

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DRUNKENNESS

Earle William Gage, in Power and Poise, says:

The condition known as drunkenness is produced by alcohol, and is an abnormal psychological state. Drunkenness is in many cases a vice, but with the large majority it is primarily a psychological disease, or a disease of the mind.

As a disease of the mind it is functional, and comprises three abnormal conditions: (1) a paralysis of the inhibitory power of the will; (2) a temporary amnesia; (3) a temporary affective and intellectual modification of the personality.

Drunkenness is a species of simple insanity; the drunkard is insane on one subject—drink. The mind of the drunkard is unbalanced, because he thinks nothing but whisky, and he cannot think anything else. He drinks whisky because he thinks whisky. Stop his thinking whisky, or change the current of his thoughts, and he will stop drinking it, and he never will stop drinking whisky until he stops thinking about it.

While the general effects of alcoholic liquors on individuals are various, they may be generalized under two heads: (1) being under the influence of liquor; (2) being drunk. A person is under the influence when he has taken one drink. The effect continues, if he keeps on drinking, until he is drunk.

A person may be drunk in two ways: (1) mentally (drunk in the head); (2) physically (drunk in the legs). A person is drunk mentally when his recollection is paralyzed, or when temporary amnesia ensues. He is drunk physically whenever muscular co-ordination is impaired, or whenever he experiences a paresis or partial paralysis of a group of muscles—generally those of the lower extremities. A person can be drunk physically and not mentally, and vice versa, or he can be drunk both physically and mentally at the same time.

The causes of drunkenness are: (a) direct and (b) indirect. There is only one direct cause—alcohol. The indirect causes are: (a) principal, (b) auxiliary.

The principal indirect causes are: (a) constitution, (b) depressed states of the system, (c) emotional state of the system, as joy.

The auxiliary causes are: (a) money, (b) customs of sociability, (c) association.

By constitution is meant that organization of a person which makes him susceptible or unsusceptible to the action of alcohol. It is a law that a poison acts with different effects, not only on animals of different genera and species, but also on individuals of the relative species.

Alcohol as a poison is not an exception to this law. Some persons are very susceptible to the power of alcohol, others quite to the opposite. As a general rule, periodical drunkards are most susceptible, one drink with the larger majority of them being sufficient to cause them to lose all control of themselves. In other words, one drink will totally paralyze the inhibitory power of their will.

A depressed state of the system is probably one of the most frequent of the auxiliary causes. Every person at times experiences a depression—a weakness. This depression is a circumstance which suggests stimulation or a desire for something that would brace up the entire system. A person who knows no remedy can think of none; but with the drinker it is entirely different, he knows a remedy. His depressed state of feeling is a circumstance which suggests his remedy, whisky, and he begins to think whisky, and he drinks whisky. When the effect of the whisky begins to die out, a renewed and increased depression occurs, and the remedy, whisky, is taken. The opposite auxiliary causes are so well renowned that they need no comment.

Drunkards are of two kinds, continuous and periodic. Other classes might be given, and they can be reduced to these two. The continuous is one who drinks to excess every time he has an opportunity. He is never sick from the effects of drinking. The periodic vacillates between two extremes. He is either a teetotaler or a drunkard. The periodic drinker, when once he starts to drink, never stops until sickness overtakes and overpowers him. His spree ends in a spell of sickness. It is this sickness that constitutes the different factions of periodic and continuous drinkers.

The sickness experienced by the periodic drinker is a circumstance sufficiently powerful to change the current of his thoughts, whisky. He has no other thoughts. Day and night, night and day, he thinks whisky, and drinks it. Sickness overtakes him, and now he thinks about recovery. This thought is far more powerful than that of drink. His mind is impressed in a different way. Through this impression the thought force is changed, and he stops drinking, and does not touch it until the next spree overtakes him. If, by chance, or from the increased resisting power of alcohol, the periodic drinker becomes only a very little sick, or scarcely sick, then the interim between the sprees

grows shorter and the sprees longer, until he finally drifts into a continuous drunkard. To this there is no exception.

The question may be asked: Why does the periodic drinker commence to drink, or what starts him to drink? This question is easily and plainly answered—psychologically: The periodic drunkard never stops drinking until a circumstance arises which is of sufficient power to cause him to stop thinking of drink. On the other hand, he will never commence to drink again until circumstances arise which cause him to think drink. This circumstance might be depression of the system, emotional excitement, such as joy, good feeling, possession of money, etc.

Whatever the circumstance, it is always of such a nature as to suggest stimulation, which suggests the thought of whisky, which prompts him to drink. Sometimes the circumstance may be of such minor importance to one on the outside as not to permit recognition. Again, the circumstances are oftentimes so trivial to the drinker himself that he hates to tell it for fear of being subjected to ridicule.

But whatever the circumstance, it is always sufficiently powerful to change the current of his thought, to think of whisky. The moment he begins to think whisky, then he has what he terms a desire for it, and the more intense the thought, the more the craving for liquor.

It should be distinctly understood that craving for whisky is in direct proportion to the thought. The thoughts are first, the craving afterward. At first the periodic drinker will, as he calls it, "fight it off for a day or two." This thinking whisky and fighting it off intensifies the thought of whisky, because he is thinking, not with a determination to annihilate the idea of whisky, but, but, sometimes unconsciously, and oftentimes consciously, of developing the thinking of whisky. He vacillates between thinking that a drink will do him good, and then again that it will be a menace to his health.

In his last stages he comes to the conclusion that a drink will do him no harm, because he will take only the one drink. The moment he reaches this last of the series of thoughts, he is lost, as he will soon take that "one" drink. Being very susceptible to the influence of alcohol that first drink performs the work of ruin. In less than five minutes after taking that first drink it has permeated every part of the system. An indescribable feeling of delight, of vigor, of joy, or a new life of energy, is experienced. Every cell in his body is possessed with a magic buoyancy, and he directly feels so brimful of exhilaration that he can hardly contain himself. At the same time the inhibitory power of the will suffers paralysis, and being now under the control of its impulsive power, he continues to drink, and before he conceives the fact he is drunk, in which state he will remain until sickness seizes him. Thereafter he is liquor's "bound-until-death" slave.

WIPING OUT SECTIONALISM.

Altoona's Grand Army men made a very effective and tactful comment upon Senator Gordon's already celebrated farewell speech, when they attended a Confederate veteran to his grave one day last week.

John Gains had fought under General Hill in the armies of the south, but, like Senator Gordon, he had lost whatever bitterness he may have felt in those days and had become a loyal citizen of the whole republic, anxious that former differences should be forgot and old wounds healed.

Most of the ex-rebels are that way now. You recall Colonel Gordon's homely way of expressing it in the Senate the other day:

I do want to bring about peace. I am an old Confederate; you are old veterans, perhaps. We disagreed, and you were the victors; but we still think our generals were good men and our people were good people; and we do not dispute that yours were just as good as ours. Our people down south are not quarrelling over these things at all. We have a few blabmouthed fellows that always want to make a fuss, but they are not even worth "cussing." So I will not use any invectives against them. We have them down south, but they are not my sort, and I have got more influence with the people than they have. I talk with them as I talk to you. I tell them the truth and the facts, and I tell them we have friends here.

Gains, too, felt that the Mason and Dixon line was an iniquitous fiction. Although he lived in the south, he was not ashamed that he had fought for his convictions in the south. He fought honestly, was fairly vanquished and freely forgave the victors. One of his ailing requests was that they should act as his pallbearers. Not only did the Grand Army veterans bear him to his last resting place, but the posts turned out as strongly as they would have done to one of their own dead.

As a matter of fact, Gains was one of them, for a soldier is a soldier, and an honorable war record long survives a dead cause.—Telegraph.

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WAR ON THE HOUSE FLY.

Concerted Attack to be Made by Government Entomologists.

A concerted country-wide attack is to be made on the house-fly this year, according to Dr. Howard, chief entomologist of the Department of Agriculture, who testified Thursday before a Government House committee at Washington.

When spring begins hundreds of scientists, aided by laborers, drugs and chemicals and mechanical "killers," will try to drive the household pest out of existence. Dr. Howard says the campaign will be opened in the country districts, and the department will issue a farmers' bulletin, giving advice as to the ills the flies are responsible for and how to eradicate them.

This country, according to Dr. Howard, is the only one of importance in the world that has made no effort to protect its orchards and crops by rigid quarantine at its ports. More than half of the 17 serious tree and vegetable parasites now costing the farmers many millions of dollars every year were brought in from other countries.

Dr. Howard urged the importance of legislation to protect the United States from the introduction of foreign insect and parasite pests entering with imported plants and nursery stock.

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The Bab.

"The Bab"—Mura al Mohammed—was born in Saraz, Persia, in the year 1820. He was trained at first to commercial life, but a pilgrimage to Mecca awakened in his heart the religious zeal which made him devote his life henceforth to developing the faith which he held. Upon his return to his native city, in 1844, he assumed the title of Bab, or "Gate" leading to the truth. In the eyes of the orthodox Mohammedans the tenets of the Bab were rank heresy, and he was taken to Tabriz and shot.

The Klondike Discovery.

The discovery of gold in the Klondike is said to have been made by a prospector named J. W. Carmack, who married a squaw and learned from the Indians that there were deposits of gold in the Klondike region. In August, 1896, he returned the story by taking out several hundred dollars' worth of gold in a few days by primitive methods.

Still Warm.

After watching a turkey slobber for some minutes, Tommy exclaimed: "Look, mamma, the old slobber has had his fan up for half an hour, and his face looks just as red as ever!"

New Thought.

As a man thinks in his heart so is he. Look on the sunny side, determine not to see shadows and make the best of everything and life will be one sweet song.

Habit Hard to Overcome.

Many people find it impossible to get over the habit of adulterating the truth which they use.

The Signature of Thomas Moore.

What is believed to be the only document containing the signature of Thomas Moore, the poet, in the New World, is in possession of Father J. Byrnes, of Bernallillo, New Mexico. It is a time-stained bit of hand-woven paper bearing the signature "Thos. Moore." The poet's signature is attached to a draft for £100 made in favor of Thomas and Hugh Moore, and drawn on "Adam Crampton, Merchant, London." The document is dated August 31, 1802. Although somewhat yellowed by time and although the quill pen has made two incisions into the paper, the draft is still in perfect condition and is one of the most interesting documents of its kind in existence, since the signature is particularly rare. Mr. Byrnes came into possession of the draft through a Silver City man, who had it in turn from John Marshall, who came to New Mexico many years ago to settle in Silver City, and who had the draft from its original holder, that is, "Adam Crampton, Merchant," of London. The draft bears, it is believed, one of the three genuine signatures of the poet held in the United States.—Irish World.

Steam Up.

A train of thought won't do you much good unless you get up enough steam to carry it through.—New York Times

A Cynicism.

Woman's most valuable asset is—the imagination of man.—London Truth.

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