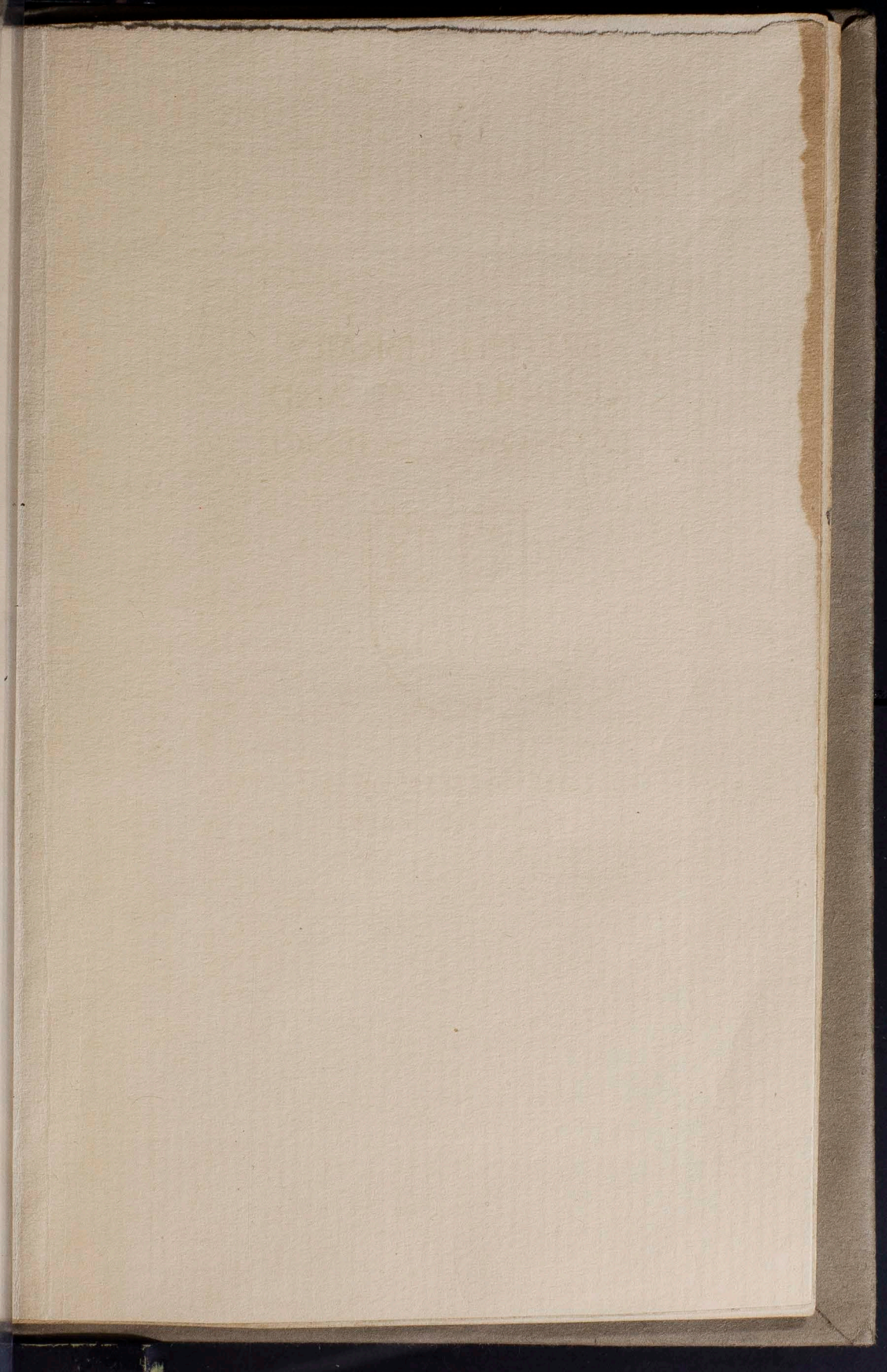
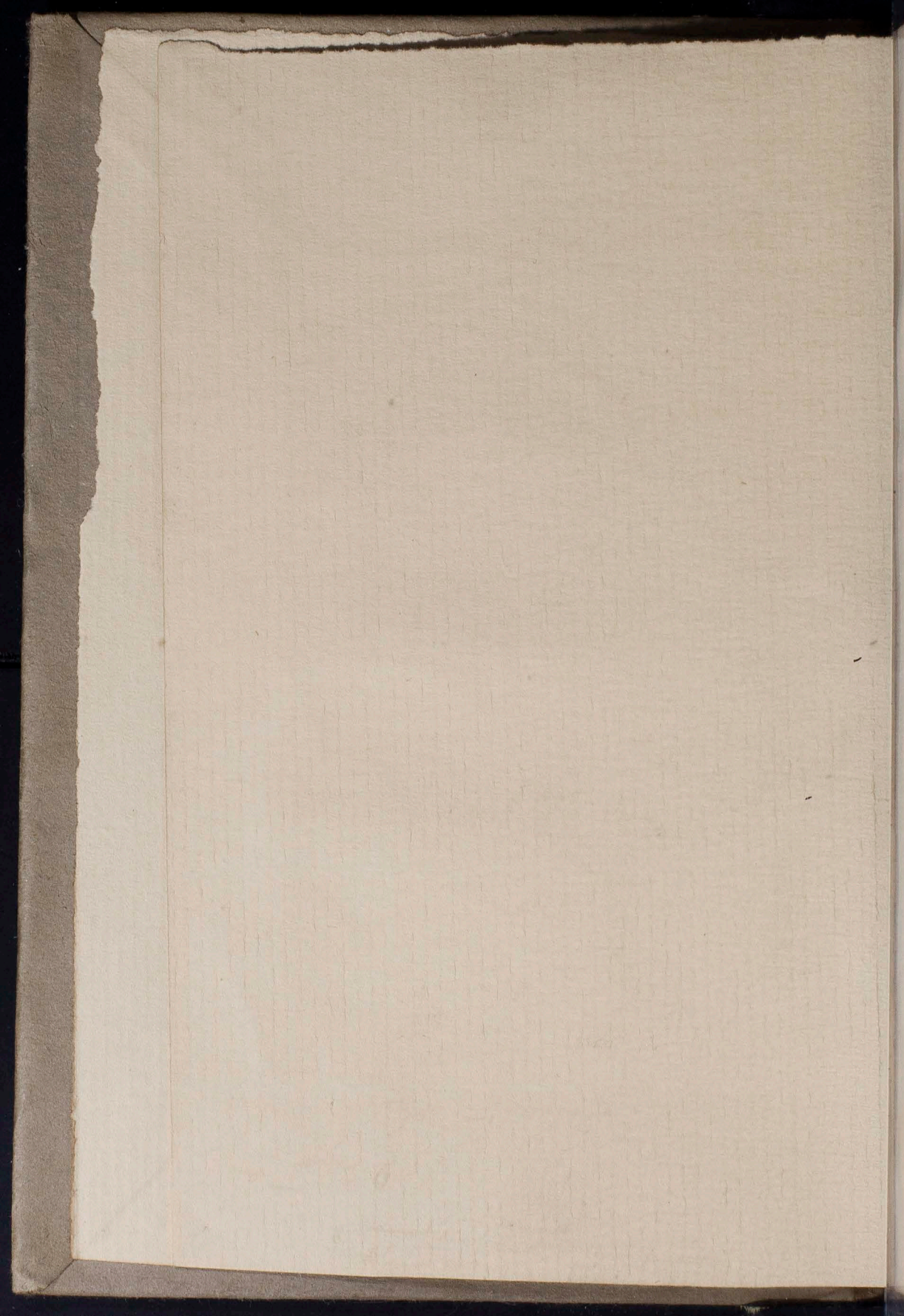


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EVERY WOMAN'S BOOK;

OR,

What is Love?

CONTAINING MOST IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE

PRUDENT REGULATION OF

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOVE,

AND

THE NUMBER OF A FAMILY.

LONDON:

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R(S.R.)

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P R E F A C E

Love is the source, whence flows the stream of human happiness. That this stream has not flowed so abundantly as every well-wisher to his species must desire it should, is attributable to several causes, all, however, founded on ignorance of its worth, and the means of more perfect enjoyment. Its uses and its abuses, whether in relation to abstinence or excess, to the undesired and often mischievous and unhappy consequences of female impregnation, to forced, sordid, or venal connection, and to unhappy matches, are, in this book, fully explained. The object of the Publisher is to war with that sort of prudery which is tantamount to hypocrisy. True virtue can afford to be sincere and open in all cases; it needs no secrecy, no concealment, nothing that it desires should be hidden. It is vice alone that lays claim to secrecy.

The following pages have been written with these and with no other views. The Publisher places his motives for judgment in the hands of the young, the middle-aged, the healthy, the happy, the virtuous, and the sensible part of the community of both sexes.

This publication has become a matter of very general discussion, and will form a striking feature in the history and progressive improvement of this country. The modest and chaste woman may be assured, that nothing is here meant to offend her. Instruction, upon a matter, of which both men and women are by far too ignorant, for their welfare and happiness, is the sole object of this publication. It may shock prejudices; but it will be approved by reason and due deliberation. No one, more than the Publisher, admires chasteness in language and elegance in manners; but all matters of instruction require the plainest language, and all subjects may be philosophically discussed, when they are discussed with a view to the acquisition or communication of useful knowledge. Such is the object of this publication.

It has become a standard work. Ten thousand copies were sold, before the commencement of the present year. It is now stereotyped, and no more will be said about the number of the editions. But it is anticipated, that, for the future, it will be one of the most valued little books in the English Language. No other book, in being, treats on a subject, that has so many important relations.

London, April, 1828.

WHAT IS LOVE?



THE first person, entitled to answer is, the languishing maid of eighteen. She will say, that love is a delightful passion, which can only be fully felt by maids of her years, and if her's be an unrequited love, she will deny its existence in the other sex. Children, she will say, cannot love ; because she never felt such sensations when a child. Older women cannot love ; because they are not so giddy as herself. She can tell you of those who cannot, and who do not love ; but though she feels and thinks a hundred things, she cannot tell you what love is. If she attempt to describe it, you will find, that she means nothing more than a love of the company of a particular male person. If she enjoy that person's company, her sensations are greatly excited, she loves, she dreads his departure, and would set aside the rules of social life to keep him about her. When he goes, it is like a final farewell : every interval of seeing him is an age. He returns , and her sensations are more violently excited.

If he be agreeable, if he have the art of pleasing, his very company is an indescribable yet pleasing part of the torture ; but not to meet him at an appointed time is the very acme of human woe. If he promise and deceive, if he forsake, if he give his company to another female, then, love, like another bile or gastric juice, turns upon its own body, injures and sometimes destroys it. Still the maid knows not what love is, she has desired her lover's company and has enjoyed it ; but that only added fuel to the fire, it has not, for a moment, abated her passion. She has received him punctually ; but still there has been an unappeased sensation. They have met, they have parted : she has sighed for him, she has smiled upon him, she has mourned his absence and enjoyed his presence ; but still something remained ungratified. She knows not what it can be ; it is called *love*, and she, who is still ignorant of herself, can neither understand the cause of, nor apply the remedy to, her disease.

The young man, generally, is as ignorant, as to " what is love," as the young woman. The heart is personified and made the medium of this passion ; but this, like all other personifications, is an erroneous result of ignorance, a supposititious cause, an effect of which is only felt. The

passion of love lies deeper, its seat is the whole body. Every part administers to it.

If the young man be the wooer, he is the love-sick maid all over, where nothing is expected but the person wooed. Money must here be out of the question; we will, for the present, deal with nothing but love of person. The custom of society encourages him to make his advances boldly; if he receive a *no*, he tries again and again, and assures himself, of victory. If he were able to discriminate at the time, he would perceive, that the very condescension to utter *no*, is but an affirmative transposed, and he would be wise not to press the monosyllable, but always to assume the affirmative, and to act upon it with an appearance of prematureness. Under the present state of society, love is a subject on which some women will not talk, and it is only necessary to see this, to act without speaking, to answer for them, and to take for granted that the passion is reciprocal. Every healthy woman, after the age of puberty, feels the passion of love. It is a part of her health, and as natural a consequence as hunger or thirst. Even very few unhealthy women are without the passion. Their disorder, in nine cases out of ten, is caused either by the absence of the

passion or the want of its gratification when possessed.

It is a barbarous custom that forbids the maid to make advances in love, or that confines these advances to the eye, the fingers, the gesture, the motion, the manner. It is equally absurd and ridiculous. Why should not the female state her passion to the male, as well as the male to the female? What impropriety can there be in it? What bad effect can it produce? Is it immodest? Why is it immodest? Is it not virtuous? Why is it not virtuous? It would be difficult to find answers to these questions. Equality and the right to make advances, in all the affairs of genuine love, are claimed for the female. The hypocrisy, the cruelty, that would stifle or disguise a passion, whether in the male or in the female, is wicked, and should be exposed, reprobated, and detested. Young women! assume an equality, plead your passion when you feel it, plead it to those to whom it applies.

Why should we not speak out freely upon this, as well as upon any other subject? It is an affair of pleasure and happiness, and should be matter of common conversation, as other simple pleasures are, every one of which, when rea-

sonably indulged in, produces happiness. There is not a single reason, why it should be concealed, or even why it should excite distaste, when spoken of in a mixed company of males and females. The uses of tobacco and snuff are filthy habits, habits offensive to those who do not use either, a prostitution of the mouth and nostrils to a constantly irritating substance, and is similar to the most disgusting prostitution that has been found among men or women, for it is a perpetually craved and voluntarily purchased prostitution. If love were a matter of common conversation, no other ideas would be associated with it, no other observations would be made upon it, than such as now pass on the gratification of an appetite, such as hunger or thirst, or the taking of a luxury, such as fruit, wine, &c. "Let us take our fill of love," is one of the best exhortations in the Bible, one of the best ever made by woman to her lover.

If love were made matter of sedate and philosophical conversation, the pleasures arising from it would be greatly heightened, desire would never be tyrannically suppressed, and much misery and ill health would be avoided. Parents would explain its meaning, its uses and

its abuses, to their children, at the proper time ; and all ignorance, and what is worse, all hypocrisy upon the subject, which leads to so many disasters, would be abolished. We should soon see a much finer race of human beings, a much more chaste and virtuous race, than we now see. Restraints operate precisely as they operate in cases of excessive taxation ; they destroy the revenue sought, and produce the evils of a smuggled and more disastrous intercourse. Yes, women ! you should be more bold and more virtuous on this head, as a means of removing all seduction, all violence, and all prostitution of your persons as a traffic.

In the old maid, the passion of love, like an overflowing gall-bladder, for want of due absorption, tinges every other sensation with bitterness. In animation, as well as in vegetation, ripeness is the point of health to be gained and to be enjoyed ; and, as the animal so far differs from the vegetable, as to be a self-renovating and self-preserving machine, to make ripeness wholesome, it *must* be duly enjoyed. If the proper excretions be not promoted, ripeness is either never accomplished, or, if accomplished, hastens to decay. They, therefore, who abstain from sexual intercourse, are generally useless for the

purposes of civil life. They seldom possess either the common cheerfulness or the gaiety of well-supported animal life.

The real old bachelors, as well as the old maids, belong to a sort of sub-animal class; for, to be without the passion of love, or to pervert it, argues a sad mental defect. It is hoped, that this developement will do something toward lessening the number of old bachelors and old maids. These apathetic, loveless folks may now be stimulated, with a good grace, since a wholesome check upon an excess of offspring is developed. Love is the most delightful of all our passions, so delightful, indeed, that not one evil that can be removed should be allowed to diminish it. It makes so great a part of human happiness, that it ought so to be purified, as to exist free from all alloy.

The matron is generally so well skilled in affairs of love, as to love philosophically, or rather with a philosophical countenance. It is from this gravity of countenance, that the giddy and inexperienced maid fancies that love is confined to unmarried girls. To love and be sedate does not seem to her inexperience to be possible. But the real difference is between *love gratified* and *love not gratified*. The question of *what is*

love is as difficult to be answered by the matron as by the maid, and as the former has ceased to know any but gratified love, she is too apt to frown upon and discountenance the ungratified love of the latter; instead of which, it is a mother's duty, to explain to her daughter, or other female charge, the question of *what is love*. There should exist no ignorance upon the subject, after love is felt and can be enjoyed.

As for the peevish, exhausted old man, we can only say for him, what Rochefoucault said for old age: *it is a tyrant, that forbids the pleasures of youth, under the pain of death*. He has enjoyed love, as he enjoyed life, without knowing what it meant, or whence it came, and has, if he be religious, perhaps, sought for spiritual phantoms to account for the one as well as for the other. He cannot answer the question *what is love*. It has not yet been philosophically answered.

The philosopher, in asking himself the question, *what is love*, solves it by asking another question, *what is an animal*, or, *what is man*.

Looking at mankind, he finds them of two sexes, male and female, varying but little as to external form or internal character. He finds that they possess the same passions, have the same desires, live by the same means, and with

the difference of the female being the body qualified to breed the species, he sees them in almost every respect alike. Our Saxon ancestors called the female *womb-man*, whence came the corruption of *woman*, a very proper and the chief distinction between the male and female of the human species. There are some slight differences, such as the form of the bones of the pelvis in the female, and the separation or extension of the heads of the femurs or thigh-bones, which, while they facilitate the means of parturition, greatly diminish the strength of the female. Women have more fat and less muscle than men; and are upon the whole more delicately formed.

Looking further, he perceives, that there exists no other real distinction between the male and female of other animals, though there is frequently a greater difference as to external appearance. He also sees, that the principle of sex, or that of male and female, extends to vegetables, and that, in many instances, they can only be propagated by contact. As they have not the power of loco-motion, it is supposed, that this contact is wholly dependent upon the motion of the air, or of insects conveying the seed of the male to the female. So that the

period, when vegetables are bursting with pollen, may be called the period of their loves. Many animals have only periodical and some only annual fits of love. The female has no seminal organs like the male; but there is a stimulating *something*; which produces precisely the same desires and the same pleasures.* Impediments to natural enjoyments bring on the more violent paroxysms of the fit, and it may be truly inferred that LOVE IS A DISEASE: a disease delightful in its cure, but distressing and disastrous if not cured.

Love, in the animal sense, is the desire, which all well organized animals have for sexual intercourse, and like all the animal affections called natural, it exists independently of the will. A human being cannot will that it shall not be

* The article "Generation," in Rees's Cyclopaedia, has the following paragraph: "The opinions concerning the effusion of a *seminal fluid* by the female, and its mixture with that of the male, are altogether imaginary. That a *mucous fluid* is sometimes poured out in coition from the internal organs and vagina, is undoubted; but this happens only in lascivious women or such as live luxuriously; it consists merely of mucous, and is discharged externally instead of passing into the uterus, or womb." All physiologists and surgeons attest, that the female has no seminal vessels like those of the male.

hungry, or that it will or will not feel any other animal sensation, although it has the power in many cases to modify its feelings and desires. This is physical love.

In savage life, in the lowest state, the passion of moral love is but little felt, the mere animal sensations or affections predominate, and the amorous propensities are gratified without either ceremony or secrecy, the gratification of this appetite being no more matter of shame or reproach, than the gratification of any other appetite, such, for instance, as eating or drinking; all those appetites are equally necessary and useful. But as society continues to advance, and right of property begins to be established, the imagination begins to operate, and this may be called the commencement of moral added to physical love; as society advances, the imagination becomes more and more powerful, and, in respect to the sexes, becomes the leading, frequently the all-predominating power, and this is the sum total of love. Moral love is wholly, or very nearly so, an operation of the *imagination*, upon the passion and gratification of physical love.

This definition may be briefly illustrated by the distinction of love, as physical and moral;

physical, as relating to the animal passions; *moral*, as relating to the pleasures and benefits derivable from physical love, and further, embracing the principle of attachment and the ties of consanguinity, neighbourhood, country, species, &c.

Reproduction or accumulation of identities similar to self, seems to be a common law of animal and vegetable life; and the disposition to reproduce in all well-formed and healthy subjects is as powerful as hunger or thirst, or the desire of self-preservation. It is a passion, not criminal in the indulgence; but criminality attaches where the indulgence is withheld; because health, and even life is endangered. It is not a passion of the mind, or an artificial passion, such as a craving to exhibit the distinctions of society; but a natural passion, or a passion of the body, which we hold in common with every other animal. It grows with our growth and is strengthened with our strength.

To prove that physical love is nothing but this passion, it is sufficient to refer to the period or age at which it comes on and leaves us. We hear not of physical love in decaying age or in infancy; and the attachments of habit, of kindness, of gratitude, or of human, social, indi-

vidual, parental, filial, or domestic affection have no connection with the passion of physical love. We talk of a love of virtue, of friendship, of heroism, of charity, of generosity; but this kind of love is wholly distinct from the passion of physical love between the male and female, and may be properly termed moral love. All men are apt to feel the passion of love for a beautiful woman: all women for a handsome and agreeable man; but this expresses nothing more than a desire to associate ourselves with the most agreeable objects. The every day occurrences of mankind explain this matter, and hence the intrigues connected with the passion of physical love. While violence in this case ought to be punished in the most deterring manner, all other legislation upon the subject, beyond the maintenance of offspring, may be fairly deprecated. In nine cases out of ten of adultery on the part of the female, a justification both physical and moral might be traced. Neglect or physical incapacity for love on the part of the husband are the almost invariable causes of adultery.

This definition of love explains why married people are frequently unhappy, and sometimes hate each other soon after marriage, and become

inconstant. It proves, and experience is wholly with it, that the marriage ties in this country are too many for the simple enjoyment of a passion that is not constant, but occasional, that dies with every gratification, and should neither be forced nor shackled. Mutual desire should, at every period of life, constitute the practical part, or the gratification of love, which, if left quite free, would not become more fickle in its attachments. Nature disdains an artificial tie, and the attempted shackles are insults that generate enmity.

There are those who live entirely for the gratification of their sensual passions. Others have moral passions, or passions of the mind, which nearly or altogether divert them from the more gross and sensual passions; such a man was Sir Isaac Newton; and such we may charitably suppose all those to be, who would check the amount of sexual intercourse. Imperfect themselves, they would have the passions of every other person subdued like their own. This is a great error in human judgment; and due allowance should always be made for the actions and passions which differ from our own, provided they injure none designedly.

Let it not be understood that this work

advocates indiscriminate intercourse, such as exists among animals, and such as has in some measure existed among savage or uncivilized races of mankind. Where there is an equal number of males and females, each should be contented with one of the other sex: but upon the principle contained in the following maxim:—
“ You shall have me to yourself, just as long as you treat me well and can really love me : when that feeling ceases, we had better part and seek new matches.” Equality between the sexes is the source of virtue. If there were two women to a man, a plurality of wives would be prudent. If two men to a woman, a plurality of husbands would be as prudent. None unmatched that desire to be matched, is the maxim of morality. Nature has no criterion upon the subject. All the criteria that have existed have been artificial, or legislative, or the consequence of habit and powerful passions.

This Essay on Love cannot fail to be highly useful, if rightly studied. That which now passes under the name of love is but too generally a maudlin, sickly sentiment, founded on hypocrisy, and means nothing at bottom but the gratification of a passion which is felt but not understood, and which professes to be every thing but that which it is in reality. The right con-

consideration in a matter of love is—Are our persons agreeable to each other? Can we live together and continue to love each other? For a knowledge on this head, the Jewish mode of betrothing for a year on trial was admirable; for scarcely aught but a year's trial can decide the fact. Love should be stripped of the disguise it has so long worn, and should never be seen but in its naked form. Then it would not disgust; then would its renewals be perpetual; then would seductions and adulteries cease; then would be the day of triumph to solid virtue and sound human happiness.

It is to be hoped, that no young lady will, after reading this essay, listen to a word about love, without asking the aspirant—*what is love?* If he have not the courage or the knowledge to state explicitly what love means, he is unworthy of her choice as a partner. It is the test for his sincerity.

Who can think of a courtship of years, and allow that the parties have any knowledge of that of which they are in fancied pursuit; it is impossible! there must be some defect in both. It must be hypocrisy which professes a passion that is not felt. Genuine love will admit of no such delay. The excited single man gratifies himself among prostitutes. The unmarried

chaste woman pines. This should not be. Love must be gratified, or its victim wastes and dies. Those young women who suffer from Chlorosis, and what is called the Green Sickness, suffer from nothing but the disease of ungratified love. Our best physicians have acknowledged this: and Dr. Cullen was wise and humane enough to recommend that such persons should indulge their passion of love. If this were the case, we should have more beautiful women, more healthy children, and more of every kind of happiness.

One of our principal London physicians, in conversation on female disorder, observed to a lady, that *in nine cases out of ten of sickness, and in five cases out of six of death from consumption, among young women, the proximate cause was the want of sexual commerce.* He added, *the present state of society will not admit of my saying this publicly; but such is the fact, and it would be well if it were more generally known.*

Works are now publishing for instructions in the art of beauty. These will be useful: but it may be taken as a certainty, that the groundwork for the improvement of human beauty must be *health and knowledge: health* to give vigour to the body—*knowledge* how to maintain it, and

how best to display it. To enjoy this health and this knowledge, we must first obtain a correct knowledge of the human body and its relations to the animals, the vegetables, and the states of the atmosphere that surround it. Religion has been a great destroyer of beauty, has greatly deteriorated the healthy character and fine structure of the human body: it is a mental disease, that turns love into a fancied sin, and commits dreadful ravages, in excluding due sexual intercourse. Even where secret indulgence has been obtained, the dread of discovery has sometimes caused equally distressing mental distraction.

Females secluded from male society, in the institutions of the Roman Catholics, have had recourse, even at the recommendation of their priests, to the most unnatural means of abating the passion of love, and a direfully immoral hypocrisy has been the consequence. Facts could be stated that would make woman blush for her sex, man for his kind, and the religionist for the vicious influence of his religion. It was in these institutions, that the means of preventing conceptions were first resorted to; and from this has sprung the knowledge of one of the most important social benefits.

Then comes the consideration—what a dread-

ful thing it is, that health and beauty cannot be encouraged and extended, that love cannot be enjoyed, without conception, when conception is not desired, when it is a positive injury to the parties themselves, and to society at large. This circumstance has been a great bar to health and beauty. See, what a mass of evil arises from bastard children, from child-murder, from deserted children, from diseased children, and even where the parents are most industrious and most virtuous, from a half-starved, naked, and badly housed family, from families crowded into one room, for whose health a house and garden is essential. All these matters are a tax upon love, a perpetual tax upon human pleasure, upon health, a tax that turns beauty into shrivelled ugliness, defaces the noble attitude of mankind, and makes its condition worse than that of the cattle of the field.

What is to be done to remedy this evil? There is something to be done: a means has been discovered, a simple means, criminal in the neglect, not in the use. The destruction of conceptions has been sought by acts of violence, by breaking with a knitting needle or some similar instrument, through the mouth of the womb, the membranous vessel, that contains the liquor amnii, essential to the sustenance of the foetus;

by doses of poisonous herbs and drugs, such as the Ergot of Rye, Savine, and violent purgatives, that injure and sometimes destroy the body of the mother in her attempt to reach that of the foetus in her womb. The first is the safer of the two, but not a safe means of destroying a conception. There is danger, and the operation must be repugnant to the feelings of the female, who has any good feelings remaining. Either case is dreadful, truly dreadful. Yet custom has made it a common matter, a little-thought-of-matter of course. Every village has its almost yearly cases of the kind. In this Island, hundreds of infants are annually destroyed at or before birth; some cases are discovered, but multitudes pass undiscovered. We condemn and shudder at the infanticides of China and other countries; yet it is a question, if infanticide ever prevailed in any country to a greater extent than in our own. Here, then, as in every other case of disease or other evil, *it is better to prevent than to cure*, and here, *prevention is most simply practicable, a means within the reach of all.*

The best and wisest of men labour with zeal to promulgate secretly or covertly a knowledge of this plan. Women are also secretly engaged in it, after having got over the prejudices of the old

customs, by giving it a full consideration. It is alluded to in Mill's *Elements of Political Economy*; and still more plainly in the *Art. Colonies*, in the *Supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica*, from the pen of the same gentleman: it is clearly alluded to in Place's *Illustrations of the Principle of Population*; it has been broached somewhat disguisedly in several newspapers, and preached in Lectures to the Working People by a most benevolent gentleman at Leeds: it has been circulated in thousands of hand-bills throughout the populous districts of the North, and is the hinted inference, as the only remedy, for all that is said in the House of Commons, or elsewhere, upon the subject of the unemployed, ill-employed, and badly paid, surplus population.

The remedy, for preventing conception, shocks the mind of a woman, at the first thought; but prejudice soon flies. To weak and sickly females, to those to whom parturition is dangerous, and who never produce living or healthy children, it is a real blessing, as it is in all cases, where children are not desired. It will become the very bulwark of love, the promoter of wisdom, of beauty, of health, and happiness. The remedy has been long known to a few in this country, and to the aristo

cracy in particular, who are always in search of benefits which they can peculiarly hold, and be distinct from the body of the labouring people. On the continent of Europe, it has been long very generally practised.

That great traveller and philosopher, the late John Stewart, known as the "*Walking Stewart*," stated it as his opinion, that a time would come, when intelligent women would not submit to the pains and perils of child-birth. He used to say, why should not a man see a woman with as little emotion as he sees his own sister. We say, if he did, a large portion of the happiness of life would be extinguished. If Stewart meant, that they would avoid sexual intercourse, his opinion was, in this particular, opposed to his more sound philosophical inductions, and he was certainly mistaken. The desire for this intercourse is a principle which must always exist, and will always seek to be gratified. Many curious anecdotes exist upon the subject. Women, while smarting under the birth of the first, have declared, that they would not have a second child, but it was all vain menace; they were pregnant again immediately when pregnancy might have been expected. Even in cases, where there can be no

delivery but by the Cæsarian operation, and where women have been told, that a second delivery would be fatal, the caution has been lost in the passion for intercourse. No reasoning, no caution, no consequence, will operate against it. Of one woman, the wife of a poor labourer, a singular anecdote of resolution is related. She would resist his importunities for months after each birth, and even arm herself with a knife to resist him, if he became violent; but all would not do; she could never defend herself throughout the year, she was generally the first, after a few months had elapsed, to propose an honourable capitulation! Then, say, ye hypocritical prudes, what is love, if it be not the natural, the powerful and necessary propensity for intercourse? Nor blush at the fact; for it is evidently the cleanest, and most pleasant of all the excretions necessary to the well-being of the animal body.

In Abyssinia, according to the authority of the traveller Bruce, affairs of love are carried on at entertainments, as openly as the other parts of the festivity. Were your Bible fairly translated, you would learn, that it was also a custom among the Israelites; and that, in the affair of the idolatry of the golden calf, where the whole host of

the people are said to sit down, to eat and drink, and to rise up to play; the rising up to play, in the Hebrew, expresses an affair of love. One proof, this, that the Israelites were of African origin, and once the neighbours of the Abyssinians.* Though it must be confessed, that, throughout Asia, however the women might have been secluded or otherwise enslaved, love has not been associated with such fantastical notions and tricks, as in Europe, since the introduction of Christianity.

It has been objected, that if the religious part of the ceremony of marriage were abolished, and all ecclesiastical controul removed, there would be promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, but this is an error, marriage among us is a system of degradation and slavery, and consequently of fraud and discomfort. The laws must so arrange matters, that the children (of those who choose to have children) shall be provided for; and it seems but reasonable, since children cause expence, that it should be borne by those who produce them: but beyond this the law ought

* The modern discovery of Captain Clapperton, of a nation of people in the centre of Africa, nearly white, as white as the Jews, and civilized, is another proof or probability for this conclusion.

not to interfere. To this extent there must be arrangements in all civilized societies, and the more completely this is effected with the least possible inconvenience in other respects, the nearer the laws will approach perfection. The present laws respecting marriage do more moral mischief to society than could be done by any other arrangements, which it is at all probable would be made were these laws wholly abolished.

It has also been objected, that if the physical means of preventing undesirable conceptions were to become general, debauchery, immorality, and misery would be increased, and that society would be much more degraded than it is. But this is a fallacy easily exposed. They who conclude that dissolute conduct would be increased, are but ill-informed as to the actual amount of such conduct, and it is more than probable, that if the facts were disclosed to them as they are known to exist by magistrates, overseers, and medical men, they would be astounded. Among the poorer labourers and mechanics, chastity is hardly known, and it has lately been given in evidence before Committees of the House of Commons, that no marriage has taken place over considerable spaces in

various parts of the country, until the girl was pregnant, and this too among the agricultural population. Mr. Henry Drummond, banker, at Charing Cross, a large landowner in the county of Surrey, and a magistrate, gave the following evidence before a "Committee of the House of Commons, on Labourers' Wages :—

Q. What is the practice you allude to, of forcing marriages?—I believe nothing is more erroneous than the assertion that the Poor Laws tend to imprudent marriages ; *I NEVER knew an instance of a girl being married until she was with child, nor ever knew of a marriage taking place through a calculation for future support.*" Mr. Drummond's statement was confirmed by other equally respectable witnesses.

Something near a-kin to this is constantly going on in the manufacturing counties, the facts, respecting some of these plans, would not be credited if stated. Neither the general prevalence of sexual commerce, nor the early age at which it commences in these districts, would easily find credence, if stated. These things, with the present laws respecting marriage, and the redundant population, do all but infinite mischief to society. Both parties, but especially females, consider themselves de-

graded and act accordingly, that is, act like people who have no character either to sustain or to gain. In the class immediately above these, and even still higher in the scale of society, how enormous is the number of women who, either openly or privately, degradingly prostitute themselves for *money*: how great is the number of women who indulge their desires without being suspected, and how can it be otherwise? Multitudes of men never marry, a still greater number refrain from marrying until they grow comparatively old; yet most such men are practised debauchees, and the mischief they do by the fraud and hypocrisy they produce is incalculable. This would not be so were physical means adopted to prevent conceptions. Girls would not then be seduced as they are now. Those women who chose to have lovers would neither be degraded nor brutalized, nor made miserable in consequence thereof as they now are, any more than they are in Sweden and in some parts of Germany, where the practice prevails. But the great good which would result from physical preventives would be, that alliances would be more EARLY formed, and would be lasting. Girls would not then surrender themselves to the caprice, the injustice of

men, nor become victims to their cruelty, as they do now.

A girl would tell her lover that there was no longer any impediment to their submitting to the form, whatever it was, that society had established, and as she would be sure to make a match, she would take care to keep herself in that state which would induce the man who really loved her to conform to her wishes. The great obstacle to marriage, under its present form, is the fear of a large family, and the poverty which results therefrom. This removed, marriages would be much more common. People would form alliances while young and unpractised in deceit and hypocrisy, and would live virtuously and happily all their lives. We have evidence of this. In some of the New England States of North America, divorces may be obtained on very easy terms, and for many various causes as well as by consent of the parties, and yet divorces are rare indeed. In Prussia also, the law is nearly the same as in North America; and here also the number of divorces and separations are small. It has been observed by more than one writer, that the number of divorces and separations in Prussia, is much less than in England, among equal num-

bers of people. In both these countries, the morals of the people are in respect to honesty and fair dealing very superior to ours. The commerce of the sexes is much more free in both these countries, than it is among us, without producing the same evil consequences. A woman, in these countries, and particularly in Prussia, is not expelled society, because she chooses to have a male friend, neither does it prevent her obtaining a husband any more than it prevents a man who has a female friend from obtaining a wife; neither is this freedom of intercourse and facility of divorce found to make women bad wives or men bad husbands. In fact, there is neither the same frivolity and incessant desire of change that there is among us, nor the same ill usage of women by men that we see every day and every hour of our lives most disgracefully practised. Whoever will take the trouble to examine those important questions, will most assuredly be convinced that physical preventives of conception, if general, would put an end to an immense quantity of debauchery and misery, of vice and crime, and greatly improve the condition of the whole body of the people.

The debauchery constantly going on among men and maid-servants. between servant-girls

and their *young* masters, and even their *old* masters, with servant-women in inns, and hotels, and lodging-houses, cannot be increased but may be diminished ; and, at any rate, would be divested of much of its grossness, and of nearly all of its evil consequences, by the general use of the physical check. It must not be supposed, that it is insinuated that all women are unchaste. No one can doubt, that there are more chaste married women in Great Britain than in any other part of the world ; and that in every rank of life, numbers of unmarried females live chaste-ly : but still the number of women who are not chaste is exceedingly great. It is among the middling and better sort of tradesmen, and among genteel people generally, that chastity prevails the most, and more particularly among the females in those classes who have never been married.

But the idea, that the species of chastity which consists of a constrained abstinence from sexual commerce is a virtue, whatever may be the evils which follow it, and that the indulgence of choice in all cases is a vice, is absurd. Chastity, in a philosophical and moral sense, is the power of mind that resists mercenary or degrading commerce ; that disposition of mind which gratifies itself

upon the honourable principle of mutual equality, mutual desire, and mutual pleasure, is unfairly and most unreasonably called unchaste; but this like every other question, has its relations of connection and dependency. Plighted troth should not be broken from desire for change. Deception should not be practised. Successful concealment should never be made the substitute of propriety. True chastity is in the mind which examines itself and is satisfied as to the purity and utility of its motives.

The subject of love is generally misunderstood, both in theory and practice, and much of existing human pain is the consequence of this misunderstanding. It is no more associated with sin than any other kind of commerce between individuals.

It is a fact that can hardly have escaped the notice of any one, that women who have never had sexual commerce begin to droop when about twenty-five years of age, that they become pale and languid, that general weakness and irritability, a sort of restless, nervous fidgettiness takes possession of them, and an absorbing process goes on, their forms degenerate, their features sink, and the peculiar character of the old maid becomes apparent. A state of health

succeeds which makes their very existence in many cases a burthen to them, and in all cases produces melancholy sensations in those who know whence the cause proceeds.

The physical check, if once brought into general use, would remove this mass of evil; there would then be no such persons; for every young woman would have a husband. Women, if we may be allowed the expression, would be in much greater demand, as every young man would take a wife, and women would be all but infinitely more respected than they are now.

It is not possible to anticipate the happiness likely to result from the physical check when once in general use.

There is an ill-founded notion current, that to produce an unlimited number of children is beneficial to society. A more erroneous notion was never formed. It is only a benefit to children, to be produced, when they can be made healthy and happy. It is only a benefit to parents, when they can produce them with the preservation of their own health and happiness. It is only a benefit to society, when children become conducive to the improvement of the state. It is an evil when they

become a burthen to pre-existing members; an evil when they become a burthen to the parents; an evil when they are not healthy and happy.

All states of animal being are states of pleasure and pain. Pleasure is the absence or abatement of pain. All states of pain are evil: all states of pleasure are good. The greater amount of animal life is a state of pain, and the duty of humanity, virtue, or what is called morality, is to lessen the amount of pain; and the principle of preventing painful conceptions is a positive good to society.

But in this recommendation of the prevention of painful conceptions, in this newly-stated view of the subject of love, other objects are aimed at: we desire not only to prevent the existence of unhappy children that make parents and friends unhappy; but we aim a blow at all the unnatural propensities which either sex has associated with the passion of love. We seek the annihilation of prostitution and of the venereal disease, and he, who proposes a means equal to the eradication of this wide-spreading, this almost universal disease, will become the greatest benefactor of mankind. The unnatural propensities, of which prostitution may be

justly ranked as one, are many: they are common to both male and female, and consist of self-excitements and unnatural gratifications, such as onanism, pederasty, and other substitutions for the accomplishment of seminal excretions in the male, and the appeasings of lascivious excitement in the females by artificial means. We desire to extinguish all these bad and disease-producing practices, by natural and healthy commerce between the sexes. We recommend chaste and proper commerce instead of the artificial and unnatural means so extensively in use, to subdue, for the moment, the passion of love. We encourage the reality and decry the base artifice. The former promotes health and happiness; the latter generates disease, and all that is degrading, painful and disgraceful to those who practise it.

The important discovery is, that if, before sexual intercourse, the female introduces into her vagina a piece of sponge as large as can be pleasantly introduced, having previously attached a bobbin or bit of narrow riband to withdraw it, it will be found a preventive to conception, while it neither lessens the pleasure of the female nor injures her health. When convenient, the sponge should be dipped in

warm water, or even in cold water rather than in none.

The practice is common with the females of the more refined parts of the continent of Europe, and with those of the Aristocracy of England. An English Duchess was lately instanced to the writer, who never goes out to a dinner without being prepared with the sponge. French and Italian women wear them fastened to their waists, and always have them at hand. One thing should be observed, and that is, *the most strict cleanliness*, never to use one bit of sponge a second time without a proper washing. The writer has been informed by those who have made experiments upon the matter, **that** the sponge is not felt by either party during the act of coition, and that no portion of the pleasure is abated; while, on the other hand, the pleasure is increased in the removal of all dread of evil consequences. One gentleman has made an experiment of using the sponge unknown to the female, of which she was ignorant until it was shown to her; so that, it is clear, there is nothing unpleasant in its use for so important a purpose.

The use of the sponge is the female's safeguard; but there are other means, by which

conceptions are avoided, to be practised by the male. One is, to wear the skin, or what, in France, is called *the baudruche*, in England, commonly, *the glove*. These are sold in London at brothels, by waiters at taverns, and by some women and girls in the neighbourhood of places of public resort, such as Westminster Hall, &c. Another is, not to inseminate the female, by observing a partial or complete withdrawing at the moment of seminal emission. This latter is the more certain means, and some women, particularly those of the Continent, will make it a part of the contract for intercourse, and look upon the man as a dishonest brute who does not attend to it.

A third means has been adopted and recommended to others by certain anatomists in London, which is, to emit the semen in the cavity below the womb, instead of into or on the womb, by a mutual withdrawing or elevation of the body at the time of emission. The theory of this practice can only be understood by anatomists, or explained by anatomical plates. It certainly has been asserted by some of them to be efficacious; but, upon the whole, it seems questionable, since it infers the necessity of emitting semen into the womb to produce conception.

The theories of conception are various. The precise process is as much unknown to modern anatomists and physiologists, as it was to Aristotle, Hippocrates, or Galen. Hitherto, it has eluded all research, and there is scarcely a hope of discovering it, since women are not anatomists, and since their own experience is not equal to an explanation. It is a question, whether all women are impregnated by precisely the same means as to insemination, and none of the theories of conception have accounted for the production of twins or three children at one gestation and birth. Even the precise means by which the ovarium of the female is conveyed to the womb is not well explained.

In consequence of our imperfect knowledge of the process of conception, we can rely on nothing but experience, as to the means of preventing it. The sponge has been questioned, as to its efficacy, in some cases; in others it has been found certain; and the inference is, that variance in habit or construction of parts may vary its effects. Complete withdrawing before emission is certainly effectual in all cases; but not so easily to be observed by all persons. Partial withdrawing is effectual

on some women ; but not so with all. There is no certain rule, and experience must decide which of the particular precautions is necessary.

There is so much of mental misery and bodily suffering to be avoided, by preventing conceptions, where they are injurious and not desired, that all persons interested should make it a peculiar study and observance. There is nothing unnatural in the circumstance, further than it is unnatural to use precautions against any other natural evil, such as a fever, a storm, or a beast of prey. Healthy human beings so far differ from the generality of other animals, that their desires and modes of living lead them to desire intercourse at all seasons ; and where debility is not produced by excess, health is confirmed by the stimulating and pleasing excitement.

To destroy a conception is a capital offence against the laws of the country. To aid or assist in destroying it, is the same. A mother is not permitted to destroy her offspring, even while it be in the womb. The law protects the foetus, as it protects the born infant, and punishment follows when the act of destruction is detected. Conception, therefore, should

not be risked, with any view to subsequent destruction, as prevention is alike moral and legal, while destruction of the foetus is degrading, immoral and illegal.

The notions of indecency and immorality, which unreasoning minds attach to all discussion about sexual commerce, may be combatted by referring to the history of mankind, and by showing that through all the varied customs of different nations upon the subject, whatever was the prevailing custom was always the moral right of the matter. In some countries, and in former ages, the first principle of hospitality was to give the visitor the free use of the females of the house, and the wife first and in particular. It is so still in several parts of Europe. An American Indian has been known to caress his visitor for the gratification of his wife, even when seeing them in the act of commerce. The Grecians and Romans had their Temple of Venus, where young people could appease their passions under the form of worship; and if such were the religion of every country, we should not see every third female sickly, consumptive, or wretched for want of sexual commerce. In no other respect than in this Temple and worship of Venus would we

recommend a return to the customs of ancient nations upon the subject of sexual commerce. We desire an improvement upon their customs. We would encourage genuine love, wherever it can be made conducive to the happiness of either sex. We would not call upon the females of this day to join in a procession with a Phallus at their head; nor upon Christian ladies to preserve the cross as the standard of their faith, since that cross is but the mathematical emblem of that Phallus, and that Phallus, the male organs of generation, the emblem of the vivifying power of animal and vegetable matter, an emblem on which the deified principle of reason always was and always will be periodically crucified, have a temporary death, and rise to life again. While we would preserve the moral spirit of love, we would have it to be the only religion of the state, as it admits of no sectarianism. We would purify whatever in it is gross, and remove every gross idea from every idea that is not most refined, and alike wise and moral.

It is the tact of those who are wedded to customs, to treat, as immoral, all theories and all practices which are opposed to their notions

We, who introduce new theories and new prac-

tices, or revive old ones which we think should not have been put aside, would beg a truce with you, and ask you to examine before you condemn, to think, consider, and deliberate well before you decide; and where you cannot shew the contrary, to give us credit for good motives. The men, who have been instrumental in making the matter known in this country, are all elderly men, fathers of families, of children grown up to be men and women, and men of first-rate moral characters, of first-rate learning, and some of the first politicians and philosophers that ever lived in this or any other country; men, who are known, as above described, in almost every country in Europe and America, and who look upon this as the most important discovery that has yet been made among mankind; important in every relation of popular morals, popular politics, domestic happiness, and social economy.

The great utility and importance of this measure may be summed up under the following heads:—

1st. That no married couple shall have more children than they wish to have, and can maintain.

2nd. That no unhealthy woman shall bear

children, that cannot be reared, and which endanger her own life in the parturition ; that ineffectual pregnancy shall never be suffered.

3rd. That there be no illegitimate children, where they are not desired by the mother.

4th, and finally. That sexual commerce, where useful and desired, may be made a pleasure, independent of the dread of a conception that blasts the prospects and happiness of the female.

If these reasons be not sufficient to satisfy the most fastidious mind, then the ignorance, the unfeeling ignorance under which that mind labours is to be pitied. We are all apt to be shocked at having long-established notions controverted. We value such notions as parts of our existence. We dislike the first examination of all controverting doctrines. But it is consistent with the current character of the things about us, that we are exposed to incessant change of habits and of doctrines ; and all that is necessary to make us wise, is, that we freely examine every system, opinion, and thing that comes in our way, so as to interest or to shock us. "Prejudices," says Lequinio, an elegant French writer, in his work entitled, *Les Prejuges Detruits*, "arise out of igno-

rance and the want of reflection; these are the bases on which the system of despotism is erected, and it is the master-piece of art in a tyrant, to perpetuate the stupidity of a nation, in order to perpetuate its slavery and his own dominion."

Boulanger has said, most truly, "Every man is proud of having discovered a new truth." We are proud of this discovery. All men and all women will yet be proud of it. The prejudices of many may be offended by this book; but we trust to time and assuredly good intentions to wear away both offence and prejudice.

This book is not like one of those vile, mischievous, misleading, and fraudulent books commonly on sale for the gratification of ignorantly-diseased appetites. It is not like the lascivious books which are secretly though extensively sold by almost every bookseller. Those books are printed solely for a corrupt and corrupting money-getting purpose, and exhibit nothing but bad examples; while this book, recommended to every woman, and most properly called "EVERY WOMAN'S BOOK", is a book of instruction on one of the most interesting subjects, not only to the female, but to the male, to families and friends individually,

and to society at large. It is a book of physical, philosophical, and moral instruction, and not only deserves the appellation of *Every Woman's Book*, but that of a book for every human being at the age of puberty.

It is put forth as a book, that maintains the rudiments of one of those first principles, by the adoption of which human society is to be improved. Human society has not yet a code of good morals, nor any sound physical principles laid down, by which the greatest happiness, of the greatest number, is to be accomplished. We put forth this book as containing a development of one of those first principles; and we make our appeal to posterity, to decide on its merits and value. Most approvingly alive to whatever is delicate in human feeling, earnestly disposed to be delicate toward that delicacy, and to encourage it wherever it can be usefully encouraged, as one of the heightening pleasures in the principle of love, we here declare, that we are free from the disposition that could offend that delicacy, and no such offence was meant by this publication, the useful knowledge of which could not be best stated otherwise, than as it is here stated

