"The Etiology of Narcomania or Inebriety"

Definition.

In treating of the diseased condition called Narcomania or Inebriety, I adopt the definition of Norman Hill, that this is a constitutional disease of the nervous system characterized by an overpowering impulse to intoxication at all costs, at all rates, that this is not a disease due to vicious propensities and wasted opportunities, but is a disease as fell and insidious as tuberculosis or cancer or any other disease which has at any time decimated the ranks of the human race.

The craving is not for inebriants for their own sake, but for the temporary relief of the agony of the "nerve storm." Narcomania is a disease due to inherited tendencies in a great number of cases, the result of an inborn weakness of will, of an inborn deficiency of moral control, added to a keen natural
susceptibility to intoxicating agents, whether such agent be alcohol, cocaine, morphia, chloral, Indian Hemp, absinthe or ether. In a majority of cases the drug chosen is alcohol, partly on account of its almost universal distribution, partly on account of its too frequent use at all social functions. Opinions of authorities as to a definite disease.

Hess, in his work on Inebriety states: "The etiology of inebriety in most cases in which the medical history of the inebriate has been traced is as well marked as the etiology of the majority of diseases. In inebriety we often find pathological dependence of the tissues of individual organs, and in addition general depression for degradation of the whole organism. Men and women of the highest culture, the purest and the most exalted aims have become reckless drunkards. The clearest minds, the keenest intellect, the most acute reason have been subdued by alcohol. The warmest hearts, the kindest souls, the most unselfish
spirits have been transformed into the coldest, most unkind, and most selfish rotaries at the shrine of Bacchus. Why then have these and a great company of such, fallen so low? Not from a desire to fall, not from wicked and vain imaginings, not from a determination to become drunken, not from any innate love of the intoxicating agent, but from a want of power to resist the overwhelming weight of a well-nigh irresistible impulse within them, which, especially when awakened to action on the contact of a narcotic with the nervous system, blinded them away in spite of their vain efforts at escape, in a whirlwind of excesses and indulgence. 

Man, in his work on Alcoholism, writes: “The cerebral inferiority of some alcoholics finds it its most frequent cause in heredity. But there is also the group of individuals who, thanks to repeated successes, create for themselves, as to speak, a morbid predisposition. It is interesting, from this point of view, to
compare the condition of their intelligence at the various dates of their admission into asylums; on each relapse the individual is gradually transformed, he descends in succession the various degrees of the intellectual scale, and in the third or fourth relapse, we often find weakening of the faculties. In this class of patients, alcoholic drinks act in a manner different from that on other subjects; thus is not the correlation between the physical and the intellectual symptoms. In these persons the nervous system seems to divide itself, all that pertains to the intellectual orders shows an excessive susceptibility to impressions whilst all that is concerned with the physical order, on its functions in the normal fashion, there is a loss of equilibrium. Moreover, what occurs in these cases as regards intellectual phenomena is produced in the same manner in other diseases. It is the fact of the existence of a weak organ in certain individuals, which is always liable to give way under the
most varied conditions. — Clifford Allbutt (System of medicine. article on morphinism) writes as follows — 

"Then comes the turn of those "neurotics," persons subject, perhaps, by nature to larger oscillations of nervous tension than the normal man — who seek intoxicant from afar with a retriever-like instinct and curious in their sensations, play in and out with all kinds of them; narcotic powers such folk almost by anticipation, and they often find less difficulty in the first tolerance than other people. With conscience blunted, and the bit out of the mouth, so that energy is set loose as it never was before, energy expanding under no self-criticism energy joyfully slipping into extravagance with that bemused sense of brilliant ascendency which animates the "general paralytic" in his earlier phases — be it morphine, alcohol, chloral, cocaine, all or any are welcome: the intoxication with its hours of excitement and release must be had at any price and every reform is followed by a relapse into the use of the same drug or of another. It is in these
persons that a hereditary craving for intoxicants is found; and with this tendency we may find in the family the nervous disease of insanity, yet by no means always so. Dr. J. of Boston physician to the Washington Home says:

"The extent to which the morbid craving for intoxicants, and the infirmity of will in resistance, which combined constitute the disease, having its sense and sustenance in the impaired functional activity of the various organs of the body, exists can be appreciated only by one who has carefully observed it in a large number and variety of cases. As a disease its character is most complex and obscure, involving as it does abnormal conditions of both body and mind, varying in every case with individual temperament and characteristics —

Archbishop of Armagh—

I may perhaps fittingly close this short dissertation on the office of other as regards the diseased condition of certain cases of Inebriety, by quoting
the mighty words of the excellent and accomplished Archbishop of Armagh, in a letter to Dr Norman Mann, where his Grace remarks: "In certain cases inebriety is a disease, and the victim can no more resist it than a man with eye can resist shining."

Having thus demonstrated that many writers of repute admit that there is a definite diseased state of the nervous system which may be called inebriety or nasomania, and that in persons with this predisposition a very small quantity of intoxicant will call forth a "nerve storm, just as in those predisposed to epilepsy a minimum dose will determine an epileptic seizure, I would here state my own personal opinion that all bouts of drunkenness are by no means to be classed under the diseased state called inebriety, but probably in more cases than are generally supposed this predisposition to a diseased state exists, and without
doubt as evidenced by Maginn, Lessing and other writers, many chronic alcoholics gradually, and imperceptibly, by their excessive indulgence, their systems to this disease, still I am of opinion that many persons who may be classed under the heading of free-drinkers, or careless drinkers, (adopting the classification laid down by the Collective Investigation Committee of the British Medical Association in the report submitted by Sir Edmund Owen,) many persons I say can go on for years taking an excess of alcohol without producing a predisposition to the diseased nervous condition called Intemperity. The excessive amount of alcohol must of necessity damage the various organs of their body, but it does not bring about that temporary mania so often seen in Intemperity itself. I will now pass on to an inquiry into some points of similarity between Intemperity and Insanity.
Relationship between Intemperance and Insanity

H. Am. says "Intemperance being a disease, to what group of diseases should we assign it? There can be but one answer: intemperance belongs to the group of "diseases of the nervous system" and its nearest ally is "insanity." Many intemperate are so constituted that to drink in what is called "moderation" is beyond their power. To impute immorality, vice, and sin to the intemperate for his physical inability to stop at one glass is no injustice as it would be to impute the same sins to the idiot for his idiocy, or to the hereditary epileptic for his epilepsy.

S. M'Anstey describes drunkenness as a brief chronicle of the successive phases of inebriety displayed in a short period of time. First there is a condition of stimulated energy with weakened self control like the mental excitement which often precedes mania, then follow motor and sensory disorders, incoherence of ideas, uncontrolled excitement or unreasoning melancholy, and lastly, a condition of stupor which
might be called temporary dementia. Maynard states alcoholism is frequently combined with imbecility, and we meet an every degree of intoxication in the imbecile. The action of alcohol is much more powerful on them, and their drunkenness is frequently accompanied by attacks of violent passion and sometimes fury. Epileptics even more than imbeciles are very prejudicially affected by alcoholism, and if we find that there are exceptional cases where the abuse of drink does not increase the frequency of the attacks, the majority of cases are especially subject to them when they have been drinking. Absinthe is very liable to bring on attacks of epilepsy due to the special poison in it acting on the centre in the cord. Chronic alcoholics are often subject to epileptic attacks even when there is no hereditary history of epilepsy. I may say that I have had the less than nine cases of this kind in my own practice during the last five years.
Insanity and inebriety are both characterized by periods of intemperance. Wright ("Quarterly Journal of Inebriety" Oct 1842) writes, "The inebriated patient, go as a rule, resumes in the intervals between his attacks, his normal inebriety, regretting his excesses, and filled with good resolutions. During the reign of the inebriated access, however, the insane desire is to achieve intoxication, which nothing can overcome. In the inebriate access, some other overpowering impulse dominates the individual."

In both inebriety and insanity, the final end is often homicide or suicide. My friend, Dr. H. A. J. of Lytham has related to me a case of a patient of his own who suffered from periodic inebriety. A man of independent means with a mental inheritance, this man, admitted that he absolutely loathed the cursed drink, but he could not resist it. The periodic attacks becoming more frequent, he told his medical attendant that he thought he should commit suicide the latter tried to chaff him out of the idea.
ordered him change of air, and a sea voyage, but in three months time he took his own life.

In relation to heredity there is a striking resemblance between insanity and intemperance. An intemperate parent may beget an intemperate child, and an insane parent may beget an intemperate child—just as the offspring of an insane parentage is inured with various nervous, with epilepsy, hysteria, melancholia, idiocy, intemperance, or various forms of insanity; so too are the children of intemperate subjects to like hereditary.

The etiology of both diseases is in many particular identical. Heredity, exhaustion, nervous shock, overwork, and syphilis play a large part in the causation of both diseases—

Again just as in insanity, we may have alcoholic epilepsy, mania, mania, mania, alcoholic mania, alcoholic hypomania, alcoholic psychosis, alcoholic shooting mania—and other special forms. The most remarkable case of the intemperate
between insanity and inebriety in the
hereditary history of any one family that
I have ever encountered. His one that came
under my own personal observation and
is as follows. M. C. a lady in good
position was subject to kleptomania,
and later in lift to periodic inebriety.
She had issue four sons and one
daugther: of the sons, the eldest
was an inebriate, and literally drank
himself at the age of 46 years: the
second through "Blighting of his affection"
became an imbecile; the third was
an inebriate and became insane;
and the fourth, after manfully doing
all in his power to withstand the
inebriate impulse, at the age of forty
eight, owing to excessive hard work,
slow to the narcotizing power of
alcohol and after many years of
periodical abstention, he also drank him
self to death: as regards the daughter
she was a woman with highly nervous
constitutions, and at the menopause she
developed kleptomania. Sad to relate
this unstable nervous system was again
handed down to the next generation, the
third son who as mentioned above was
an inebriate and became insane. Had
a large family, and of this family
one son had become an inebriate and
one daughter developed religious mania.
The second and fourth sons mentioned
above died bachelors, but their sister
who married a man of sound nervous
system had four sons of whom one
also became an inebriate.
Surely this sad family history alone
would convince even the most sceptical
of the close relationship between
inebriety and insanity, and should
aid in proving that inebriety is a
definite diseased condition, a diseased
condition of the nervous system which
the slightest shock may, in those so
predispersed, fan into a destroying
and devastating flame.

Hatchen of Glasgow, nearly fifty years
ago regarded inebriety as a form of
mania, a brain and mind unsoundness, rendering the victim irresponsible for his acts done in a paroxysm.

In Belgium the law acknowledges an irresistible uncontrollable impulse to drink to excess as a form of insanity and legislates for it accordingly by the involuntary commitment of the nasconomaniac to an asylum or the production of medical testimony.

Fanciful theories of inebriety as really more a variety of constitutional instability than of alcoholic disease.

**Etiology of the Disease.**

Having long shown that inebriety is in many cases a true disease, having assigned it a place among diseases of the nervous system, and having endeavored to show how closely allied it is to insanity, I will now proceed to discern the etiology and show which are the causes contributing to the appearance of the disease in the person of human beings —
These cancers may be divided into predisposing causes, and exciting causes; the former are those which render the body susceptible to the disease; the latter are those which excite an outbreak in bodies previously predisposed to it.

Predisposing causes
Sex. In respect to alcohol, in America the male seem to greatly preponderate, but in England the sexes are becoming more evenly balanced, the number of female inebriates being marked as the increase. In respect to morphia, Allbutt considers the greater prevalence is on the female side, but B. Mathias, Zerbinstein and Bleunmeyer find the figures to run pretty equally between the sexes.

Age
The period of life between 30 and 40 shows the greatest liability to the disease, and the period from 40 to 45 comes next. In Austria, France and Britain youthful inebriety is on the increase. J. Joseph Parish (Proceeding
of the Society for Study of Inebriety) considers that there is an inebriate climacteric in every life, when nervous periodicities become plain, when the vital energy fails in intensity, when the storm of passions abates, when nervous susceptibility wanes. He places this period between 40 and 50. Sir Hen. Rowton places it later, between 55 and 65.

Religion

Religious excitement, if that excitement be beyond control is a marked pre disposing cause. Roman Catholics show fewer cases of inebriety than Protestants. Sir Hen. describes this to the teachings of the celebrated Father Mathews, of Cardinal Manning and other influential Catholic abstainers. Among the Mohammedans opium is strongly supposed to have aphrodisiac virtues; they also use it in place of the forbidden alcohol, to help them over their terribly protracted religious fasts, as for the Brahmins and Buddhists. The Jews are well known as a remarkable abstemious race.
this in a great measure being due to their
considered attention to many healthy,
and sanitary conditions.

Race

Here, considers that the Anglo-Saxon race is
the most susceptible to narcotic, and
remarks that probably the greater share of
this inebriate proclivity is the property
of the Saxon element in our blood. To
race who were mighty in their cups, and
when known in drinking is recorded in
history. I am more inclined to agree
with Pellegrini in his article on Alcoholism
that the Russians are so liable if not
now so. This is also an enormous amount
of inebriety in France, Sweden, Austria,
Germany, Denmark, and Belgium.

The Italians are probably the least
liable to this disease, and next to them
come the Spaniards. Savages races, and
especially the Red Indians are especially
prone to this disease and swiftly
drink themselves to death, but may it
not be that the poisonous nature of
the "firewater" supplied to them is
a factor in to be taken into account in their case, since it is admitted the case that butyllic and amyllic alcohol have a more
injurious effect on the nervous system
than the lighter alcohols? (B.W. Richardson
Cantu Lectures).

Climate

According to the evidence taken by the Opium
Commission in India, opium is used by a
very number of Her Majesty's subjects,
and by thousands of others beyond
her dominions in the faith that the
drug is useful to them and is not
abused in any ordinary sense of the
term. Whether it be taken as an antidote
to fever or other ill-health, or as one
of those nervous agents which all people,
civilized or uncivilized, desire, that we
have dismissed tea, coffee, and
tobacco to promote the nervous system,
and restore it after fatigue, or tender
it with forms of extraordinary
endurance in lieu of rest or food. Opium
is used in many oriental countries not
as a vicious indulgence, but as a
reasonable aid in the work of life. Opium is still largely used by dwellers in the level of England which at one time gave malaria, as the few districts of Lincolnshire; either because they is still in such district, some remnant of maleficence, or from old custom. It may also have a depressant effect. The east wind, invites a paroxysm in many instances, but must be dreaded all those dull, cutting days when the air is heavy and charged with electricity. The disturbed electric condition of the atmosphere excite the nervous fluid of the body, and people are apt to get distempered, irritable, and offened, and fly to narcotics to soothe them. Conditions engendering malaria are influential in producing sickness, the malarial stomach produces a sense of malaise, languor, malaise, and depression which causes for relief. This relief is temporarily afforded by opium and alcohol in virtue of their anaesthetic influence.
A factor of importance in the causation of American removers intensity is the astonishing variation of temperature in some parts as Florida, the glass bow shows a leaf from to avoid heat to freeze chill (Proceedings, Entomology Society no. 14). Southern climates do not yield so abundant a crop of inebriates as northern climates. In America people in the northern states do not seem to have the power of retaining the inebriate impulse as easily as those in the southern states. In England too the amount of inebriety seems to be far greater in the northern counties as Yorkshire and Lancashire than in the southernmost counties. Seaside resorts too seem to me to quelipine it is astonishing the amount of alcoholic scenes that goes on in most seaside watering places, whether it is the "salt in the air" or I have often heard remarked in Blackpool, or the bracing air I know not, but certain it is that
many people who are really abstemious in Ireland towns, as well as they en to reside in on the sea-coast become chronic alcoholics.

Pecuniary circumstances.

Riches naturally exercise a great modifying influence. But many inebriate are destitute, and in the majority of instances, the means have been squandered in drink. Increased prosperity of the country means an increased consumption of alcoholic liquors per head of population. Thus the consumption of beer per head which was 24.34 galls in 1861 and 29.25 galls in 1893, touched its highest point in 1874 at 34 galls. According to Lavers' tables, the average price of all commodities was higher in 1873 and 1872 than in any year between 1825 and 1893. The average price of commodities may be taken as a general index of the prosperity of a country (Robberson in 1873). Probably the deplorable condition of inebriety is most prevalent among the intelligent and cultured classes of Society, education


and refinement predispose to the melody, since the nervous system becomes more sensitive and thus is more liable to be unstable.

Heredity

From records of 2,905 cases of inebriety treated in America and Britain by J. W. Henn, Choate, and others, no fewer than 1,374 had a family history of previous inebriety, and this is probably short of the truth, owing to patients being naturally somewhat reticent on the "family failing." It would thus appear that the chief inherited cause of inebriety is an inebriate parent, but insane parents also beget inebriate children. When the heredity is on the father's side, it would seem that it is the moral nature of the offspring which is altered, when on the mother's side the brain and nerves are more liable to suffer. The female parent is the more general transmitter of the hereditary alcoholic taint. Sometimes when the father is a drunkard, the girls are the most liable to be the subjects of hereditary
alcoholism, and when the mother is the culprit the sons are especially endowed with the family failing (hereditary croise). When the heredity is from the mother it arises mainly from the defective nutrition of the nervous centres of the cerebral and spinal substance during the entire uterine career. The continued action of nervous narcotics modifies the nutrition of the nervous system, and it is this acquired perversion of the normal nutrition of the nervous system which is conveyed from parent to child and constitutes heredity in alcohol (Herr).

Sir B. W. Richardson (in his Captain lecture) has the following powerful paroxysm: "The most solemn fact of all bearing upon these mental abominations produced by alcohol and upon the physical act less than the mental is, that the mischief inflicted on man by his own fact and deed cannot fail to be transferred to those who descend from him, and who are thus -
insensibly afflicted. Amongst the
many winderful designs of nature
and its more manifest than this that
physical vice like physical feature and
physical virtue, abounds in line. It is
I say, a solemn reflection for every
man and every woman, that whatever
we do to ourselves do so to modify
our own physical constitution and
mental type, for good or for evil,
is transmitted to generations that
have yet to be. Not one of the
transmitted worse physical or mental
is more certain. Passed on to those
yet unborn than the worm, which
are afflicted by alcohol. We therefore
who live to reform the present
in this respect are stretching fats
our powers to the next to environ it
to identify it, and to lead it toward
that millennial happiness and bliss
which in the fulness of time shall
visit even the earth making it under
an increasing light of knowledge a
garden of human delight, a Paradise
reigned.

Then again remarks "The most saddening, and perhaps the most serious of the numerous evils inflicted by alcohol on human kind is the hereditary transmission of the drink-impulse itself. Of brain degenerations involving a delicate susceptibility to narcotic influence, or a nervous allied to incertitude, or a dutiful will power, and all the pathological change engendered by indulgence in alcohol, even when successfully resisted, the diseased tendency is often still alive though slumbering, ready at a moment's notice to break out in a fierce blaze on the smallest provocation. Many persons of the highest character, strictest integrity, and noblest purpose, though abstainers from all intoxicating liquors, simply from having been both with an inlaid tendency to narcotic excess, with mental inadequacy or mystification, or with morbid impulses, were had to struggle while they lived to preserve themselves from
drink and drunkenness. Ribot defines inebriety as a law by which all living beings reflect themselves in their descendants.

Professor Demme of Stuttgart said that parental alcoholism may be the expression of an inheritable psychopathic disposition which may show itself in the next generation as alcoholism or as a mental disease of some other variety. The injury to the descendants of intemperate parents is explained by the theory that this excess probably interferes with the nourishment and development of germinal cells. Demme took notes of the family history of ten families of drunks and compared these with the family histories of ten temperate families. These observations extended over twelve years. Of the descendants of the intemperate families only 17.5% were in ordinary health in childhood whereas of the descendants of the temperate families 81.9% were healthy during childhood and youth. From these and other observations Demme came to the
conclusion that intemperance is hereditary, transmitting itself from generation to generation until the increasingly defective race becomes extinct.

J. T. Mason ("Quarterly Journal of Intemperance," July 1891) says:

"Intemperance is the great underlying cause of alcoholic intemperance in the pestilence of disease."

Green's from observations made on 188 individuals reports that the children of intemperates have a decided propensity to intemperate excess, as one half of the cases noted by him having come from intemperate ancestors. The majority of the offspring suffer from intemperate consumptions, especially largely prevails among them and that are more liable than others to become insane.

Clouston (Annual Report Ed. Royal Assay Office, 1859) remarks:

"Though disregard of the laws of our being in past generations a hereditary condition has been established in many brains through which the intensities of feeling and craving for intoxicant the
forces of control"

Paul Balleine (Prigg. essay on "The Role of Heredity in Alcoholism" says, "an alcoholic subject runs a terrible risk of
conceiving upon his descendant either
irregularity or tendency to vice or suicide,
or hysteria, or milder nerve disorders. If
a proclivity to alcoholic excess is
handed down it may manifest itself
in a taste for the same liquor as
that preferred by the ancestor, and in
its mildest form will so predispose the
descendant to intemperate indulgence as
to seriously impair his strength of
will.

"Mr. Smith" (quoted by Keen) gives the case of
an drunkard who was the parent of
seven idiots. They were all deficient in
bodily and vital energy, and predisposed
by their very organisation to have
"weakness for debilitic natures." Apathy
they showed the greater part of their
involuntarily for the exciting effect of
intemperance to their small stock of
vitality, mental and physical."
A curious motion has been made by Dr. Dappel, that the children of morphinists often show on birth the "symptoms of withdrawal" of the drug, and need morphia and alcohol to soothe them. Grathers too says that these children not rarely become themselves morphinists or alcoholists in after life (Albutt).

As the use of morphia diminishes sexual desire, the children of morphinist mothers are more commonly met with than of morphinist fathers.

It is highly probable however that the inherited error for opium or morphia is not really so great as that for alcohol. But this as I have pointed out before may arise from the ubiquitous uses of alcohol and in certain classes of nativities with unstable brain and nervous system, the element of chance must come in to which narcotic agent first holds them in its grip.

It is probable that the alarming increase of alcoholic heredity in England
in view in great part to the unmistakable increase of female in-
temperance.

Among ancient writers, Plato referred to the injurious effects of intemperance,
both on the parent and on the child and forbade the use of wine to the newly married. Plutarch wrote, "Drunkards begot drunkards." Aristotle taught that "Drunken women bring forth children like unto themselves."

Proprietary alcoholic indulgence tends to cause structural degradation in the
form of the brain, with perseverion
of function. The progeny inherit a
Weakened power of resistance and are
unable to resist abnormal impulses
and even ordinary temptations. The
inherited defective mental balance
is so real that any sudden and
excessive call upon their nervous
system is apt to upset their equilibrium
and plunge them into an insane
or inebriate outbreak.
Alcoholic heredity may be homogenous or heterogeneous. In the former the alcoholic diathesis of the transmitter is reproduced in the person of the descendant. In the heterogeneous form the heredity is transformed from alcoholism into various nerve disorders which may persist through life, whether in the presence or absence of alcohol.

Heredity may be immediate i.e., from one or both parents; or mediate i.e., from a grandparent, though the father and mother may have been apparently free from the taint.

I purpose closing my remarks on the heredity of imbecility by quoting a case mentioned by H. A. Ross:

"A gentleman of position, sixty-four years of age, is a hereditary drunkard. So violent is he that his wife and family have had to leave him. One of his sisters (married) is an imbecile through drinking. She will do anything for drink, will beg, borrow, or steal, pawn everything she can lay her hands..."
on, and even essay robbery with violence in the hope of obtaining money to gratify her morbid craving for alcohol. Another sister (married) is also a habitual drunkard who is subject to fits of ungovernable fury when in drink, and being dangerous both to herself and others, is under restraint. Thus all the family are masochomaniacs. The fatal legacy in this case was from both parents. The father shot himself when labouring under alcoholic mania, and the mother was an inebriate drunkard. The grandfather was also a confirmed inebriate.

Temperament

Of all temperaments the phlegmatic is the least predisposing to delirium tremens with the temperament can indulge in copious potations without being affected either in speech, or gait, and hardly ever show symptoms of either disturbance or excitement. Kent mentions a case of such a one, a barrister, a born and thorough Southwark speaker, who when actually
drunk seemed to be more sober than when he had not been drinking. In his eyes, when so drunk in his legs that he could not, difficulty stand upright, his tongue moved more slowly. His speech became more deliberate, his syllables more lucid and well weighed. To a stranger he appeared perfectly sober when he was thoroughly drunk. He was the subject of inherited debility in the maternal side—undoubtedly the nerves, and the nervous temperament are the most liable to fall victims to this disease.

Associated habits

Tobacco: it is most probable that the use of tobacco does not incite to syphilis, although in some cases it may have a tendency to develop that abortive diathesis which in some constitutions sets up the diseased condition of debility. But on the other hand, cases have been known in which tobacco had a tendency to check the outbreak—
It would seem that in most chloral cases alcohol is the principal anaesthetic concerned, the chloral habit occupying a secondary though important place. One such case I remember well. A. G. a married lady, whose husband was a medical man; she suffered intense pain at the periods and had been advised by her mother to take gin and hot water at these times. Later in life she added chloral. The result was most disastrous, for it appears that there was marked inebriation in the father's side and this unfortunate lady died from the effects of chloral and alcohol at the early age of thirty-four.

In many morphine, opium and chloral type cases, one of these narcotic drugs is the principal intoxicant resorted to by most if not all of these habits also use alcohol. The morphine habit seems in many cases to have been started for the relief of pain, and in many cases has unfortunately been
initiated by the medical profession, it is rarely, however, that this cramp is started by its own under the weight of bereavement or other such heavy trials: alcohol or chloral seem to be preferred by those who cannot wait for the healing hand of time. The cramp for cocaine has in some instances been started by reason of its substitution for morphia. In the withdrawal of that drug but does not appear to have ever been taken from the beginning for its own sake, unless it be among the Peruvians and tribes of Western South America who have used it for centuries as a stimulant and to enable them to perform long and tiring journeys on horseback.

Other diseases which predispose Syphilis acts as a symptomat potient factor, probably by its depressing influence on the mind and nervous system, for which relief is sought in intimation.
Subacute and chronic chest diseases on account of the wearing effect of the constant suffering, similiarly headache, emaciation, and head injuries may act as predisposing causes.

Bad Hygienic Conditions

Ill-ventilated and over-crowded dwellings, from the vitiated state of the air, cause languor and sluggishness, and produce a profound feeling of depression which may call for stimulants, to obtain relief.

Intoxicating agents

These are undoubtedly a strong predisposing as well as an exciting cause, since their constant use by persons who have no taint of debility, may in time so affect their vital centres, and vital organs, and so weaken their will-power that their constitution becomes more predisposed to the narcotic influence of the intoxicating agent, and in the application of some strong exciting cause, a paralysis of intellect is evolved —
Exciting causes are those which on their application to the predisposed body cause the disease, and firstly let me discuss Nervous Shock.

The various forms of nervous shock which may provoke to acts of inebriation are domestic, business, or financial trouble, religious hysteria, disappointed affections, fright, overwork, desire to tide her a crisis, worry and its oft accompanying sleeplessness. These varied forms of shock acting on an unstable brain disturb the equilibrium, and lessen the control over thoughts and actions, causing an exaggerated view of the position of affairs to be taken, and an overwhelming desire to arise to drown present miseries in oblivion. Ill-assorted marriages are a frequent cause. Husbands worried by their wives, wives worried by their husbands, fly to drink for comfort and consolation.

So too sudden bereavement, a man loses his wife after many years of
Happy married life becomes miserable, gloomy, apathetic, interested in nothing, and seems totally unable to gather up the threads of life and so evokes alcohol to deaden his tumbled mind, and anaesthetize his brain.

Joy as well as sorrow may lead to drinking, especially in cases of unexpected good fortune, as from legacies. Here relates the case of a temperate intelligent man of neat pride who unexpectedly inherited £30,000. Within three months he was a constant inebriate and within three years he had squandered all his means and was destitute.

**Traumatic Inebriety**

Head injuries are a powerful exciting cause. Of 600 cases treated at Fort Hamilton, one-fifth had received blows on the head, and of these, 41 became habitual, and 52 periodic inebriates. Apparently very trivial blows on the head may bring about this condition,
Possibly the nutrition of the brain substance, as well as of its membranes, is affected, and the nervous irritation sets up excites to inebriety. Certain forms of uterine disease are liable to produce some form of nervousness, such as painful menstruation; the pain is most acute, and the common remedies that gin and water or port wine, are published amongst women the most general exciting cause to intemperance.

Depressive is another influential exciting cause, the low deparing condition of the hypochondriac being such that a temporary relief is sought from alcohol, opium, or chlorodyne.

Other diseases which excite are gout and rheumatism, even at the risk of increasing the complaint. The intense headache and nocturnal pains of syphilis is often madden to narcoties. Insanity is an exciting cause, perhaps by some discharge of grey matter, the insane impulse rushes
the individual into intoxication, just as it might into hypomania or other act.

At puberty females are particularly susceptible to the fascination of memories, the mental equilibrium being liable to be affected during this transitional stage, the same causal holds good at the climacteric.

Sexual excess appears also to be an exciting cause, owing to the renewed prostitution induced by it.

Pregnancy and parturition are frequent causes, especially to rapid child-bearing.

Occupation

This may act either as a predisposing or an exciting cause. Individuals subjected to severe and exhausting brain work become predisposed, among such may be classed, members of the legislative, literary men, members of the learned professions, teachers, and also stock-brokers and operators.

Daughters and unmarried women who are engaged in trying work, and whose
opportunities for wholesome and regular feeding are few, become often profligate. Occupations which act as exciting causes are as follows. Commercial travellers, buyers for large mercantile houses, those who have often to partake of numerous drinks in order to do a good day's business, or to clinch a bargain. Auntesiness are very liable to become intemperate, so too domestic and domestics. Carters and all those engaged in driving occupations, owing to their exposure to all conditions, are liable to temptation. Some occupations exercise this intemperate excitation by reason of the unhealthy surroundings in which the work is carried on, such as printers, and the literary and printing staffs of daily newspapers. With regard to the medical profession, perhaps more especially the country practitioners is liable to fall a victim, on account of his long weary rounds, irregular meals and constant offers of hospitality.
medical men and chemists are very liable to indulge in morphine and other drugs, since they lie to their hand. But of all occupations, those engaged in the liquor trade are the most refined. Publicans, husselers, wine merchants, are all markedly liable. According to the report of the collective investigation committee (but not more) drawn up by J. Ramstedt (who, under class E (the decidedly intemperate) the licensed victuallers show by far the greatest percentage, next come soldiers, driving occupations, domestic servants and people of independent means. The lowest percentage being among clerical occupation, professional occupations and sailors.

This is a fertile source especially amongst people of independent means, who follow no profession, or business, and have no favourite wholesome hobby, but endeavor by all the means at their disposal to kill time, such men fall
ready victims to narcotics.

Overwork and overstrain acts by causing a weakened and deprived nervous condition which may in one individual determine an epileptic explosion, in another an attack of neuralgia, and in a third an outburst of cineticiety. The high pressure at which we live at the present day involves a continuous discharge of energy and leads to brain strain and neuro-asthenia, and exhaustion. The present system of forced education and examining of the young also tends to exhaust their reforming energy. Bodily and mental irritability is thus set up, rendering the system more susceptible to the basting influence of narcotics. Socialities is also an exciting cause, many people cannot bear to be alone; they must have "good company" and cheerful friends, alcohol in some form becomes linked with the friend, intercourse, at first a little only is taken, this is gradually increased in quantity until at length, indigestion is developed.
monotony of dulness may act in the same manner, the weary daily grind of the same occupation, an occupation perhaps involving more or less complete solitude, as in some constitutions a most depressing effect. Many men placed in such a position become secret or quiet dreamers, and in time become chronic invalids. In my opinion the dull monotony of an uneventful life is even a more deadly exciting cause than that arising from social aspirations, for in the latter case there is a certain amount of excitement apart from the narcotic influence to draw a man from his own region, whereas in the former case there is nothing and many men placed in such a position having once tasted the sweet narcotic fly to it repeatedly and are rapidly overwhelmed by intoxicating agents.

There are undoubtedly the immediate exciting cause of idiosyncrasy for whatever the heredity narcotic or non-narcotic whatever the predisposition, whether it
be due to temperament, religion, occupation, climate, race, or disease or injury, it is certain that without the use of the intoxicating agent there will be no outbreak of intoxication.

Many people unaccustomed to partake of alcoholic drinks and ignorant of the nature of such beverages, are at times induced to try them and being endowed with great susceptibility to their action are threat so it were into an act of drunkenness. So reformed drunkards, a small quantity of alcoholic liquor has been known to reawake the long dormant cravings. A most interesting case of this kind is related by Wood: “In a cathedral city the clergyman used unintoxicating wine. At one communion the supply was rather short and the clergyman, thinking that it would not matter, made up the quantity short by an intoxicant. A reformed indweller believing that he was communicant in an unintoxicating harmless element partook as usual. In a moment
he was seen to rush out of the church. Some of the congregation acquainted with his history, though they had no suspicion that intoxicating wine had been given to him, saw there was something wrong and followed him. They found him making for the nearest public house in a great state of excitement. Fortunately it was not yet open, so they succeeded in getting their protege to one of their houses, where they fixed him till the parson, and sided a grog which took some hours. Next day he was himself again."

There can be no doubt that both in the case of alcohol and morphine, the prescription of these drugs by medical men has been frequent, that exciting cause of mania, but probably this was much more so in former days than at present. It is evident however that the indiscriminate prescription of these or other similar drugs by medical men is justly to be condemned;
on the other hand medical practitioners have often been most unjustly blamed for it is a common error for free drinkers to say that they drank only under "doctor's order", whereas in many cases they have taken to it on their own initiative or at the suggestion of some friend of the family.

It has always seemed to me that sufficient stress is not placed on the adulteration of and addition of deleterious substances to alcoholic drinks, as a potent exciting cause of an inebriate outbreak. The drink is called under the name of absinthe is peculiarly formidable. In this liquor five drachms of the essence of wormwood are added to one hundred quarts of alcohol besides the epileptic form convulsions induced by it too; it excites a morbid craving for food, it quickly causes a permanent dyspepsia and as long as its victims live, as they cannot take food until absinthe has prompted the desire for it. Thus they continue
its use until they are often hopelessly in its power.

Amyl alcohol is often used to adulterate spirits and to fortify wines, and is an extremely dangerous addition, it causes much dyspepsia and consequent increased thirst, muscular tension, and great prostration with the desire to imbibe more spirit to "keep body and soul together", as I have heard it expressed. Amyl alcohol also remains longer in the tissues than the lighter alcohols.

Other additions made to spirits are oil of juniper, oil of bitter almonds, potass alum, nitric acid, oil of vitriol or sulphuric acid, and salicylic acid. Gin is probably the most adulterated of all drinks.

Sir B. W. Richardson in his "cantor lecture" remarks "If the subject were specially looked into, a very important chapter of facts might be collected bearing upon the injurious effects of these additions to all, wines and spirits. I have noticed
the evils that follow upon the administration of an alcoholic drink that have been adulterated with amylie alcohol, they are exceedingly serious. The distresses excited by the other faults when they do not arise from excess of absolute alcohol, we shorn in symptoms of indigestion and in the furnishment of an acid condition of the system of the body."

As late as the close of the seventeenth century an act was passed by a Duke of Wurttemberg, making it an offence punishable with death and confiscation of property to adulterate wine with birch-must, sulphur or litharge. In the year 1705-6 John Jacob vanhi of Talingen was beheaded for carrying out adulteration with the forbidden stimulants lead compound. This was undoubtedly a very severe measure and not to be tolerated at the present day, but still I feel that if the government of this country could see their way to pass some act which would put a stop
to all adulation of alcoholic liquors much benefit would result, and at least one of the exciting causes (and possibly a potent one) of inebriety would be removed.

In conclusion, I would express my opinion that if the general public had a clearer conception of the real nature of inebriety, and grasped the truth that it is a distinct disease and is not to be regarded in the light of folly, vice, or sin; then these agents in civilized society the disease has wrought and harrowed and they are many such might educate their descendants to a wholesome fear of "the snake in the grass" and bring them up to follow those trades, professions, or occupations which are the least liable to excite to an outbreak of the disease —

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P. T. O

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May, 1898
Works consulted.


I do hereby certify that this thesis has been composed by myself.

Right Blandell M.B. C.M.

May 8th, 1898.