

## The Effects of Alcohol

The effects of alcohol are easily recognised at the second stage after careful study. All activities get tainted. Gait becomes unsteady and talk gets less circumspect. Well-developed movements become way-ward. Self-control is seriously impaired. Man gets into a stupor in the third stage, which borders on torpidity and stupefaction. Another increase in the alcohol content of the system damages the respiratory system.

The use of alcohol to maintain temperature is also absurd. It should never be used to counteract cold, for alcohol reduces the capacity to preserve bodily heat. Experiments on animals have proved that those who received alcohol were more readily killed by cold as compared with those that received nothing of the sort.

Alcohol is beneficial for persons who get shelter in a warm place after having been exposed to severe cold. Alcohol has little food value, for it is not among the tissue building materials that replace shattered tissues of the body.

There are two types of fuel-foods that maintain constant temperature of the body, to wit, those that are stored in the body for use on appropriate occasions. Alcohol is excluded from this category. It may, however, be regarded as an easily assailable material, for it is assimilated by the blood within five minutes and starts its action accordingly.

Even with normal health the use of alcohol does not activate the nervous system, rather it slows down the nervous process and renders their activities unstable. It throws a light veil over the brain. A peculiar effect of alcohol is that it lowers the scrutinizing potency and one's actions in their crude form become satisfying to him. This defective judgement persists for hours. Alcohol deteriorates the ability to bear any kind of hard physical fatigue. Its use perverts action and brings on fatigue quicker".

After this, it is little else but regrettable that people still being themselves to become enamoured of alcohol. It is a different matter if alcohol is taken on a doctor's advice as medicine. But to get one's self addicted to it, and become its' slave, is positively unbecoming of the inherent dignity of man.

Besides, it is also a waste of good money. This is a case where man buys mad men with his hard earned money. A person drinks this stuff only to lose his senses and his power of reasoning, and stoops to more gibberish nonsense. Not unoften we find ourselves revealing important information to our very enemies under the influence of alcohol.

In short getting addicted to alcohol is like throwing one's self in the gutters only to die in that muck. The house, the family all is pushed into ruin, and there is no calamity which is too great for alcohol to bring upon the heads of its worshippers. Alcohol, because of the poisonous effects of the products, which is so dilute and of which the higher potencies are obtained by the process of distillation.

## Some Instructive Tests

Some instructive tests that have been devised to measure the effect on human efficiency, of calculated doses of alcohol, will be of interest to the inquisitive reader. Thousands of studies, demonstrations and laboratory experiments have been undertaken to gauge the mischief which the use of alcohol perpetrates on the working capacity of the intellectual no less than of the manual worker.

To pile up all this evidence would be tedious indeed, and yet the following typical experiment of Dr. J. J. Ridge of England has a value of its own in demonstrating in a simple way the deterioration in efficiency which invariably results from alcoholic drinks – both light and strong, in small or large doses.

"Some years ago, I constructed instruments to test the effect of small doses of alcohol on the sense of touch and muscular sense. The instrument for testing consisted of two fixed upright points, about half an inch apart, and between these a third point, which could be moved so as to approximate to one or the other.

The individual moved the Centre until he considered that it was midway between the two. The movement of point was registered on a dial. The degrees on the dial were arbitrary, but fourteen experiments on five persons showed that whereas the average divergence from the actual centre, before taking alcohol, was represented by 115 degrees on the dial, after taking alcohol these were 1898 degrees, and in no case was there any improvement.

Hence the sensitiveness of the touch is clearly deteriorated, by small doses of alcohol, although the persons experimented on were quite unconscious of the attention. The nature of the experiment is also to some extent a test of the judgement or power of perception, and it does not show which link or links in the chain of sensation would chiefly be affected."

Another demonstration of the effect of alcohol upon physical efficiency took place on the occasion of a sixty-two mile walking match at Kiel which was held to decide the championship in long distance walking among German athletes. It was open to all, irrespective of their habits in regard to alcohol.

The contestants in the match, however, were required to give full particulars before hand to the

committee in charge of the affair in this behalf. Of the 83 contestants, there were 24 abstainers and yet they won 40 percent of the prizes. Among the remaining 59 persons, then were 2 who had used no alcohol for months in preparation for the contest. They too won prizes. Among the first 25 men to reach the goal, 60 percent were abstainers only 2 of the 24 abstainers failed to reach the goal while 30 of the 59 drinkers were unable to complete the walk.

Yet another interesting test was undertaken by Lieutenant Bengt. Boy, of Carts – Krona Grenadiers in the Swedish Army, and others, by way of measuring exactly the effect of small doses of alcohol on target shooting, which was at a distance of 200 feet. These tests covered a series of experiments and were held on the regular army manoeuvre grounds at Stockholm. "The experiments, carried out by six men, all excellent marksmen, and all used to alcohol were divided into three series each lasting several days. During the first and third series the men were entirely abstinent. During the second series, lasting five days, the men took a small definite amount of alcohol daily.

## Three Kinds of Tests

There were three kinds of tests. In the first and second tests, the men took about two thirds of a wine glass of brandy (containing a little more than an ounce of alcohol) from 20 to 30 minutes before the firing and an equal amount of alcohol on the evening before.

In the precision test of shots, every man showed less precision, and made fewer points when influenced by alcohol. In the quick firing test each man fired a round of 30 shorts in 30 seconds, On the first series of abstinent days, they hit the target, on the average, 23 out of 30 times. But the alcohol days told a different story.

The wind, the weather, and the light conditions were better than on the abstinent days, yet the effect of so little alcohol as that in about two glasses of beer twice a day cut down the average to only 3 hits is 30. Again on the abstinent days, the firing improved and the men averaged 26 hits out of 30 shots.

"Third were the endurance tests, two trials of 200 shots each. Here the amount of alcohol used was the least of all, less than two glasses of beer (four fifth of an ounce of alcohol), taken half an hour before the test, yet the result was the same. Although without alcohol the men made 359.5 points, on the alcohol days they made only 277.5 points, nearly a third less."

"The men thought they were doing better on the alcohol days. One of the corporals said after laying down the gun, "I am sure a man can shoot better when he has had a little brandy", but the results proved how grievously he misjudged."

## Mental Efficiency

Mind and body are so intimately linked that the effect on one is as a matter of course, reflected with

proportional intensity on the other. The brain –as the instrument of the mind, is very deleteriously affected by even very small doses of alcohol. In the words of Dr. Chapple of London "Alcohol is a poison, having a specific affinity for the nerve centres of the brain. and paralysing those centres in the inverse order of their development the last developed suffering most."

In other words the higher qualities of the mind are attacked first and suffer the most. "Civilized man equals the brute animal plus the brain development. Alcohol blots out the higher brain development and leaves the brute animal. Even a very little alcohol not showing itself in drunkenness, has a damaging effect on the human brain." In these words has been summed up the alcoholic affinity for the nervous centre as a poisoning and denaturing factor.

The man who becomes intoxicated by the alcoholic poison, as such, "loses first his sense of decency, his ability to think clearly and accurately and to associate ideas. As his intoxication progresses it affects those nerve and brain powers which control the senses. He begins to see double, to be unable to control his movements, his powers of smell, hearing and sight are distinctly lessened. It has been well-said that intoxication epitomizes the whole history of insanity.

The man who becomes dead drunk within the space of a few hours undergoes very much the same changes as the man who gradually becomes insane, and he who keeps his association and motor senses slightly drugged all of the time by moderate<sup>1</sup> drinking is not entirely a sane man. He is constantly drunk to some degree and is therefore constantly insane to some degree.

"The day has passed when any intelligent and informed person could boast of the ability to 'carry liquor well'. Such ability is not a sign of a strong body but of a weak brain. The brain which is not sensitive to alcohol is an atavistic product." This is indeed a very unflattering commentary on the alcohol poison by an eminent American authority on the basis of direct experience of the situation prevailing around. But it is a truth, pure and simple.

## **Alcohol is a Ready Solvent of Fat**

Alcohol is a ready solvent of fat, and the brain cells being composed largely of fatty tissue are, as such, the peculiar domains of alcoholic poison. In fact, as is well-established every poison has a peculiar affinity for certain specific organs of the body, for instance lead for the muscles of the wrist, mercury for the salivary glands, arsenic for the stomach wall, Strychnine for the spinal cord, and alcohol for the brain cells. The brain cells, once damaged, as it often happens in cases of continued drinking, are never replaceable.

Experiments with particular reference to the damage which the brain cells suffer as a result of alcohol poisoning have been conducted by physicians of note in Europe and elsewhere. They have demonstrated beyond the shadow of doubt that the consumption of even very small quantities of alcohol has a distinctly deleterious effects on mental efficiency.

"One glass of beer will decrease the powers of memory, reason and perception for a certain length of time, and steady so-called moderate drinking produces an abiding impairment of the mental capability. Investigations made by Dr. Alfred Stehr, in Germany disclosed a distinct loss of efficiency on Mondays, after the drinking on Sundays, among a group of workers in Dresden. This loss amounted to 28.5 percent.

Dr. Exner of Vienna, found as a result of his experiments to determine the effect of alcohol on the ability of the subject to respond quickly to a flash of light, that "A small quantity of alcohol would distinctly lengthen the reaction time, and when the test was complicated by requiring the subject to press a right or left telegraph key, as might be suggested by the signal a very small quantity of alcohol was found to increase greatly the liability to error. Another research worker Dr. Krapelin has demonstrated that alcohol has virtually the same effect upon mind and strain.

## Whiskey Sans Spirit

A news item as appeared in the Dawn of 23rd May 1969 is given below :

"Whiskey Sans Spirit"

- i) London. May 22: The days when one can drown one's sorrows in alcohol might be numbered in Britain.
- ii) A group of Bristol University research workers claims to have discovered a way to take the alcohol out of the, alcoholic drinks without changing their taste in the slightest.
- iii) An Official organisation, the National Research Development Council, has agreed to finance further research in view of its interest in particular for motorists.
- iv) But not everyone feels the discovery is worthwhile, Medical Professor, Dr. Francis Camps who recently carried out a study on alcoholism, said on Monday that such research was a waste of public money. He said that if people drank alcoholic drinks it was not for the drink itself but for the alcohol it contained and its effects.
- v) He also pointed out that the state takes 95 per cent of the price of a bottle of whisky in tax to persuade people to stop drinking. It would be to those a very profitable source of revenue."

## A Psychological Truism

It is a psychological truism that any habit which affects the workers ability to judge quickly and accurately, or by which the faculties of sight, hearing and touch are affected, greatly increases the liability to accidents a mangled leg, a smashed hand, a cut finger or worse.

Now it has been scientifically established that alcohol has effects even in the most moderate doses. It has a decidedly baneful influence on the faculties of sight, hearing and touch. The judgments by eye measurements are vitiated by alcohol. So is hearing rendered less acute. Such impairment of the sense organs makes the worker less alert to respond instantly to a danger signal, while increasing the brute tendency to disregard the safety of others.

## Drinkers Cause Accidents

"The margin of safety in modern industry is small. It is measured too frequently by fractions of an inch. Reduce the alertness and the exactness with which the body responds to the necessities of labour, and by so much you have increased the liability that the hand will be misplaced that fraction that means mutilation". (U.S. Senate Document No. 645, Vol. XI.)

A pamphlet issued by the Fidelity and casualty company, serves the following stern warning: No man under the influence of alcohol even slightly should be permitted to remain in the works, much less to work. Nor should a man whose nerves have been rendered unsteady by the habitual use of alcohol or by a recent debauch be permitted to operate machinery or to carry on any dangerous work. He endangers not only his own life, but the lives of others.

The Aetna Life Insurance company on the basis of their experience in the fields of accidents and fatalities in the industrial sector have issued the following valuable piece of advice of the industrialists.

It is advisable not to employ or to continue in employment men who are known to be steady and hard drinkers. The regular use of intoxicants in any quantity is bound in time to make a workman undesirable as regards both his liability to cause accidents, and his efficiency.

It has already been shown that there is practically no line of demarcation between the individual who has succumbed to insanity as a result of mental or physical disease and the one who loses his sanity under the intoxicating influence of alcohol, temporarily for a few hours or for longer periods as a sufferer from the dread disease "delirium tremens" which is translated "Drinker's Mama", what it actually is.

The inmate of the mental asylum, in fact, is more fortunate and less pitiable than the person who has deliberately courted insanity by way of an escape from reality through the self destruction channels of alcoholic stupefaction. Both get out of touch with reality. The former however, is excusable as having been the victim of circumstances chiefly beyond his control.

The latter, on the other hand, has purposely repudiated the superb grandeur of life gifted to him by the Infinite Bounty of the Supreme Sovereign – by an abominable act of ingratitude for the most magnificent favour–Life as the most splendid product of all Creation. Surely his suffering is self–inflicted and as such a very heinous crime against himself and against Society, on whom he would foist a drinker's progeny.

All professional men agree that a sizeable proportion of the inmates of mental asylums comprise men

who have been driven to that fate through the pressure of alcohol on their mental faculties. As to what exactly is the percentage of such victims in the asylum, authorities differ. Dr. F. W. Terflinger's estimate puts the percentage at 20, on the basis of his direct experience as medical superintendent of the Northern Hospital for the Insane, while Dr. William G. McAllister, Superintendent of the Philadelphia Hospital, asserts that 30 per cent of the inmates in the insane wards of the Philadelphia Municipal Hospital are insane because of drink.

Dr. Joseph Wigglesworth of England testifying before the Interdepartmental committee on Physical Deterioration puts this figure of alcoholic insanity at 29 per cent. All of these investigators agree that the damage done to the mental faculties is much greater than is indicated by these figures which express only a partial facet of the alcoholic picture.

One eminent authority on Temperance, has sounded a note of warning to the American people in these words; "In nearly every state the expenses of caring for the insane is mounting rapidly due to a growing social conscience, but in view of the fact that such a small proportion of our mental defectives are now sheltered, the question of checking the increase of insanity is pressing. We are in great danger of not being able to stand the burden if it increases as rapidly as it has in the last ten years."

## **Alcohol is Simply the Hub of a Vicious Wheel**

It must be remembered, that alcohol is simply the hub of a vicious wheel. In the words of Dr. C. Kallick Millard, medical officer of health for Leicester, England, "Indulgence in alcohol tends to inefficiency; inefficiency tends to low wages and irregular employment; low wages encourage bad housing and bad environment generally; bad environment encourages further indulgency in alcohol."

## **Feeble Mindedness**

A commission, appointed to investigate feeble mindedness in new Jersey (U.S.A.) reports that "moderate drinking, so-called, is the cause of a great majority of the epileptic, feeble-minded and sub-normal children in that State.

The historical study in this subject of investigation of the causes of feeble-mindedness and mental deficiency, conducted very painstakingly by Dr. Henry Herbert Goddard, Director of the Training School of Vineland, N. J. forms a running commentary on the effects of alcohol on mental faculties through several generations.

Under the title "The Kallikak Family" he has traced the story of that family through six generations to a soldier, named Martin Kallikak, who himself had four honourable generations behind him.

This soldier, probably under the influence of drink, raped the honour of a feeble minded girl. From his legitimate wife he fathered six generations of doctors, lawyers, judges, educators, traders, land holders,

with only 1 insane, only 15 children who died in infancy, none feeble-minded.

From his other illegitimate sexual union, the six generations comprising 480 individuals, the study discloses 143 feeble minded, with only 46 known to be normal 36 illegitimates, 33 prostitutes, 3 epileptics, 3 criminals 8 keepers of disreputable houses, with a large number of dying in infancy.

Alcohol runs throughout the illegitimate line like a red streak. We have such obnoxious phrases for most of them as "Alcohol is prevalent in the family." An alcoholic, had three feeble-minded grand-parents"; Confirmed alcoholic", "Feeble-minded and alcoholic", "Alcoholic and Syphilitic woman", Seven children, two alcoholics and immoral, one died of delirium tremens, others all alcoholics, leaving long line of descendents".

Here is food for serious thought. A single indiscretion on the part of a hitherto respectable citizen leads Society with untold loathsome material, the burden of the misdemeanours of each generation piling up with ever cumulative effect, till Doomsday.

According to the Russian Paper 'Pravda' as quoted in the 'Millat' dated 2-4-1969 Alcohol is responsible for more than half of unnatural deaths, for 40 % of the Divorces, for 85% of deaths due to fights, for 63 % of deaths through drowning and for 98% of deaths through murder. Further according to Pravda several Anti-Liquor Institutions are themselves conniving the evil of drunkenness and many of the officials of the Institutions are themselves addicted to the vice of drinking. The solutions suggested by Pravda are the stoppage of wholesale of Liquor in Public and the drinkers should not be allowed to move out in streets.

## Crime and Indecency

Another study in this field will bear brief mention. It is the story of Max Jukes of New York –a drunkard– whose descendants covered almost all fields of crime and indecency. 1200 of them were proved during the study period to be occupying penal and charitable institutions.

They cost Society \$1200,000, without giving any service in return. 310 were in poor houses with a high infantile mortality, amounting to 25 percent of the child birth; 440 were viciously diseased; 400 were physically wrecked at an early age because of their own misdoings; 50 were notorious women; 7 were murderers; 60 were habitual thieves; 130 were convicted for miscellaneous crimes.

With such a black record of alcohol, the question often asked is "why does not alcohol destroy the race which gives it such freedom of operation?"

The same question, however, can be posed in regard to other vices like indiscriminate sex relationships which are productive of the dread miasmas of syphilis and gonorrhoea. The reply given to the question by an American sage is as follows: Not the living but the dead are the evidence against alcohol as against syphilis.

These racial poisons are not merely poisonous but, as the eminent Dr. Sleeby remarks "are lethal". The race is being constantly degraded, but it is constantly being redeemed by better influences.

There is, no doubt an extra-ordinary resisting power on the part of the reproductive elements to alcohol as to other nocuous influences, but these elements are subject to degeneration by alcohol as is evidenced by the perversion of thought and conduct induced by its use in the individual.

Guinea pigs, dosed with constantly increasing quantities of poison have frequently offspring immune to a hundred times the dose that would be fatal to the untreated guinea pig, but these offspring's of poisoned parents are invariably dwarfed and possession of a vitality less resistant to other assaults "

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