



Health Tract, No. 13.

CAUSES AND CURE
—OF—
INTEMPERANCE.

CAUSES OF DRUNKENNESS.

1. The Drunkard's Legacy.

THE most confirmed and irreclaimable drunkards are those who have inherited the appetite from drinking ancestors. There are many such. They are really less responsible for their condition than those whose vices have entailed it upon them. Many instances are known in which the tendency to drink extended to the fifth generation from a drinking ancestor.

Probably this is the most active cause of the great and unabating increase of intemperance. Drunkards' sons become drunkards through inheritance, and transmit the propensity to their children, stamping it still more deeply upon their depraved organizations.

2. Alcohol in the Kitchen.

The use of alcohol in cookery has done not a little to cultivate a love for the burning beverage. Wine and brandy sauces, and other preparations containing alcohol, early excite and form a love for alcoholic

drink in children whose natural tastes would discard it at once. It is not at all uncommon to find alcohol taken in this form, even by people who consider themselves strict teetotalers.

3. Moderate Drinking.

The moderate use of liquor is the stepping-stone to greater excesses. All drunkards are at first moderate drinkers. Were there no moderate drinkers, there would soon be no drunkards. No man sets out in the drunkard's career with the expectation and determination of becoming an inebriate. It may be justly said that moderate drinkers are fresh recruits for the ranks of intemperance.

4. The Kitchen a Nursery of Drunkenness.

The use of alcohol in cookery has already been referred to as a cause of intemperance. Still another charge of far more universal application must be laid at the door of the cook, though the ignorance of the latter may cancel part of the responsibility. We refer to the general and excessive use of stimulating and irritating condiments in the preparation of food. Pepper, spices, and large quantities of salt and most other condiments, have an unmistakable influence in creating and exciting a love for stimulating foods and drinks, and thus ultimately lead toward intemperance.

5. Tea and Coffee Encourage Drunkenness.

This statement will doubtless startle those who have been taught to believe that there is no evil in "the cup that cheers and not inebriates;" but we are prepared to show that the influence of the use of these poisons (for such they are) directly tends to encourage drinking stronger stimulants, though our present space will not allow us to enter into a discussion of

the subject, as we have done elsewhere. (See Health Tract, No. 6, "Tea and Coffee.")

6. The Twin Sister of Drunkenness.

Tobacco-using and drunkenness go hand in hand. Nearly, if not quite, every drunkard chews or smokes. The great majority of drunkards became addicted to the use of tobacco first. Thus they learned to demand a stimulus of some kind. The feverish heat produced by tobacco required quenching, and liquor was resorted to. The white man gave the Indian rum, and the latter gave him tobacco in return. The exchange was a bad bargain for both. Either is bad enough alone; but rum and tobacco together are blasting the human race like a simoon from the heart of hell.

7. Medical Use of Alcohol Causes Drunkenness.

Thousands of men, and women too, have acquired an appetite for alcohol through a doctor's prescription. An unwise physician gave ale, beer, wine, or brandy as a "tonic," "to improve digestion," "to strengthen the system," "to counteract debility," or for some similar reason. The patient thus acquired a love for the stimulation of alcohol, and soon came to regard it a necessity, and took the duty of prescribing into his own hands. In a few years he became a drunken sot, and died a drunkard's death. This subject is elsewhere considered at greater length.

8. Sundry Causes of Intemperance.

Ambition to excel on some particular occasion, or a desire to compel nature to forego rest beyond reasonable limits, has led many to take "an occasional drop," to their final ruin. The "fine exhilaration," the "lively play of the imagination," which accompanies slight stimulation, has led captive thousands of poets, authors, orators, statesmen, and even clergymen.

THE CURE OF INTEMPERANCE.

1 Prohibition Insufficient.

We are heartily in favor of prohibition. Liquor-selling is as much a crime as theft. But we have no faith that prohibition alone will ever exterminate the vice of intemperance. Thieves will exist, in spite of laws against theft, so long as men are covetous and unscrupulous. So men will find some means to obtain liquor so long as they have an appetite for the drug. Alcohol will be furnished so long as there is a demand for it.

But no true friend of temperance will refuse to cooperate with those who are earnestly seeking to control this great evil by prohibition because this measure does not promise to be wholly successful. It is certainly as great a crime to manufacture alcohol to sell to men as a wholesome beverage as to make counterfeit bills. It is as great an offense to rob a man of his health and happiness by selling him rum as to steal his property. Why not enact laws against such offenses? It would be as reasonable to contend that there should be no laws against theft because such laws will not abolish stealing, as to urge that the manufacture and sale of liquor should not be prohibited by law because such a law would not wholly cure intemperance. Moral suasion alone will effect a radical cure of thieving or of drinking; but let us have the laws, nevertheless. Prohibition will do something. If the supply is cut off, the demand may diminish somewhat.

2. Moderate Drinking a Trick of the Devil.

Intemperance is one of Satan's surest means of leading men to perdition; and moderate drinking is one of his most alluring snares. Those who argue that

the moderate use of wine would cure intemperance, have only to look to wine-producing countries for a refutation of their theory. Drunkenness is as common in Switzerland and California as in New York, though wine in those countries is nearly as plenty as water. Wine, as well as whisky, contains alcohol, and alcohol is poison in all doses. Intoxication means poisoning. The moderate drinker is poisoned a little, the gutter drunkard is fully intoxicated. The difference between the two is only one of degree.

3. The Pledge not a Cure.

When the temperance reformation was first instituted, it was considered sufficient evidence of a man's reformation if he simply placed his name to a form of words which pledged him to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage. When this was accomplished, it was considered that a great victory had been won. No restriction was placed upon the use of alcohol as a medicine, and thus the pledge amounted to little more than a nullity. It has been estimated by experienced temperance workers that at least three-fourths of those drunkards who have been induced to sign the pledge have returned to the vice again, some within a few days, others after longer periods of sobriety. It is next to an impossibility to reform a confirmed inebriate. A drunken woman is even more difficult of reformation than a male drunkard; and some have even declared the restoration of a woman addicted to drink to a life of sobriety a human impossibility.

Temperance societies may have accomplished some good, but the real benefit arising from them cannot be estimated very highly. Temperance lecturers really accomplish very little good in most cases. As a general rule they aim more toward securing their own popularity by amusing the audience than toward

the reformation of the inebriate. The very class of individuals who ought to be benefited by a portrayal of the evils of rum are debarred from hearing the lecturer by an admission fee, or by the contemptuous looks of those who attend for the purpose of being entertained.

4. Use of Substitutes a Fatal Error.

It is of no use to search for substitutes for alcohol, for they will prove either wholly inert or quite as bad. Tobacco, opium, and tea and coffee are the Turk's substitutes for alcohol, which the Koran denies him. No one will claim that his condition is better for the exchange. Artificial stimulation is the great sin of intemperance, and the cause of its evil results. All substitutes are likewise stimulants; hence, they are of no value as remedies.

5. The Only True Cure.

Intemperance can only be cured by destroying the demand for liquor. The drunkard must be convinced of the error of his ways and led to reform. We must stop making drunkards by pampering the appetite for stimulating food, and exciting the palate with irritating condiments. The battle must be waged against tobacco and opium as well as alcohol. All modes and degrees of stimulation must receive equal censure.

6. Vegetarianism a Cure for the Appetite for Alcohol.

Mr. Napier, of England, recently read before a learned society an account of the cure of a large number of cases of drunkenness by the adoption of a vegetarian diet. The great chemist, Prof. Liebig, observed, more than twenty years ago, that people who used only vegetable food did not take wine. Becoming acquainted with this fact, Mr. Napier made

a practical application of it, with the result already stated. The following is a brief report of a few of his cases :—

“An analytical chemist, aged thirty-two, who was given to intemperance, on having his attention called to Liebig’s statement, was induced to adopt a vegetarian diet, and before six weeks he was a total abstainer. A lady of independent means, a clergyman, a girl of nineteen, a man and his wife and sister (all over forty years of age), a bedridden gentleman (cured in thirty-six days), a captain in the merchant service, a half-pay officer, a clergyman and his wife, were all cured by a diet mainly farinaceous [vegetable]. Two sisters, members of a family noted for intemperance, were cured in about a year. A clerk who had lost several situations by intemperance was cured by vegetarianism and taken back at an increased salary. A governess aged forty, two military pensioners, a man of sixty, and three old sailors were permanently cured in a few months.”

Beans, peas, rice, and highly glutinous bread (graham bread), were observed to be of special value as articles of diet. This testimony is a powerful one in support of the position that the use of animal food is in some degree favorable to intemperance, and may perhaps be a remote cause of that vice in many cases.

7. How Shall the Drunkard Reform ?

The great obstacle to the reformation of a drunkard is his want of will power. His mind is diseased as well as his body. His will is paralyzed as well as his trembling nerves. He has no power to resist the temptation so long as it is before him ; hence he must not be allowed to see, or smell, or taste the enticing fluid. Immediate total abstinence is the only safe course. It is of little use to attempt to reform by degrees, for a little liquor keeps the appetite alive and

clamoring for more. Abandon substitutes of every kind. Rest and sleep as much as possible.

Lastly, the poor drunkard may find his resolutions strengthened by appealing for aid to Him who pities the frailties of his creatures and proffers help "in time of need."

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