

# **VITAL FORCE: HOW WASTED AND HOW PRESERVED**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649028436

Vital Force: How Wasted and How Preserved by E. P. Miller

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Cover @ 2017

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**E. P. MILLER**

**VITAL FORCE: HOW  
WASTED AND  
HOW PRESERVED**



# VITAL FORCE:

How Wasted and How Preserved

BY  
E. P. MILLER, M.D.,

AUTHOR OF  
"HOW TO EAT," "DYSPEPSIA," ETC.

Eleventh Thousand.

NEW-YORK:  
MILLER, HAYNES & CO.,  
No. 41 WEST TWENTY-SIXTH STREET.

1872.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THIS little book is born of the idea that mankind are suffering for want of the knowledge it is designed to give. A medical experience, extending through several years, has convinced me that people of all ages and both sexes are suffering from abuses of the sexual function. In a majority of instances, these abuses were begun and continued in ignorance of the results which were to follow.

Children inherit strong sexual desires of which they do not know the meaning ; and, receiving no instruction with regard to these desires, they either fall spontaneously into evil practices, or learn from impure associates habits which eventually prove their ruin. Young men and women, controlled by passion, rush into vices which finally destroy both body and soul. Married people, without a thought of sin, commit excesses which induce disease, destroy happiness, and entail weakness and deformity upon their children.

These facts have been so frequently and so forcibly thrust upon me, that I have felt constrained to bring before the people a consideration of the sexual nature of mankind. I am aware of the prejudices which exist against a discussion of these subjects, and of the difficulties to be met in attempting to bring a work like this before the public. Parents shrink from instructing their children with

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regard to their sexual nature ; teachers dislike to talk of such private matters to their pupils ; ministers fail to denounce these evils from the pulpit ; doctors are backward about referring to sexual vices amongst their patients ; and newspapers are, many of them, so fearful of offending the public taste, that they decline inserting in their columns advertisements of a work of this kind.

But I am so impressed with the importance of a knowledge of the subjects here presented, that I earnestly hope this book will overcome many of the existing prejudices against a dissemination of such truths ; and, in order to accomplish this, I must look for aid in its circulation from all who feel that reform in this direction is needed.

I know that the book is far from perfect ; but I could not wait longer for those who might write it better. I send it forth with the feeling that if, by means of it, one boy or girl, or one young man or woman, is saved from the "broad road that leads to death," if one father or mother is induced to live more in accordance with the laws of nature, or to watch and guard a single child from sexual vices, then my work will not have been in vain.

E. P. M.

NEW-YORK, Sept. 1867.

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## INTRODUCTION TO THIRD EDITION.

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LESS than a year and a half has passed since this little book was first published, yet more than five thousand copies have already been sold ; and this, notwithstanding the insuperable obstacles in the way of giving a wide circulation to a book treating of the subjects herein discussed.

The notices of the press which it has received have been almost universally in its favor, and some have esteemed it "second to no book yet published except the Bible." Flattering as have been these notices, still higher encomiums have been offered by both men and women of high literary and moral worth, in public as well as private life ; yet my highest reward comes in the hearty "God bless you for writing this book," which I have received from hundreds of those who have suffered from the evils herein depicted.

Scores of young men, and women, too, have told me that, had their parents placed such a book in their hands, or impressed upon their minds a knowledge of its contents, before they had learned the evil way, it would have been worth more to them than any amount of money, and have proved of greater practical value than all the education they ever received. There is no doubt of this ; "for what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own life ?" and truly when one's manhood is lost by the follies and excesses of youth, the better part of life, all its enjoyments and pleasures, all its beauties and benefits, are forever gone.

I have the gratification of hearing repeatedly from physicians, as well as others, that "it is the best book of the kind to place in the hands of the young that has ever been written."

Dr. Dio Lewis says : "While you have not shrunk from exposing the evil in all its hideous deformity, it is done in a spirit which can give no offense even to the most fastidious. As a medical man, and as one whose life is given to the dissemination of the laws of physical health, I thank you."

Phœbe Cary says: "I hardly know how I can use language that will express with sufficient force and clearness my appreciation of the value of such a work—a work that, without *one word of coarseness or vulgarity*, strikes clearly and directly at the root of what would seem to be the most wide-spread and terrible evil with which humanity is cursed. I wish your book could be placed in the hands of every human being who has sufficient intelligence to comprehend its words of warning, for I do sincerely believe there is no hope for the world until man is taught to respect and honor his body as the pure and beautiful temple made by the Creator for his soul."

Yet, notwithstanding these and scores of similar indorsements from equally high authority, I am sorry to say that obstacles to its circulation have arisen from a source whence the most efficient aid should have come.

The religious press, even those who gave the book cordial notice, have declined to advertise it; why this is so, I can not understand, for I believe it to be a part of the Christian religion to teach people to live true and virtuous lives, to suppress sensuality and vice, to enjoin purity, cleanliness, and obedience to all the laws which God has made for the government of the bodies as well as the souls of men.

How men can be Christians and yet be sensualists, in either single or married life, is beyond my comprehension! How people can be preachers and promulgators of Christianity, and refuse to aid in the suppression of "this most wide-spread and terrible evil" is for other consciences than mine to determine! To make the best of Christians, we must have pure souls in healthy bodies, and these we can not have so long as a fundamental vital law is constantly being violated. If we would have God's "kingdom come" and his "will be done in earth as it is in heaven," then must all who love him fight manfully for the destruction of evil in whatever form, nor shrink because of false delicacy from any opportunity of doing good.

Some have objected to this work on account of the stringent rules laid down in regard to sexual indulgence in married life. I admit that the positions here taken are much more exacting