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Weber Freiligrath Frey
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Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
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Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus Moltke
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**Sex Avoided subjects Discussed in
Plain English**

Henry Stanton

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Henry Stanton

Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)

ISBN: 978-3-8495-0429-8

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CHAPTER I [5]

SEX

The happiness of all human beings, men and women, depends largely on their rational solution of the sexual problem. Sex and the part it plays in human life cannot be ignored. In the case of animals sex plays a simpler and less complex rôle. It is a purely natural and instinctive function whose underlying purpose is the perpetuation of the species. It is not complicated by the many incidental phenomena which result, in man's case, from psychologic, economic, moral and religious causes. Climate, social conditions, individual modes of life and work, alcohol, wealth and poverty, and other factors affect sexual activity in human beings.

Sexual love, which is practically unknown to the animals, is a special development of the sex urge in the human soul. The deeper purpose of the sex function in human beings, likewise, is procreation, the reproduction of species.

The average man, woman and child should know the essential sex facts in order to be able to deal with the sex problems of life. Of late years there has been a greater diffusion of such knowledge. To a large extent, however, children and adolescents are still taught to look on all that pertains to sex as something shameful and immodest, something [6] not to be discussed. Sex is an "Avoided Subject."

This is fundamentally wrong. Sex affects the very root of all human life. Its activities are not obscene, but Nature's own means to certain legitimate ends. The sex functions, when properly controlled and led into the proper channels, are a most essential and legitimate form of physical self-expression. The veil of secrecy with which they are so often shrouded tends to create an altogether false impression regarding them. This discussion of these "Avoided Subjects," in "Plain English," is intended to give the salient facts regarding sex in a direct, straightforward manner, bearing in mind the true purpose of normal sex activities.

The more we know of the facts of sex, the right and normal part sex activities play in life, and all that tends to abuse and degrade them, the better able we will be to make sex a factor for happiness in

our own lives and that of our descendants. Mankind, for its own general good, must desire that reproduction—the real purpose of every sexual function—occur in such a way as to perpetuate its own best physical and mental qualities.

THE LAW OF PHYSICAL LIFE

It is a universal rule of physical life that every individual being undergoes a development which we know as its individual life and which, so far as its physical substance is concerned, ends with death. Death is the destruction of the greater part of this individual organism which, when death ensues, once more becomes lifeless matter. Only small portions of this matter, the germ cells, continue [7] to live under certain conditions which nature has fixed.

The germ cell—as has been established by the microscope—is the tiny cell which in the lowest living organisms as well as in man himself, forms the unit of physical development. Yet even this tiny cell is already a highly organized and perfected thing. It is composed of the most widely differing elements which, taken together, form the so-called protoplasm or cellular substance. And for all life established in nature the cell remains the constant and unchanging form element. It comprises the cell-protoplasm and a nucleus imbedded in it whose substance is known as the nucleoplasm. The nucleus is the more important of the two and, so to say, governs the life of the cell-protoplasm.

The lower one-celled organisms in nature increase by division, just as do the individual cells of a more highly organized, many-celled order of living beings. And in all cases, though death or destruction of the cells is synonymous with the death or destruction of the living organism, the latter in most cases already has recreated itself by reproduction.

We will not go into the very complicated details of the actual process of the growth and division of the protoplasmic cells. It is enough to say that in the case of living creatures provided with more complicated organisms, such as the higher plants, animals and man, the little cell units divide and grow as they do in the case of the lower organisms. The fact is one which shows the intimate inner relationship of all living beings. [8]

THE LADDER OF ORGANIC ASCENT

As we mount the ascending ladder of plant and animal life the unit-cell of the lower organisms is replaced by a great number of individual cells, which have grown together to form a completed whole. In this complete whole the cells, in accordance with the specific purpose for which they are intended, all have a different form and a different chemical composition. Thus it is that in the case of the plants leaves, flowers, buds, bark, branches and stems are formed, and in that of animals skin, intestines, glands, blood, muscles, nerves, brain and the organs of sense. In spite of the complicated nature of numerous organisms we find that many of them still possess the power of reproducing themselves by division or a process of "budding." In the case of certain plants and animals, cell-groups grow together into a so-called "bud," which later detaches itself from the parent body and forms a new individual living organism, as in the case of the polyps or the tubers in plant life.

A tree, for instance, may be grown from a graft which has been cut off and planted in the ground. And ants and bees which have not been fecundated are quite capable of laying eggs out of which develop perfect, well-formed descendants. This last process is called parthenogenesis. It is a process, however, which if carried on through several generations, ends in deterioration and degeneracy. In the case of the higher animals, vertebrates and man, such reproduction is an impossibility. [9]

These higher types of animal life have been provided by nature with special organs of reproduction and reproductive glands whose secretions, when they are projected from the body under certain conditions, reproduce themselves, and increase and develop in such wise that the living organism from which they proceed is reproduced in practically its identical form. Thus it perpetuates the original type. Philosophically it may be said that these cells directly continue the life of the parents, so that death in reality only destroys a part of the individual. Every individual lives again in his offspring.

THE TRUE MISSION OF SEX

This rebirth of the individual in his descendants represents the true mission of sex where the human being is concerned. And re-

production, the perpetuation of the species, underlies all rightful and normal sex functions and activities. The actual physical process of reproduction, the details which initiate reproduction in the case of the human being, it seems unnecessary here to describe. In the animal world, into which the moral equation does not really enter, the facts of conjugation represent a simple and natural working-out of functional bodily laws, usually with a seasonal determination. But where man is concerned these facts are so largely made to serve the purposes of pruriency, so exploited to inflame the imagination in an undesirable and directly harmful way that they can be approached only with the utmost caution.

The intimate fact knowledge necessary in this [10] connection is of a peculiarly personal and sacred nature, and represents information which is better communicated by the spoken than by the printed word. The wise father and mother are those naturally indicated to convey this information to their sons and daughters by word of mouth. By analogy, by fuller development and description of the reproductive processes of plant and animal life on which we have touched, the matter of human procreation may be approached. Parents should stress the point, when trying to present this subject to the youthful mind, that man's special functions are only a detail—albeit a most important one—in nature's vast plan for the propagation of life on earth. This will have the advantage of correcting a trend on the part of the imaginative boy or girl to lay too much stress on the part humanity plays in this great general reproductive scheme. It will lay weight on the fact that the functional workings of reproduction are not, primarily, a source of pleasure, but that—when safeguarded by the institution of matrimony, on which civilized social life is based—they stand for the observance of solemn duties and obligations, duties to church and state, and obligations to posterity. Hence, parents, in talking to their children about these matters should do so in a sober and instructive fashion. The attention of a mother, perhaps, need not be called to this. But fathers may be inclined, in many cases, to inform their sons without insisting that the information they give them is, in the final analysis, intended to be applied to lofty constructive purposes. They may, in their [11] desire to speak *practically*, forget the moral values which should underlie this intimate information. Never should the spirit of levity

intrude itself in these intimate personal sex colloquies. Restraint and decency should always mark them.

In making clear to the mind of youth the fact data which initiates and governs reproduction in animal and in human life, the ideal to be cultivated is continence, the refraining from all experimentation undertaken in a spirit of curiosity, until such time as a well-placed affection, sanctioned by the divine blessing, will justify a sane and normal exploitation of physical needs and urges in the matrimonial state. To this end hard bodily and mental work should be encouraged in the youth of both sexes. "Satan finds work for idle hands to do," has special application in this connection, and a chaste and continent youth is usually the forerunner of a happy and contented marriage. And incidentally, a happy marriage is the best guarantee that reproduction, the carrying on of the species, will be morally and physically a success. Here, too, the fact should be strongly stressed that prostitution cannot be justified on any moral grounds. It represents a deliberate ignoring of the rightful function of sex, and the perversion of the sane and natural laws of reproduction. It is in marriage, in the sane and normal activities of that unit of our whole social system—the family—that reproduction develops nature's basic principle of perpetuation in the highest and worthiest manner, in obedience to laws humane and divine.

CHAPTER II [12]

THE TRANSITION FROM CELL TO HUMAN BEING

In the functional processes alluded to in the preceding chapter, the male germ-cell and the female germ-cell unite in a practically equal division of substance. We say “practically” because the maternal and the paternal influences are not equally divided in the offspring. One or the other usually predominates. But, as a general rule, it may be said that in the development of the embryonal life the process of cell division proceeds in such a way that every germ of the child's future organism represents approximately one-half maternal and one-half paternal substance and energy.

In this process lies the true secret of heredity. The inherited energies retain their full measure of power, and all their original quality in the growing and dividing chromosomes (the chromosome is one of the segments into which the chromoplasmic filaments of a cell-nucleus break up just before indirect division). On the other hand, the egg-substance of the female germ-cell, which is assimilated by the chromosomes, and which is turned into *their* substance by the process of organic chemistry, loses its specific plastic vital energy completely. It is in the same way that food [13] eaten by the adult has absolutely no effect on his qualitative organic structure. We may eat ever so many beef-steaks without acquiring any of the characteristics of an ox. And the germ-cell may devour any amount of egg-protoplasma without losing its original paternal energy. As a rule a child inherits as many qualities from its mother as from its father.

DETERMINATION OF SEX

Sex is determined after conception has taken place. At an early stage of the embryo certain cells are set apart. These, later, form the sex glands. Modern research claims to have discovered the secret of absolutely determining sex in the human embryo, but even if these claims are valid they have not as yet met with any general application.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Some twelve days after conception, the female ovule or egg, which has been impregnated by the male spermatazoön, escapes from the ovary where it was impregnated, and entering a tube (Fallopian) gradually descends by means of it into the cavity of the womb or uterus. Here the little germ begins to mature in order to develop into an exact counterpart of its parents. In the human being the womb has only a single cavity, and usually develops but a single embryo.

TWINS

Sometimes two ovules are matured at the same time. If fecundated, two embryos instead of one will develop, producing twins. Triplets and quadruplets, [14] the results of the maturing of three or four ovules at the same time, occur more rarely. As many as five children have been born alive at a single birth, but have seldom lived for more than a few minutes.

GESTATION

The development of the ovule in the womb is known as gestation or pregnancy. The process is one of continued cell division and growth, and while it goes on the ovule sticks to the inner wall of the womb. There it is soon enveloped by a mucous membrane, which grows around it and incloses it.

THE EMBRYO

The *Primitive Trace*, a delicate straight line appearing on the surface of the growing layer of cells is the base of the embryonic spinal column. Around this the whole embryo develops in an intricate process of cell division and duplication. One end of the Primitive Trace becomes the head, the other the tail, for every human being has a tail at this stage of his existence. The neck is marked by a slight depression; the body by a swollen center. Soon little buds or "pads" appear in the proper positions. These represent arms and legs, whose ends, finally, split up into fingers and toes. The embryonic human being has been steadily increasing in size, meanwhile. By the fifth week the heart and lungs are present in a rudimentary

form, and ears and face are distinctly outlined. During the seventh week the kidneys are formed, and a little later the genital organs. At two months, though [15] sex is not determined as yet, eyes and nose are visible, the mouth is gaping, and the skin can be distinguished. At ten weeks the sexual organs form more definitely, and in the third month sex can be definitely determined.

THE FOETUS

At the end of its fourth month the embryo—now four or five inches long and weighing about an ounce—is promoted. It receives the name of foetus. Hairs appear on the scalp, the eyes are provided with lids, the tongue appears far back in the mouth. The movements of the foetus are plainly felt by the mother. If born at this time it lives but a few minutes. It continues to gain rapidly in weight. By the sixth month the nails are solid, the liver large and red, and there is fluid in the gall bladder. The seventh month finds the foetus from twelve and a half to fourteen inches long, and weighing about fifty-five ounces. It is now well proportioned, the bones of the cranium, formerly flat, are arched. All its parts are well defined, and it can live if born. By the end of the eighth month the foetus has thickened out. Its skin is red and covered by a delicate down; the lower jaw has grown to the same length as the upper one. The convolutions of the brain structure also appear during this month.

PLACENTA AND UMBILICAL CORD

During gestation the unborn infant has been supplied with air and nourishment by the mother. An organ called the *Placenta*, a spongy growth of [16] blood vessels, develops on the inner point of the womb. To this organ the growing foetus is moored by a species of cable, the *Umbilical Cord*. This cord, also made up mainly of blood vessels, carries the blood of the foetus to and from the *Placenta*, absorbing it through the thin walls which separate it from the mother's blood. Only through her blood can the mother influence the child, since the Umbilical Cord contains no nerves. The Umbilical Cord, attached to the body of the child at the navel, is cut at birth, and with the *Placenta* is expelled from the womb soon after the child has been born. Together with the *Placenta* it forms a shapeless

mass, familiarly known as the "afterbirth," and when it is retained instead of being expelled is apt to cause serious trouble.

CHILDBIRTH OR PARTURITION

At nine month's time the foetus is violently thrust from that laboratory of nature in which it has formed. It is born, and comes into the world as a child. Considering the ordinary size of the generative passages, the expelling of the foetus from the womb would seem impossible. But Nature, during those months in which she enlarged the womb to hold its gradually increasing contents, has also increased the generative passages in size. She has made them soft and distensible, so that an apparent physical impossibility could take place, though it is often accompanied by intense suffering. Modern medical science has made childbirth easier, but the act of childbirth is usually accompanied by more [17] or less suffering. Excessive pain, however, is often the result of causes which proper treatment can remove before and at the time of confinement.

TWILIGHT SLEEP

The so-called "Twilight Sleep," a modern development, by which the pangs of childbirth are obviated by the administration of drugs or by hypnotic suggestion, has its opponents and defenders. The advantage of a painless childbirth, upon which the mother can look back as on a dream, is evident. The "Twilight Sleep" process has been used with the happiest results both for parent and child. Opponents of this system declare that the use of powerful drugs may injure the child. A method commended is the administration of a mixture of laughing gas and oxygen, which relieves the mother and does not affect the child.

THE NEW-BORN INFANT

The average weight of the new-born child is about seven and a half pounds. It is insensitive to pain for the first few days, and seems deaf (since its middle ears are filled with a thick mucus) for the first two weeks. During the first few days, too, it does not seem able to see. The first month of its existence is purely automatic. Evidences of dawning intelligence appear in the second month and at four months it will recognize mother or nurse. Muscularly it is

poorly developed. Not until two months old is it able to hold up its head, and not until three months does voluntary muscular [18] movement put in an appearance. The new-born's first self-conscious act is to draw breath. Deprived of its usual means of supply it must breathe or suffocate. Its next is to suck milk, lest it starve.

HEREDITY

We often find children who offer a striking resemblance to a paternal grandfather, a maternal aunt or a maternal great-grandmother. This is known as avatism. There are many curious variations with regard to the inheritance of ancestral traits. Some children show a remarkable resemblance to their fathers in childhood, others to their mothers. And many qualities of certain individual ancestors appear quite suddenly late in life. Everything may be inherited, from the most delicate shadings of the disposition, the intelligence and the will power, to the least details of hair, nails and bone structure, etc. And the combination of the qualities of one's ancestors in heredity is so manifold and so unequal that it is extremely difficult to arrive at fixed conclusions regarding it. Hereditary traits and tendencies are developed out of the energies of the original conjugated germ-cells throughout life, up to the very day of death. Even aged men often show peculiarities in the evening of their life which may be clearly recognized as inherited, and duplicating others shown by their forbears at the same period of life.

As has already been mentioned every individual inherits, generally speaking, as much from his paternal as from his maternal progenitors. This in [19] spite of the fact that the tiny paternal germ-cell is the only medium of transmission of the paternal qualities, while the mother furnishes the much larger egg-cell, and feeds him throughout the embryonic period.

THE ENGRAM

An interesting theory maintains that the external impressions made upon an organism which reacts to them and receives them, might be called *engrams* or "inscriptions." Thus the impression of some object we have seen or touched (let us say we have seen a lion) may remain engraved on our mind as an impression. Hence every

memory picture is one of engrams, whether the impression is a conscious one or an unconscious one. According to this same theory the reawakening of an older impression is an *ecphory*. Some new stimulation may thus ecphorate an old engram. Now the entire embryonal development of the human child is in reality no more than a continuous process of ecphoration of old engrams, one after another. And the entire complex of our living human organism is made up entirely of these energy-complexes engraved on our consciousness or subconsciousness. The sum total of all these engrams, in a living human being, according to the theory advanced, is given the name of *mnema*. That which the child receives in the way of energies contained in the germ-cells from its ancestors is his hereditary *mnema*. And that which he acquires in the course of his own individual life is his acquired or individual *mnema*.

CHAPTER III [20]

SEX IN MALE CHILDHOOD (FROM 14 TO 16)

During the first years of child life all those laws of practical hygiene which make for good health should be carefully observed. Every organ of the body should be carefully protected, even at this early age. The genital organs, especially, should not be rubbed or handled under any pretext, beyond what is absolutely necessary for cleanliness. The organs of generation, which we are apt to treat as nonexistent in children, just because they are children, claim just as much watchful care as any others.

SEX PRECAUTIONS IN INFANCY

Even in infancy, the diaper should fit easily about the organs which it covers, so as not to give rise to undue friction or heating of the parts. And for the same reason it should always be changed immediately after urination or a movement of the bowels. No material which prevents the escape of perspiration, urine or fecal matter should be employed for a diaper. The use of a chair-commode as early as the end of the first year is highly to be commended, as being more comfortable for the sex organs and healthier for the child. It favors, [21] in particular, a more perfect development of limbs and hip joints.

EARLY SEX IMPRESSIONS

Sex impressions and reactions are apt to develop at an early age, especially in the case of boys. If the child's physical health is normal, however, they should not affect his mind or body. The growing boy should be encouraged to take his sex questions and sex problems to his parents (in his case preferably the father) for explanation. Thus they may be made clear to him naturally and logically. He should not be told what he soon discovers is not true: that babies are "dug up with a silver spade," or make their appearances in the family thanks to the kind offices of storks or angels. Instead, by analogy with the reproductive processes of all nature, the true facts of sex may be explained to him in a soothing and normal way.

EVIL COMMUNICATIONS

Too often, the growing boy receives his first lessons regarding sex from ignorant and vicious associates. Curiosity is one of the greatest natural factors in the child's proper development, if rightly directed. When wrongly led, however, it may have the worst consequences. Even before puberty occurs, a boy's attention may be quite naturally drawn to his own sex organs.

NATURAL CAUSES OF INFANT SEXUAL PRECOCITY

Sexual precocity in boys may be natural or it may be artificially called forth. Among natural causes [22] which develop sex precocity is promiscuous playing with other boys and girls for hours without supervision. It may also be produced by playful repose on the stomach, sliding down banisters, going too long without urinating, by constipation or straining at stool, irritant cutaneous affections, and rectal worms. Sliding down banisters, for instance, produces a titillation. The act may be repeated until inveterate masturbation results, even at an early age. Needless laving, handling and rubbing of the private parts is another natural incitement to sexual precocity.

PRIAPISM

Priapism is a disease which boys often develop. It may be either a result or a cause of sexual precocity, and may come from undue handling of the genital parts or from a morbid state of health. It takes the form of paroxysms, more or less frequent, and of violent and often painful erection, calling for a physician's attention. If the result of a functional disorder, and not arrested, it is in danger of giving rise to masturbation. This morbid condition sometimes seriously impairs the health.

MASTURBATION

Masturbation, the habit of self-abuse, often formed before puberty, is an artificial development of sexual precocity. Most boys, from the age of nine to fourteen, interest themselves in sex questions and matters, but these are usually presented to them in a lewd and improper manner, by improperly informed companions. Dwelling upon these thoughts [23] the boy is led to play with his sex organs