and the general belief in sorcery and countercharms forced occultism to formulate some counter effect to the evil disposed tiers of the *aguilette*. Priests exorcised the evil one and occultism prescribed various remedies. The Ecclesiastical Councils of Milan, Tours and the Synods of Mont Cassin and of Ferrara, as well as the Council of Melun, held in 1579, visited all these evil doers that so sadly interfered with nuptial joys and the scriptural injunction to go forth and multiply with excommunication and its solemn anathema, thus handing them over to perdition for eternity.

Secular parliaments were fully as severe in dealing with these supposed mischief making culprits, for while the church looked well to the damning of the soul of these recreants, the civil bodies burned, hung and otherwise punished the body, so that the devil could the sooner come into possession of their souls. This is very evident from the old records which tell us of a cobbler named Abel de la Rue, who was publicly hung and afterwards burned for having so bewitched Jean Moreau de Coulo-

moniers, who, whatever his other failings were, was sufficiently powerful not to allow any low born cobbler to trifle with his propensities. The Paris parliament, before whom the case was tried, promptly condemned Abel to the stake, but on an appeal to the Rouen parliament the latter very magnanimously so altered the sentence as to have him first hung, and then burned. In 1597 Ohamonillard was executed for a like offence.

The strangest case of all was that of an obscure sorcerer who was condemned and burned alive at Bordeaux, being accused of having not only bewitched a lord and lady of a neighboring castle, but who had so managed his spell as to make it cover all the valets and chambermaids and waiting men and women from her ladyship's maid down to the scullion, so that a most happy, beatific and edifying state of enforced virtue and continence pervaded the whole domain.

Another strange case which brought the reverend father Vidal de la Porte, an ecclesiastic, to grief, was a somewhat like general offence, which, however, further charged his reverence, not only with having stopped all carnal play among a certain number of the inhabitants of Riom, in France, but with extending his malefice so as to cover the dogs, cats and other domestic animals, a bewitchment which threatened to make these races extinct. This priest was condemned to make full penance and a confession at the church door, whither he was marched under guard from his prison, clad only in his shirt, and barefooted, holding a lighted taper in his hand, while a rope encircled his neck, after which he was marched to the place of execution, hung, and his body reduced to ashes. Riom was then not in the least behind our Salem forefathers in either intelligence or activity, and promptly squelched the devil on sight.

Amasis, King of Egypt, was believed to have been bewitched by a Nile shepherd at the time of his marriage with Laodicea, a young and beautiful Greek maiden of Cyren, who was possessed of such personal charms as would have tempted a St. Anthony from the paths of virtue.

Among the Romans, discarded wives were believed to have become possessed and exercised this rite upon their former husbands on the occasion of their next marriage. Tacitus tells us that Numantine was cited to appear before the Roman senate for having so bewitched her former husband Silvanus.

Occultism and popular superstition contrived many preventives and remedies for this evil. The groom was advised to wear two shirts, one over the other, and both turned inside out, during the marriage ceremony. Another consisted in tapping a barrel of white wine and running the first wine through the wedding ring, while some skatologically inclined counter sorcerer advised the husband to micturate through the wedding ring on his nuptial evening as an offering—a sure countercharm to any paralyzing effects of the wicked necromancers. In the north of France, in the mountains and wooded regions that extend from the Ardennes to the Vosges, a favorite remedy consisted in rubbing the grease of wolves on the frame of the door of the nuptial chamber, or on that of the church door through which the bride passed on her entrance to the church. In some parts, the bride is advised to wear one of her stockings inside out, while the groom ate a roasted woodpecker seasoned with salt used in the making of holy water. Sniffing up of smoke arising from a burning tooth belonging to a man who had recently died, was looked upon as a sovereign preventive, while some quicksilver in a tube of straw placed under the nuptial pillow was believed to be very efficacious. A piece of wax taken from a candle that had been burned at Easter, if taken and worn by the groom, was expected to do wonders, just as in a general manner a like piece of wax worn on the chest was reputed to shield the wearer from the evils of any sorcerer. Among the ancients, the gall of the crow mixed with the oil of sesame rubbed on the groom was looked on as a sure remedy.

The Arabians were not free from these superstitions, as some of their writers recommend the gall of a certain fish to be rubbed on the groom who is suddenly stricken with this necromancing form of anaphrodisia. The Empress Justinia, wife of Marc Aurelius, was cured of a passion she entertained for a gladiator by being made to drink the blood of another gladiator who was purposely slain for the purpose. According to Apuleius the juices of the birthwort, heartwort or aristolochia, had the effect of undoing the work of the sorcerers and restoring man to the normal. A celebrated doctor of the times, named Thiers, counts twenty-two different remedies and safeguards in use against the sorcerers and witches who thus disable the newly married. Among his recommendations we find the placing of salt in the pockets and shoes of the bride and

groom—for it must not be overlooked that the bewitchment was so effective on either sex that no man could maintain the proper virile force in his member to enter a bride who was so bewitched. Another of his remedies consisted in carrying on the body—in a pocket or hanging about the neck like an amulet—the roasted liver of the woodpecker, while the groom or bride thrice stroked the belly of an ass. Rubbing the feet or legs of the bedposts of the nuptial couch with the fat of the wolf was also recommended. Many of the old church rituals contained valuable advices looking to the discomfiture of these sorcerers, whose evil power was recognized by even such able and astute observers as St. Thomas and St. Augustine. Cardinal Perron had inserted in the Evreux ritual much solid advice looking to the protection of his flocks so that they would not need to wax profane on their marriage night.

Among the ancients there existed great faith in the efficacy of what was termed *hippomanes*, a drug made from a wart or fleshy growth that was at times found growing on the forehead of a foal, which was dried and powdered. This formed one of the most ancient of love philters. Aristotle, Aelian, Pausanias, Phormis the Arcadian, Theocritus, Theophrastus, Ovide and Juvenal, all speak of this drug and its uses. Administered to man or woman it was said to throw them into the peculiar erotic furor possessed by mares at their horsing season. An old tradition relates that Phormis incorporated some of the powder of *hippomanes* with the bronze out of which he cast the statue of a mare, the sight of which threw all approaching stallions into a wild state of erotic frenzy. Since the days of Theocritus the name of *hippomanes* has been associated with a plant found on the southeastern parts of Europe and more extensively on the Pacific Coasts of the new world, which possesses the power of driving horses into a frenzy. On the Pacific Coasts this is called “*loco weed*,” and horses who have partaken of it are said to be “*locod*” or made mad.

Jean Wier mentions that among the superstitious love philters of his times, the hairs on the end of the tail of a wolf, the brain of a cat, as well as that of a lizard and that of a serpent called the star serpent, enjoyed great renown. A powder made from the bones of the tree toad which had been stripped of its flesh on an ant hill—worn as an amulet suspended about the neck was said to be an unfailing love charm. Shirts and other

vestments of the dead—the history of a dead man's shirt figured very conspicuously in the Sharon case in San Francisco several years ago, the lady having procured such a piece out at Lone Mountain and administered it to the gay old boy to bring him to time—pieces of the wax of candles used at funerals and other such lugubrious articles were all believed to impart passionate feelings to the partaker.

The Egyptian priests, according to St. Jerome, were enabled to live a life of chastity and defy the devil and all temptations of the flesh, by daily imbibing a small quantity of infusion of hemlock, as its continued use soon reduced them to a state of perfect impotence. The *nenuphar*, or water lily, the flower of the *nymphaea alba*, was also used by the religious orders of ancient and more modern times to accomplish the same ends, being given in the form of syrup, decoction, or in the infusion.

To stimulate the passion and overcome anaphrodisia, opium and musk mixed with amber have long been employed in the Orient. Debray mentions a Turk possessed of a select harem who had used for fifteen years a compound of cinnamon, amber, musk, cardamoms, mace and nutmegs as an anaphrodisiac for himself and harem, with the results that he had thirty-five children and feeling perfectly well. A mixture of opium and hellebore and another of opium and machomore—the latter being a wild mushroom found in northeastern Asia, possessing properties analogous to those of opium, only more exciting and stimulating—have long been in use among the northern Africans and Asiatics as stimuli to the animal passions; the last named mixture is a favorite with the Malays who, under its influence, are thrown into the homicidal frenzy which starts them on their murderous runs.

Cantharides have from time immemorial been reputed as being aphrodisiacs of the first water. It is doubtful, however, if any drug ever was so overestimated or so misapplied or employed with so much danger or harm. Phosphorus may be classed in the same dangerous as well as inefficient category; while it may be said in general that all medicines possessing a very active primary aphrodisiac property will, in the end and to their unfortunate partaker, prove most decided anaphrodisiacs. *Cannabis indica*, opium, and all narcotics that stimulate and soothe the cerebral and nervous systems will, in the end, bring about a state of sexual paralysis in either sex hard to eradicate.

Patients suffering from anaphrodisia from a too free indulgence, physical debility, or advancing years, would actually fare better if partaking considerably and sufficiently of some of the old sedatives above mentioned, such (as hemlock, nenuphar, bromides or camphor, so as to enable them to give tired nature its much needed rest. Whatever is to be accomplished in these cases must be done on the line of strict hygiene, moral as well as physical. Sea bathings, cold shower baths, massage, careful dieting, avoidance of too much meat and alcoholic beverages, substitution of fish in any form for meats, an out of door life, a contented mind and the cultivation of a cheerful disposition, are among the best means of restoring the wornout sexual functions. To attempt their restoration by direct stimulants to the exclusion of the above means, is simply plying the spur to an exhausted horse which needs rest, oats and water, instead of the prick of the spur.

Electric belts sending forth sparks of electricity, penis congestors, congesting rings, and the various other appliances of the ingenious are, after all, but mere makeshifts and time killers, or mind amusers, in 99 per cent of the cases of impotence and anaphrodisia, although there is no denying that in many cases of mere sympathetic anaphrodisia, the relief or comfort that these may impart to the distracted mind may often work a reformation. They should, however, carefully abstain from employing any active anaphrodisiacs or attempt to brace up on alcoholic stimulants, as the latter, while very active in increasing desire and power where these have an existence, are, nevertheless, possessed of the reverse power where both desire and ability are on the wane; in fact, in some cases the inconsiderate use of stimulants may even tend to extinguish all passion and render the patient as docile and harmless as a eunuch.

Some years ago I was consulted by an elderly gentleman of some seventy years, well preserved and otherwise in a splendid state of health. He was then in a state of the most pronounced frigid anaphrodisia. He wanted to but could not. There was enough of caloriferous thoughts in his upper story which burned like an Arabian desert, but the lower regions were as frigid and as passionless as the north pole in the middle of an arctic night. In youth and up to the time of his marriage he had been perfectly continent, and had always lived an abstemious life. After his marriage and up to a year previous to his visit to me he had

always been able to properly acquit himself as a dutiful and loving husband. At this time his wife fell into the hands of some quacks who treated her for a year for some imaginary uterine tumor, and who had insisted on a perfect state of continence as between husband and wife as being highly necessary. This long protracted rest at his time of life was a dangerous proceeding, as he fell by disuse into a state of frigid anaphrodisia, and when fully awake to the condition, the awakening only served to rivet the affliction more firmly. On an examination the parts were found to present no condition of atrophy in any sense, and from the previous history of good conduct in youth and up to the time of thirty and the general rectitude of his life, I had no doubt but that with the establishment of confidence through moral hygiene, that he would soon be all right. His wife was a well preserved and handsome woman of some forty-five years—although, if one is only as old as his arteries or according to their feelings, I should not have given her more than thirty-five—and it is needless to say that I expected considerable help from this quarter.

Remembering the relation of Hequet concerning the experiment of the Saracen General Saladin who, in order to test the relative virtues of a meat diet compared to one of fish upon the sexual appetite, fed for some time a number of austere and holy dervishes on meat and subsequently on an exclusive fish diet, in the meanwhile exposing the poor dervishes to the temptations offered by some beautiful slaves, who were instructed, if possible to lead the poor fellows from the path of continence, and how they resisted all the wiles of these terrestrial houris while on meat, but quickly succumbed after a few days' tintillation after a fish diet, I placed my patient on fish of all kinds and carefully excluded meats, except fowl and game, of which he was to partake once daily. Peas, beans, and all such flatulence generating eatables were excluded, and he was allowed a small glass of beer or ale with his dinner and supper. He was instructed to retire early and if insomniac to take a lunch of graham crackers and some light beer at midnight. In addition he was given a placebo to take every three hours during the day, and told to use cold sponge bathings and the perineal douche every morning, and to carefully dismiss the subject of his impotence from his mind, assuring him that in the course of a month he would be all right.

In the course of the next ten days he did not report any improvement. The flaccid condition of his mundane affairs seemed to be worse if anything. This was very discouraging. Since the beginning of his wife's treatment they had occupied separate beds. Knowing her splendid physique I then advised that they should use but one bed, and that she should enter as an active factor in the treatment of his case. Very unfortunately, the wife was given too much to a too prim idea of modesty which she carried to extremes, being one of those who perform many natural marital functions, however cheerful and domestically necessary, still under such a seeming degree of moral protest and of shocked morality, as to cast an effectual damper on an easily squelched and not over vigorous and partially dormant virile member. He explained these things to me so that I soon perceived that not only we could not look for assistance from that quarter, but furthermore, that the poor man's Don Juanic propensities would require stiffening to a degree not alone to enable him to carry out his part of the contract, but to defend themselves against the blighting and chilling effects, and overcome the frigid—if altogether silent—protests of his helpmate—which amounted to something like attempting to carry by storm a double line of entrenchments, protected by an enfilading fire.

Physicians are often imposed upon, and often their honest and conscientiously moral efforts are employed to further just the opposite ends from those intended. It proved so in this case, as the herculean and heroic labor done in the hope of retaining that which best serves to harmonize [the conjugal relations, was, in the present instance, simply used by my septuagenarian reprobate of a patient in efforts to break the seventh commandment. In fact he had had no thoughts about his wife from the first, and all his anxieties were centered on seducing a handsome young chambermaid of some twenty summers who attended to their rooms, and here it was why all my best planned efforts had brought no good result, as the natural excitement attending his novel enterprise and the natural, moral and physical obstacles which were to be overcome in the match required more stamina than he could at once muster or long maintain out of all the moral and medical treatment that he had thus far undergone. In search of that seclusion and quiet which are so essential to the consummation of

such enterprises, he at last went off on a business trip to meet his youthful *Dulcinea*, who departed by another train, hoping to find a lover's paradise in Los Angeles. His wife heard of the escapade, and very inconsiderately for herself, at once initiated divorce proceedings. The old gentleman was very very wealthy, but this consisted wholly in negotiable securities which he promptly placed in safety, leaving the wife to obtain her divorce without any division of property. A more thoughtful, calm, and philosophical woman, upon discovering the bent that her aged husband was taking, would have shut her eyes to his shortcomings, and taken pains to have procured a sufficient number of attractive and not over virtuous handmaids to have brought the old *Lothario* and his newly acquired aphrodisiac propensities to an early grave, pretty much as the Austrian court managed to dispose of the health and life of Napoleon II., through a Viennese ballet dancer, who otherwise would have been a serious political disturber in the peace of Europe, a mode of death which would have been consistently happy with the old man's new departure.

I have given a few details concerning some of these cases simply to illustrate that much of our so-called impotence is only relative or sympathetic, and to emphasize the truth that in the greater percentage of cases aphrodisiacs are more apt to be hurtful than beneficial, and that impotence as we generally meet it must be treated rather on moral than on therapeutic grounds. Testiculire and the various animal extracts are commendable in these cases as they the more directly strike the imagination, and are more apt to restore confidence, while on the other hand there are no possible dangers that may occur from their uses. I may say in passing that I have found a raw meat diet highly beneficial in some cases of anaphrodisia, especially when due to a timid or an anemic nature, although some of the most erotically irritable male natures I have known were very spare as well as anemic. One case was a thin cadaverous man, a victim of trembling palsy, through years of the inordinate use of tobacco which he was even then using unsparingly. This latter case was not an aspermic satyriasis by any means, and yet in his apparently incoherent state of muscular control, something which even affected his speech, he was in such a state of constant aphrodisia that he averaged from thirty-five to forty complete copulative acts during the week. Plethoric, corpulent or

fat men may also exhibit both extremes of sexual desires; a strong heavy man who is rather more muscular than merely stout, may be very sexually inclined, while another who is simply large through adipose tissue may be both aspermic and a victim to the most frigid anaphrodisia. I have seen sexual desire and capacity return with a loss of adipose tissue, and a restoration to a more normal shape. The physician should not discourage a patient owing to any too arbitrary limit placed by age, as the functions under proper hygiene may be restored at times in an aged person as well as in one who is otherwise in his prime, although, in giving any such encouragement, we should well weigh every physical consideration in connection with our patient.

Although cantharides and phosphorus, as already mentioned, long enjoyed a high reputation as active aphrodisiacs, their immediate effects in this direction depend largely upon their manner of administration, and the larger doses to which popular belief attributes such wonderful propensities are often more poisonous than aphrodisiac in their results. In small and continued doses they will often and after a time tend to produce the desired effect, but, as already stated, the secondary or more lasting effects of either of these drugs, will, in the end, be more the reverse, and actually tend to a more settled state of anaphrodisia. Furthermore, the gastro-intestinal tract is more apt—in conjunction with the kidneys—to receive the full force of the drug and bring the victim to an untimely death through the resulting extensive and intense inflammation. Cantharides nor phosphorus should ever be retailed out to irresponsible parties under any circumstances, owing to the popular delusions that the vulgar hold regarding their erotic virtues and the real ignorance they possess concerning their real dangers.

CATELLANI has examined the fluid contained in the sacs of twelve cases of strangulated hernia. In eight of the cases no micro-organisms were found. All these cases recovered. In the four remaining cases the bacterium coli was found, and gave pure cultivations except in one case, where no culture could be made, although the bacteria were found in the liquid of the sac when examined directly after operation; this case recovered, but the other three died. In each of the four cases there were appreciable intestinal lesions. No other organism except the bacterium coli was found.