

*Temperance
Alcohol - Physical
Effects*

THE
DRUNKARD'S DISEASED APPETITE,
WHAT IS IT?
IF CURABLE, HOW? BY MIRACULOUS AGENCY OR
PHYSICAL MEANS—WHICH.

J. Mearns

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ERRATUM.

The following paper was read before the Annual Meeting of "The American Association for the Cure of Inebriates," held in Chicago, Ill., September 12th, 1877, by the Rev. J. WILLETT, Superintendent of the Inebriates' Home, Fort Hamilton, Kings County, N. Y.

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DRUNKARD'S DISEASED APPETITE,

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Healthful and Diseased Appetites.

By the word appetite we understand the desire to gratify the cravings either of the body or of the mind.

There are intellectual and spiritual appetites, and there are also physical wants and animal passions which seek gratification. The desires of mind and of body are subject to conditions of health on the one hand and of disease on the other.

A healthful appetite presupposes a healthful organization, for neither in the moral nor the physical world do we "gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles."

Both intellectual and religious fanaticism are the outcrop of disordered minds, and so of morbid physical appetites, for they are the manifestations of diseased conditions of the body.

Appetite Not Essential to Constitute a Drunkard.

We say concerning a drunkard, that he has either inherited or acquired a diseased appetite. But is this assertion always correct?

A person may become a drunkard notwithstanding the fact that the palate revolts at the taste and the stomach rises in rebellion at the reception of intoxicating drinks. This is often the case with young men who have not the moral courage to say "No!" Of the overworked thousands who are engaged either in mental or physical labor, and are compelled to continue their toil when the powers of mind or body cry out for repose; also of those who nerve themselves with stimulants for the purpose of engaging in daring acts of crime.

A large number of persons who constitute these classes, though they frequently drink to excess, never acquire an actual appetite for intoxicating liquors. A very large proportion of the excessive drinkers of the present time can and do regulate the vicious practice, and, whenever occasion serves, reduce it to a matter of policy or self-interest.

It frequently happens that drunkards of this class, moved either by religious or other motives, are brought to a sudden pause, and resolve to quit drinking and lead a new life.

Claiming to have been Cured of an Appetite with which they Never were Afflicted.

In the majority of cases it is reformed toppers of this type who make their boast that the appetite for strong drink was taken away at the moment of their conversion, and in this way they mislead certain religious teachers who, possessing more zeal than knowledge, undertake to proclaim to the in-

ebriate, both from the platform and the pulpit, this strange and dangerous delusion.

The fact is that many of these people, whom they hold up as living examples of the truthfulness of their declarations, never possessed the appetite for liquor, and could at any time have given up its use at their will or pleasure, as thousands who join temperance organizations do, without invoking Divine aid.

In view of the tens of thousands of drunkards who invest the nation, it would be a terrible calamity if all these mighty hosts of tipplers drank in order to assuage the cravings of a diseased appetite for intoxicating stimulants—but, mercifully, it is otherwise.

Drunkards from Appetite.

There are, however, a very large number of inebriates who, unfortunately, have either inherited or acquired the appetite for alcoholic liquor, and it is this class whose condition claims our present attention.

Just as the appetite of the healthful man, when hunger or thirst is felt, longs for nourishing food or refreshing beverages, so, in like manner, does the diseased appetite of the confirmed drunkard crave for ardent spirits. Withhold the alcoholic beverage, and the intense pangs of the burning appetite seem akin to the torments of the rich man who from the pit of perdition prayed that Lazarus might be sent to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his burning tongue.

Whence comes this consuming thirst which this class of drunkards exhibit? There must be, somewhere within the man, a deep-seated diseased condition of the physical structure, which feeds upon and is intensified by the absorption of these fiery liquids.

What Physicians and Scientists Say.

Physicians and scientists whose records are of the highest order have devoted themselves to the investigation of this question, and, after deep researches, they have, with almost infallible certainty and unanimous consent, arrived at indisputable conclusions, which have been summed up by an experienced physician as follows :

"The effects of alcohol enter DIRECTLY into the causation of many affections, such as diseases of the liver, with or without dropsy; epilepsy, muscular tremor, inflammation of the stomach, various dyspeptic disorders, and the derangements of the kidney embraced under the name of Bright's disease—and INDIRECTLY the excessive use of alcohol favors the production of nearly all diseases by lessening the power of resisting their causes; and it contributes to their fatality by impairing the ability to tolerate and overcome them.

"There is a species of dipsomania which is constitutional and congenital. The desire for stimulants may be constant or paroxysmal—an irresistible and insatiable craving is either developed by ever so small an indulgence or is ever present. Persons with this predisposition lose their power of self-control as soon as they feel the influence of alcohol. The morbid appetite they suffer from, the propensity they have inherited, or allowed by indulgence to become a mania, is not only difficult of cure in the immediate victims themselves, but the seeds of morbid appetite are transmissible to their children.

"The deleterious effect on the mental is not less marked than on the physical powers—the perceptions are perverted or apathetic, the intellectual and moral faculties deteriorate, until the confirmed drinker, miserable in body and debauched in mind, has but one motive in life, viz., to indulge and gratify the morbid craving for alcohol. We will take, for instance, a person in the state known among drunkards as the "horrors." It is useless to attempt to reason a person in this plight into temperance; he may appreciate the force of all the arguments which are presented—he may be willing to grasp at any straw of help that is offered—but his whole system is crying out for alcohol; and is it to be wondered at that the starving nervous tissue attempts to satisfy an intolerable sense of craving, of physi-

cal hunger and thirst, by the use of stimulants that temporarily supply the place of food and bring relief? The will-power in such a case is in abeyance, and the patient lacks moral strength to govern a habit (be it acquired or inherited) which represents a morbid condition as much as the delusions of insanity."

Cases in Illustration.

There is no class of persons who have the same opportunity of witnessing drunkenness in all its varied diseased aspects as the officers of inebriate institutions. Here we behold it in its most loathsome, depressing, maddening, and intensified forms. The human organism, with the brain and the nerves, the stomach, the liver, the kidneys, the lungs and bladder, may be likened to a machine with every shaft out of place and every wheel thrown out of gear.

You who talk of will-power, come with me, and I will show you a young man seventeen years of age who has been drinking from his childhood. Listen to that loud, piercing, and terrifying shriek. Look, for he lies struggling on the floor—his face is fearfully distorted and livid; his eyes stand out as though they were about to be forced from their sockets; his wounded and bleeding tongue is caught between the teeth; his breathing is nearly suspended. Behold those agonizing convulsions. With the aid of medical restoratives he revives; but before we can realize the fact, he utters another cry, another fit succeeds, and yet another, until he has passed through no less than eight of these paroxysms.

There is a middle-aged, horny-handed workingman, who by toil and labor has earned a competency. He has for several years past been a heavy drinker as well as a hard-working man. His friends say that he has been consuming forty glasses and upwards of ardent spirits daily. You will

observe that reason is dethroned, and he appears almost like a drivelling idiot. His stomach rejects all kinds of food and nourishment, and every act of vomiting occasions great suffering and brings with it a bloody mucous and serous fluid, with shreds of fleshy matter, as though the lining membrane of that organ had been inflamed and ulcerated. His insanity has now assumed a new form, and he is alternately seized with violent spasms and tremor. Watch him, for the convulsion is working inwardly. There! it has broken out into uncontrollable madness, and those six strong-armed, powerful men can scarcely control him. Now he has fallen back on the bed, and every muscle and all his limbs are shaking with terror,—and so he will continue until either sleep or death comes to his relief.

Now let me lead you into another apartment. Here you see a beautiful young lady, under twenty-five years of age, who, having been disappointed by the man to whom she was betrothed, sought relief in suicide by poison; by the aid of the stomach-pump, however, her life was saved. She is an opium-eater, and has taken a drachm of morphine per day—sufficient to destroy a dozen people under ordinary circumstances. We are trying to cure her, and she is aiding us in this effort; but no mortal tongue can tell the physical and mental torture she suffers. In her moments of greatest agony death would be preferable to life. No immediate remedy can be given for her terrible malady—careful nursing, with palliatives, judiciously administered, to alleviate her more intense sufferings through the fiery ordeal which she must inevitably pass before she can be set free from her fearful thralldom, is all that we can do to assist her.

Stretched on that bed is the exhausted and almost lifeless body of another lady. She has contracted both the opium and the whiskey habits, and within the last forty-two hours has had forty-eight convulsions; but she still lives, and will in all probability recover. But, alas! it is only the first step in the pathway of torture and abject misery which she must go through before reaching convalescence.

Here is another young man who has drank to such excess that the power of reason is suspended. He spends his time in proclaiming himself to be the Lord Jesus Christ. He forgives the sins of every one who professes to believe in him, and consigns to perdition all besides. He is engaged in healing diseases from day to day. He has written letters to all the potentates of Europe, and also to the President of the United States. The latter epistle commences as follows: "Respected President, I, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday to-day and forever, humbly address you; but I am not come to destroy man's order. You shall very likely be a King of the United States in Paradise." This is simply a case of alcoholic delirium, and these strange delusions will, with proper care and treatment, soon pass away.

Poor fellow! he was once led to believe that the grace of God had taken away the appetite for liquor, but he soon realized his mistake and plunged headlong into greater excesses.

We will take a look into this hospital room. The patient, as you observe, is seized with convulsion, and it takes four strong men to retain him on his bed. That attack will probably last for two hours or more, and these fits are repeated three or four times every day. He has for a long period

been indulging almost without limit or restraint in the use of ardent spirits, morphine, chloral, and other kindred drugs. In the intervals succeeding these attacks he is rational, eats and sleeps well, and will probably recover; but it is very unlikely that he will ever be cured of the intense craving for alcohol and morphine.

Returning to the female hospital, we will point out a married lady who contracted the habit of drinking after a long sickness, during which intoxicating liquors had been prescribed for medicinal purposes. She likewise has lost her reason, and would commit suicide if not closely watched. She imagines that her husband or some other friend is either present with her, or imprisoned on some portion of the premises. It is very difficult to restrain her at times, but she is gradually improving.

We could give hundreds of additional cases which have come under our own observation. A very large proportion of alcoholic victims would free themselves from its deadly hold if it were possible. Yes! and many of them, in their sober and better moments, are most sincere and devout worshippers of God. The Pharisee, who makes long prayers in the temple, that he may be seen and heard of men, may sneer in contempt or laugh derisively if he pleases, but we are nevertheless bold to assert that there are thousands of helpless drunkards of this type who, individually, have offered up more fervent prayers to God for mercy and grace in one day than this whited sepulchre ever uttered in his whole life.

Our object is to present in bold relief the condition of utter helplessness of a certain class of inebriates who are

irresistibly impelled by the force of a diseased appetite to drink to excess; and we could lead you on still further, for in the near distance we behold the extended outlines of massive buildings piled against each other. What are they in all their magnitude? The home of the insane. Kindred asylums are to be found in every State throughout the length and breadth of this broad land, many of them numbering their inmates by the thousand. Could we but trace the history of each patient back to the generations of their fathers, as they do in some European nations, we should find in a large majority of cases that, either directly or indirectly, insanity was induced by the excessive use of alcoholic liquors.

Is the Appetite Curable?

From generation to generation governments have been engaged in legislating in this direction. The remedial efficacy of the felon's cell, the whipping-post, the ducking-pond, the stocks, and tread-mill, have all been resorted to, and have alike proved futile. There was no balm in these Gileads—there was no physician there.

More recently, physicians, scientists, and philanthropists have been seriously investigating this question in all its peculiar bearings, and one practical result of their deliberations is the establishment of Homes and Institutions for the treatment of drunkenness as a disease. Here men with morbid appetites for rum are invited to enter, or are placed there by the action of the courts for the purpose of restraint, while medical aid and reformatory measures are called into requisition. To be sure, the work has been slow, for it is no easy task to repair the breaches that strong liquor has made, but in many instances the happy results have been sure and certain.

The Miracle-Workers---A Surprise.

No sooner have these remedial institutions been placed on a firm working basis, and commended themselves to the intelligence of the earnest, thinking classes of the community, than a new proposition is sprung upon us, or, rather, a very antiquated religious heresy has been once again revived. The necessity of institutions for the treatment of inebriety and all other efforts in that direction are unceremoniously set aside with a single breath, and the instantaneous cure of the drunkard's diseased appetite is proclaimed by supernatural agency. According to this new order of teachers, the days of miracles *must* have come back to us, and, by a special dispensation, the natural laws are to be suspended in favor of every toper who has inflicted upon himself a diseased appetite for alcohol. Relying on the sure and certain teachings of Divine Writ, confirmed by our experience and observations, we had come to the conclusion that "in the physical world there is no forgiveness of sins," or as the inspired writer states it, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Even in the days of miracles we have no evidence on record that those supernatural manifestations ever extended to the removal of carnal besetments. While the people were healed of all manner of diseases, no miracle was ever performed to eradicate the lusts of the flesh. Men acquire inordinate appetites by reason of their excesses, and these grow up into besetting sins. The voluptuary, the fornicator, men of vile affections, and tipplers, cultivate these carnal passions

until they become inbred, and it is not in the order of the economy of grace to remove them by miraculous interposition. Even in the case of the Apostle Paul, so great was the conflict between his besetments and the power of Divine Grace, that he was led to say, "I keep my body in subjection lest, having preached the Gospel to others, I myself should become a castaway." From the standpoint of his own painful experience, as well as the shortcomings of others, he was led to give such advice as the following: "Mortify the deeds of the flesh that ye may live"—"Crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts"—"Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh"—"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"—"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and have no confidence in the flesh"—"There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

All the inspired writers of the New Testament present the Christian's life one of warfare—a conflict between the carnal flesh and the mind which has been renewed by the grace of God. And if we live in the spirit and walk in the spirit, every succeeding conflict will bring with it renewed victory. Though we must continue in the flesh, God helping us, we need not walk after the flesh, but after the spirit.

Our inordinate desires must be brought into subjection to the law of the renewed spirit—our vicious lusts and appetites must be nailed to the cross of Christ. It may be a long, lingering, and agonizing death, but they must hang on that sacred tree until they one by one expire. There will be sacrifices to make. It may be necessary to cut off that right hand,

or pluck out that right eye, in order to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. The Sovereign King Himself presents the case before us thus: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

There is no royal exemption held forth in favor of the drunkard. He has sown the seeds of a diseased appetite in his mortal body, and though he may be saved by Divine Grace, he may nevertheless have to carry down to the grave a wrecked constitution and a miserably diseased and pitiable human structure.

In those cases which we have already given in illustration where convulsions, epilepsy, delirium-tremens, or insanity has set in, the disease must proceed either to recovery or death, for there is no discharge in this war.

If it were ordained that the drunkard's diseased appetite should be cured by miraculous interposition, as these deluded religious zealots so persistently insist upon, we then invite them to visit our inebriate asylums and try the result on the class of patients we have described, for if this miraculous grace abounds to all drunkards, it surely will much more abound where the curse is most felt.

Curing by Miracles not the Divine Method.

But that is not the Divine Method in the economy of grace. On the contrary, God has so ordained it, that there shall be no suspension of the natural laws for the accomplishment of any purpose which can be effected by human agency. We have a striking illustration of this divine order exemplified in the resurrection of Lazarus. The first obstacle that presented itself was the stone which covered the

cave where the dead was laid. Jesus could have moved it by a single touch or word, or volition of His almighty will, but that was not rendered necessary, for the Jewish mourners stood near the grave, hence he said to them: "Take ye away the stone." The evangelist goes on to say, "And they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid." Then followed the miracle. In obedience to the Savior's call, "he that was dead came forth," but "he was bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was covered with a napkin."

Since it required no miraculous interposition to perform that portion of the work, "Jesus said unto them, loose him and let him go."

In the cases which we have already presented in illustration of the culmination of the drunkard's diseased appetite, the hospital with its appropriate appliances, the skillful physician and the trained nurse are first in order. Medication, nourishment and repose are the prerequisites for the physical recovery of the sick man.

It is our mission first to take away the stone and remove the grave clothes, and so restore him to a renewed physical life, and in the meantime to lead him into the knowledge of Jesus, and of the power of his resurrection. Instead of teaching him to pray for the destruction of the appetite, it is our business to faithfully warn him that all that he has a right to hope for or expect, is the continual impartation of God's grace, and that this will be all sufficient to control and keep in subjection his besetment; but that this grace will only be continued so long as he seeks after God with his whole heart.

Since reading the above paper the following article, published in the October number of *The National Temperance Advocate*, came under our observation; and, because it is so fully in accord with our own views on this important question, we therefore take great pleasure in appending it:

“CAN DRUNKARDS REFORM?”

“In a recent article with the above heading, in the *New York Christian Advocate*, the Rev. Charles J. Warren, a veteran temperance advocate, writes:

“Religious conversion, all are agreed, is the first necessity for all men, and especially for inebriates, as the surest hope of a real and permanent reformation of life. And intemperate men, especially those who become demented rather than demonized, it is well known, are always easily moved by religious influences, even when so drunk that they would wisely be deemed incompetent to execute a will for the disposal of earthly property, and incapable of giving testimony in a court of law.

“Yet this idea of a spiritual renovation of the heart, while the head is too intoxicated to apprehend a moral obligation, is almost beyond rational belief. It is difficult to conceive that any man, in such a state of voluntarily-induced imbecility, too drunk to hold intelligent converse with men, can be competent to transact business with God, to receive and answer those calls from the Holy Spirit that decide the eternal destinies of the soul.

“No one can doubt the power of Omnipotence to control and change the thoughts, the affections, and the will of any man, however beclouded and obdured by intemperance or other vices and evil passions. Yet men are not converted by that same miraculous power which recalls the dead to life and restores to activity the palsied arm. We judge instinctively that all men, intemperate or sober, must work out their own salvation with fear, while God works in them to will and to do.”

