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THE PHILOSOPHY OF DRUNKENNESS, AND ITS CURE.

BY JAMES C. JACKSON, M. D.

I have never known a person who habitually used ardent spirits, whether as a beverage or medicine, no matter what the form of the mixture, whether distilled, fermented or brewed, *who was not an inordinate eater*. Gluttony is a condition precedent to drunkenness, insomuch that it is questionable whether a human being ever became habitually inebriate where habitual over-eating did not first exist. If this statement be true, —and in the case of no moderate drinker nor confirmed drunkard, have I ever found an exception,—then it presents to the friends of Temperance, matter for serious consideration. In this connection I offer a few facts:

I. As far back as we have credible tradition or history of the dietetic and drinking habits of mankind, we find *that their first use of and dependence on stimulants begin in connection with food*. They either *eat or drink* at meals, substances

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which, aside from the nutriment contained in them, are either irritants to the blood or exaltants to the Nervous System, and so excite the heart's action, thus producing unnatural evolution of vitality, and slowly though surely establishing a habit of body, whereby vigor is to be had only when the blood is charged with them and the nervous system affected thereby.

It matters not how or by what means the human system comes to be habituated to the presence of such substances in the blood, nor what these substances may be. They may be pepper eaten at ordinary meals and black or green tea or coffee drunk at the same time, or they may be some drug or drugs administered as medicine by a Physician. If their effect is to make the Nervous System of the person using them dependent for exhibition of energy on their presence in his blood, the process of making him a *drunkard* is begun. Of course as in different persons different collateral influences exist, in one aiding, in another, retarding the development of that condition of the Nervous System where overpowering sense of need of something other than nutriment is felt in order to enable them to show vigor or strength, so, under the use of table foods and beverages whose effects on those who eat and drink them are, independently of their nutritive properties, to excite them and make them feel strong, will such persons show difference in rapidity of development of morbid appetite for stimulants. One child, thus fed and Beveraged, may, because of concurring circumstances, rapidly bring forward an appetite for stimulants, so that in youthhood high-seasoned foods and nervine drinks like Tea and Coffee will not answer to the wants of his nerves and muscles. If so, he passes on and takes to wine and beer, and from those to brandy, whiskey, gin and rum; while another boy, because of opposing circumstances makes passage slowly, and perhaps never reaches the Drunkard's degradation. Be this as it may, if the circumstances which checked the growth

of appetite in him were not of *his* creation, there are no thanks to be given to him for his living and dying a sober man. His dietetic habits were favorable to the development of an appetite for strong drink, but counteracting influences held it in check. Where, in childhood, excitants like the flesh of fattened animals are used daily for food, and irritants like pepper, allspice, mustard, cinnamon and cloves are also used, and nervines like tea and coffee are also used, it may be considered as absolutely certain that with advancing years the person, thus accustomed to these things, will feel the need of *stimulants*. Sometimes where the nervines used at table do not overcome the effect of the excitants and irritants also used, the subject will take to the use of narcotics, such as tobacco, for a while, before resorting to stimulants. This will depend mainly on the temperament of the party—other things being equal. A person of sanguine nervous temperament will usually take to tobacco, and if he can get the consent of a physician, to anodynes, before he goes to the use of alcoholic beverages or alcoholic medications, while a person of bilious or lymphatic temperament will give them all the go-by and at once resort to stimulants. Ultimately it makes no difference, for persons who halt a little to use narcotics are none the less certain to use stimulants than are those who go from their table beverages and irritant foods directly to the use of stimulants. It is a grist which, sooner or later, all comes to the same hopper.

II. It is noteworthy how in this direction the law of development of appetite for stimulants takes place.

(a) Excitants—flesh of animals. Our children, as soon as weaned, are permitted to use animal food

(b) Irritants—Along with flesh they are allowed to use spices.

(c) Nervines—They generally use tea or coffee, though their parents apologize therefor that they do not use it *strong*. Why they might not be permitted to do so is not obvious, if there is nothing hurtful in it.

(d) Narcotics—Tobacco and Drug anodynes. I never knew a person who drank no tea or coffee, nor used any spices nor flesh meats, nor drug medicines, who used tobacco.

(e) Stimulants.—These come *last*, as if it were that in order to their use at all, previous preparations are needful, which in most instances, I think, is true. If it be so, if in order to addict one to the habitual daily use of ardent spirits in some form, a dietetic education must be had before any liquor is drunk, whereby the Nervous System has to become *abnormal*, then it is not very difficult to get a glimpse at least of the greatness of the work which the friends of temperance have before them in order to induce the people of the United States to become totally abstinent from its use. For myself devoted to the Temperance cause as I have been for forty years, and pledged to disuse alcohol in all its forms, and to discourage its use in others, and to work heartily and lovingly with others on the present platform, I confess to no hope or expectation of great, general, lasting good to the people of the Republic through their abandonment of the use of intoxicating drinks, while their present dietetic habits remain. They are victims to the curse—not martyrs to it. From the dawn of intelligence they are miseducated, from the awaking of conscious appetite they are badly and perversely trained. In this course of false education and perverse training Temperance men and women bear an active part. Like the rest of the people they teach, and in their personal lives they illustrate their teachings.

1st. *That Stimulants are needful for the preservation of health*, and,

2d. *That they are essential to the restoration of health.*

Temperance Doctors and Liquor Doctors alike teach these falsities.

Temperance Ministers and Liquor Ministers alike teach them.

Temperance Lecturers and Liquor-dealing Lecturers alike advocate them.

Temperance Mechanics and Liquor Mechanics, Temperance Teachers and Teachers who drink, Temperance Students and Drinking Students, alike agree with respect to them.

Temperance mothers who nurse and liquor-drinking nursing mothers both agree as to the need of the use of stimulants, which are innutrient—having in them no constituents out of which blood can be made.

How then can it be hoped or expected that abstinence from alcoholic drinks will be accepted as the true philosophy of life for them by any large proportion of our people? The question becomes too narrow for their understanding. Admitted that stimulants—substances that arouse the heart's action, excite the brain and create a present sense of strength, while they add nothing to the pabulum of the blood—are necessary both to preserve health and sustain it, it puzzles *them* to see why such a war should be waged against alcoholic stimulants? These are most highly recommended by the doctors when folks are sick, are unhesitatingly used by temperance people if *Doctors prescribe* them, are sipped with consciences void of offence by temperance folks who are pious when they go to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and are more certain in their effects and easy of obtainment than any other stimulants in use with our people. Since stimulants are necessary to keep one in good health, and to aid him in getting it back when he has lost it, why not admit that *Alcoholic* stimulants are good *means* of

perly used, and so set up a war waging against their abuse. To this view of the case the temperance man I understand has but one reply, to wit :—that the moderate use runs into immoderate use by stages so easy and unobservable that the subject gets to be a *victim* to his appetite without knowing it till his self-control is lost. This reply, I think, is conclusive as far as it goes, but is incomplete. What has the temperance man to say to *this* inquiry? If drunkenness is the product of moderate drinking of ardent spirits, or of brewed or fermented liquors, and moderate drinking is created under the use of tobacco and drug narcotics, and the use of these is aided by the use of the tea and coffee, and these are used under desire created by the use of animal food and vegetable spices, how can he who uses all of these himself and advocates their use by others, both well and sick, though he abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages, expect to see the day, or to have his descendants see it, when drunkenness will not exist? It seems to me the achievement is a Sisyphean labor,—the doing of a work that has constantly to be repeated, and so is never done. As the masses of men live from habit rather than by reason, and as healthy men often form habits whose evil influence on them they do not consider till it becomes difficult to overcome them, how is it to be supposed that asking them to abstain from indulgence in the use of alcoholic liquors is likely to be successful, so long as they believe that stimulants are necessary for their health, and spirituous liquors present the kinds they like best? I feel sure it will never be done. It is now over forty years since the first temperance society was organized involving the disuse of distilled and fermented liquors. A great many persons have been saved from drunkards' graves by the labor of temperance men and women; nevertheless there is as much liquor drunk in the United States to-day in proportion to the whole population as at any previous period.

This fact shows that we save individuals, but do not permanently affect the national sentiment. We settle nothing scientifically. We determine nothing morally. A mathematician settles principles for all mankind forever, when he *once* has settled them. A metaphysician pronounces upon the moral nature of certain ideas, and stamps conviction of the correctness of his conclusions on the minds of all persons who are informed what they are. An astronomer fixes the laws of motion of the planets, and no doubt is henceforth shown. But the advocate of total abstinence from the use of alcoholic drinks *settles* nothing definitely. He induces persons who drink to stop drinking, and for this thanks are due to him; but this does not reach the evil, for while he is inducing persons to stop its use, other persons are learning to use it, and so it turns out that while twenty years ago we had 30,000 drunkards die annually out of the 300,000 then living, we now have 60,000 die annually out of the 600,000 now living. We gain nothing in the way of prevention. We only succeed in a measure in the way of reclamation, and notwithstanding all our efforts, more persons take to drinking as they pass from childhood into manhood than are reclaimed therefrom after the habit of drinking is formed.

I believe there is a better way than the one pursued of fighting this demon, drunkenness. It is not simply to fight Alcohol, but to fight all his subordinates—to carry the war, not only against distilled, fermented and brewed liquors used by our people as beverages, because of *their stimulating qualities*, but also against all those adjunctive substances whose direct and marked effect, when eaten or drunken, is to create an appetite for these liquors. The best way to cure the drunkard is to see to it that he never becomes one, and the best way to do this is to keep him from having an appetite or desire or feeling of need of stimulants. To do this, take care that he eats nu-

trient and unstimulating foods while young and always thereafter, and drinks no tea nor coffee, chews and smokes no tobacco, and takes no narcotic drugs, nor stimulating medicines when sick, and he will never die a drunkard, for he will have no appetite for liquor, nor can any one induce him to form one. Drunkenness is a *disease*, always secondary, and easily managed under right circumstances. It never originates in the use alone of alcoholic liquors, nor can it be kept alive by their use alone. Other things are necessary. True, alcohol produces the inebriety witnessable in the most advanced cases, but it is not at all necessary that a person should become *intoxicated*, in order that he shall become a drunkard and be justly characterized as such. There are different degrees of drunkenness as there are of other diseases. I have seen many a man just as thoroughly drunk, in view of scientific philosophy, who never staggered nor became unable to take care of himself, when to do so was *all* that was required of him, as he would have been, had he been unable to walk, or talk anything but the most unmeaning gibberish. For nothing is necessary in the view of science to make a man a *confirmed* drunkard, but to have him become so addicted to the use of stimulants or narcotics, or both, that his nervous system refuses to act naturally, or in other words, healthfully, unless such stimulant or narcotic is present at stated periods in his circulation. He has then gotten where his nervous system does not depend for the certainty or the vigor of its action upon the upbuilding and sustaining constituents of his blood, but upon some extrinsic matter introduced into his blood, so it cannot act naturally, but must act abnormally; and what a man's nervous system is, he is, while he has a body. Make his brain diseased, and his mind is diseased; make his solar plexus diseased, and his soul is diseased; make both brain and solar plexus diseased, and both mind and soul are diseased. The man is not master of himself; he is

not self-possessed; he is intoxicated,—drunk—though he may be able to walk without a single rotary or gyratory motion. For what matters it so far as total abstinence is concerned, whether a man who *cannot* forego his daily drams, staggers or walks straight. In many instances the drinker of liquor is more socially intolerable this side of insensibility than when in that state. I have known many women who have begged keepers of drunkeries never to let their husbands have liquor unless they would give them enough to make them beastly stupid. The thing to be contended against is the uncontrollable desire for liquor, not the stupidity which is frequently the consequence of over-indulgence. Once let a man form the habit of drinking, till he cannot perform business, nor fulfil social duties, nor command personal resources of knowledge and of thought without he is *stimulated*, and all who love him and have an interest in him, may count him as a drunkard; for he is one, whoever may say nay. To prove it, take his liquor from him, and watch his reactions. For the law of demonstration as to the degree of morbid force which liquor-drinking has acquired over a man, is to be seen in the *reactionary* conditions it creates. These are made evident under suddenly imposed total abstinence therefrom. Take his stimulants away from him, and then see what sort of man he is. Is he confused in thought and passionate in feeling? Is he morose, unsocial, fault-finding, quarrelsome? Is he suspicious, jealous, distrustful? Is he nervous, disquiet, forgetful? Has he no appetite for food, loathing water, sick at the stomach, having headache, with pain in his bones, and shivering with tremors or rigors? Is he sleepless and perturbed in imagination, having double vision, his eyes half-bloodshot? The demon has got him body and soul, though when under the influence of his daily draughts of the deadly poison he may be very smooth and suave, polite and full of genius, brilliant and agreeable.

His steps take hold on hell, and there is poor prospect that any appeals made to his moral sense will ever be of avail to induce him to sign a pledge and *keep it*, that do not involve him in an intelligent resolve to alter the general habits of his daily life. Such a man, all such men, can be made to quit the use of a'coholic drinks, but not simply and surely by a *resolution* not to drink any more. If made, they may break it, and knowing that they may not keep it, they refuse often to make it. This it is which renders it so hard work to get persons to sign the pledge. They have been made to believe that stimulants do them good, they know they *feel* better when they use them and worse when they disuse them, and many of them feel that they cannot get on at all without them; and so appeals to quit their use fall on adder's ears which will not hear, charm one ever so wisely. To cure them one must go to the seat of the disease, and this is *not in the brain*, nor in the faculties resident there, but in the nerves *back of the stomach*. Treat the man morally only so far as to induce him to let you treat him pathologically and therapeutically, and you will save him. Nine hundred and ninety-nine street drunkards in every thousand having individual vigor enough to stand the vital reactions needful to make them sober, can be restored to usefulness by a process as simple as it is magnificent. This process is to control their food and table drinks. Make any man eat rightly at table, and induce him to forego the use of all condiments, of tobacco, and drugs, and he can no more remain a liquor drunkard than he could become one under like conditions. Given vitality whereby to get well, the law curative is as efficient as the law preservative. No living man ever saw a drunken man made so by voluntary use of alcoholic liquors, who never ate flesh meat, nor spices, nor salt, nor animal oils, nor drank tea nor coffee, nor used tobacco, nor narcotic medica-

ments. Nor will such a man ever be seen, for the thing is *pathologically impossible*. To prevent drunkenness, control the food and table beverages, condiments and drug medicaments of the sober. To cure it, do the same thing. Drunkenness begins at the domestic table and ends in a public grog-shop. To close the grog-shop, take care of the table at home. Take any drunkard and deprive him of *all food*, but let him have liquor to his utmost desire, and if he does not break his neck, or cut his throat, or die by extreme exposure, he will, in the course of four or five days, begin to clamor for food. Tell him liquor is his food, and offer him some and he will refuse it. How true nature is to him in his degradation. She never forgets him, nor turns her back upon him in contempt. She lifts his instincts on to the throne, and for the time makes them supreme. He wants food. Give him none and he will die before he will drink again. Give him all he wants to eat, and he will be dead drunk in three hours after it. I have had many a drunkard whom I have saved, tell me what horrible disgust against liquor he had when, after a drunken debauch, the sense of hunger returned. He would have given all the liquor in the whole universe then for food enough to satisfy his hunger. Then I had him under my handling, by God's own appointment, and, by keeping him half-starved for weeks, kept down in him the desire for drink. True, I had to watch against Delirium Tremens, but I managed that by giving him farinaceous food only and toning the nervous system by baths. If then it is feasible to make an Inebriate a sober man by so caring for his general habits as to awaken in him a dislike for alcoholic drinks, and then of his own instinctive desire induce him to abstain therefrom, how much easier it might be so to train the young to simplicity of appetite as to insure them against becoming victims of intemperance.

If I am right then, drunkenness is to be characterized as a disease, and can be successfully treated only on that basis. To this view is to be added the correlative view, that persons who are moderate drinkers, never showing any inebriety, are sure to go ultimately to the condition and level of the drunkard, unless they cease to use spirituous liquors. For, to use spirituous liquors is sooner or later to inflame the coats of the stomach and the nerves of the solar plexus, and to the degree that this takes place is he who uses such drinks sure to have a morbid appetite therefor, and thus to increase in their use, in his dependence on their use, and in the natural and legitimate results following their use. It is, therefore, an unsafe thing for any man to use ardent spirits habitually, because the natural tendency under such use is to create diseased conditions of the stomach and its nerves, and so create a morbid appetite for them,—which appetite, when a sufficiently inflamed state of the nerves comes to exist, the drinker can in no wise control while this inflamed state continues to exist. Then, drink becomes an inexorable necessity; then, nothing can save the man but to put him where he cannot get liquor, or to reduce the inflammation of the nervous system, and of the coats of the stomach. Inasmuch as the moderate drinker, to the degree that the Solar Plexus is irritated or inflamed, will seek to drink as persistently as the drunkard, and therefore, will ultimately become a drunkard, because the more he drinks the greater will be the inflammation of the nerves affected thereby, and the greater the inflammation the greater the desire to drink, therefore there is no other thing for the cure of intemperance but total abstinence; and this total abstinence can seldom be induced by any abstract appeal made to the moral sense.

Had the men and women of forty years since known this great truth, and set going a class of machinery or system of

arrangements, the primary and essential effects of which should have been to make drunkards *so live in all directions* as to lessen the inflammation of the system of nerves alluded to, drunkards in great numbers might have been saved; and moderate drinkers, who since then have become drunkards by the million, and have gone down to drunkards' graves, might have been kept sober, and remained to the day of their death useful men and women. Philosophically considered, therefore, I am opposed to the use of ardent spirits habitually, either as a beverage or a medicine, for the reason that its direct and most powerful effect is upon the organic nervous system, instead of, as is generally supposed, upon the cerebro-nervous system or brain. True, the circulation readily absorbs alcohol into itself directly, it is taken into the stomach, and so the brain is affected by its presence in the blood which passes through it; but that is but a temporary effect. The brain soon becomes accustomed thereto, and as a great nervous mass representing large measure of Vital Power, adjusts itself to this new condition, and after a while is much less affected than at first by the presence of the same quantity of alcohol in the blood. An old habitue at the dram-cup keeps intellectual and physical equipoise (as far as the latter is dependent upon the action of the brain) much better than at first, though the quantity of liquor drunken and taken into the circulation be much larger than at first. But his Organic Nervous system never becomes adjusted to it. From the outset it revolts at the presence of this poison, and grows more and more sensitive to the effects produced by its introduction into the circulation. Such is the difference in the effects of alcohol on the Brain-Nervous system, and on the Organic or Nutritive-Nervous system. Every dram drunk, tends to congestion of the nutritive blood-vessels, and to the irritation of the nutritive nerves, until, at length, irritation becomes inflammation of the nerves. and by means of their

reflex action, morbid, or sickly, or uncontrollable desire to drink takes possession of the drinker. From that time he goes rapidly to a drunkard's degradation. Now my criticism on the means used to check intemperance and to promote temperance, makes its significance and true bearing at this very point. Temperance advocates have sought, in the main, to induce drinkers to abstain from drinking, by appeals chiefly addressed to their intelligence and moral sense, whereas their efforts should have been chiefly directed to *alterations in the conditions of living of drinkers*. To bring about such change in the condition of their living as would have been necessary, appeals to their intelligence and moral sense could have been made with entire propriety, and doubtless with very great success; because then the reason and moral sense of the drinker would have had a positive and clearly defined object before them, and could have directed his consciousness in view of that object. But, as the case has stood, the man has been left to abate his appetite for strong drink from moral considerations *alone*, while his general condition of living has been entirely auxiliary to indulgence in strong drink. He has not been made to feel that drunkenness or love of strong drink (if he had arrived at the point where it could be said that he *did love* it) was dependent upon the pathological condition of his organic nervous system, but he has been led to suppose that his determination to drink grew out of moral obliquity, or what may be termed a deadened moral sense, and that he was bound to rouse himself up by an effort of his will, and break away from his indulgence under a sense of moral obligation, pure and simple. To do this, under the circumstances in which temperance men left him, has been found in a great many instances to be impossible, not only with the man already a drunkard, but with those men who at the time were not drunkards; and so the result is that they who were already drunkards, in the main have died

as drunkards, and many of those who were moderate drinkers, have since become drunkards, and bid fair, like their predecessors, to die such.

The hygienic philosophy of treating disease, deals with the whole question of drunkenness, as respects its cause and cure, from an entirely different angle of observation and of thought. Starting out with the statement that drunkenness is the result of a diseased state of the organic nervous system, and that moderate drinking is directly calculated to produce such a diseased state of that nervous system, and therefore legitimately influential in the production of drunkenness, its advocates propose to put an entire stop to drunkenness, by inducing those who drink, whether to intoxication or not, to be treated either as having a disease, or as having the incipient conditions out of which the disease will ultimately grow. In treating the drinker of spirituous liquors from the point of his essential morbid conditions, they do not propose to relieve him from his moral responsibility, but they do propose to change the point at which that moral responsibility arises and rests.

In the consideration of this subject I have therefore said that the general conditions of living of the drunkard, or of the moderate drinker, must be essentially changed from what they are at present in this country, or else, drunkenness not only cannot be overcome, but will, in spite of all efforts of good men and women to the contrary, increase in a much larger ratio than the increase of population. In support of this view I present the following reasons:

First. In the production of such a condition of the organic nerves as induces an appetite for strong drink, which ultimately becomes morbid, and, therefore, unmanageable, other morbid agents, when used, have a very powerful influence. Of these I may name, first, the use of narcotics given as medicines, and,

of these narcotics, none stands more prominent than opium in its various forms of preparation. One can hardly conceive, much less describe, the powerful reactionary tendency awakened in the conscious appetite of persons to use diffusible stimulants, when such persons have previously taken narcotics, whose legitimate effects are powerfully sedative or depressant. Stimulants and narcotics, or any other forms of excitants and depressants, stand over against each other. He who uses one, in such degree as to produce lasting effects on his organic nervous system, will find in himself a strong instinctive desire to relieve himself from those effects by the use of the other. An opium-eater will always be found, when his opium is taken away from him for a length of time enough to set up a nervous reaction, to desire diffusible stimulants; and physicians, if a man has taken opium to such a degree as to produce a partially comatose state of the brain, find their remedy in the use of stimulants. These, then, become the great re-agents. A man who has used diffusible stimulants, like alcoholic liquors, until his system has come to be accustomed to, and therefore dependent upon their use, for a certain measure of accommodated power, and is deprived of his customary indulgence long enough to have reaction set up, will call for something that shall affect him sedatively, or in some extreme cases, depressantly. Now, he who eats opium (and it matters not a whit that he does so ~~by~~ the order of his physician) until he becomes accustomed to it, will either go until he becomes narcotically drunk, or if you take it away from him, will turn round and drink liquors until he becomes stimulatingly drunk. A great many persons, therefore, have been made drunkards by reason of opiate medication. But where one man in this country has been led to the use of ardent spirits, and ultimately, therefore, has been made a drunkard from *the use of opium given to him as a medicine*, ten hundred have been made drunkards by the use of tobacco

As a predisposer to the use of alcoholic liquors and a provoker to their use to the degree of inebriety, the use of tobacco stands pre-eminent among the list of depressent poisons. So intimate is the connection, in this direction, between the depressing effects on the organic nervous system of the habitual user of tobacco, and the establishment of the habit of drinking alcoholic liquors, till morbid appetite is created, and drunkenness ensues, that it is very difficult to find a drinker of ardent spirits, who does not use tobacco, and almost as difficult to find a man who uses alcoholic liquors, who did not *first* use tobacco. To take up the question of putting a stop to the tide of intemperance arising from intoxicating drinks, and labor to induce men to abandon it entirely, while they are in the constant use of narcotic and depressant poisons like opium, and especially like tobacco, is the most chimerical project ever set on foot and conducted by sound, sensible, far-seeing, right-judging men and women. Give me the right to induce persons of all ages and sexes to use tobacco, and I will agree to make drunkards very much faster than all the temperance societies in this country can reclaim them. Give me the right to induce children to use tobacco, and I will make more drunkards out of the number thus induced than all the sabbath-schools in this country can keep sober.

The true basis, then, of the Temperance Reformation, is that of obedience to the laws of life and health. Once place a man there, and keep him there, or if he is not competent to place himself there, and keep himself there, put him into an inebriate asylum; treat him as you would a man smitten with the Small Pox, whom it is proper and right to restrain against any turbulence of will he may show, bring his organic nerves out of their inflamed condition, and release his sensorium from what is sympathetic therewith, and the man's consciousness will return to him, the desire for strong drink will die out of him,

and, if he will live rightly thereafter in this respect, he never will drink, nor have any desire to drink, and will be just as much safer than he would be under habits of living now common to our people if he were to sign fifty temperance pledges, as one can think. There is no man, or woman, or child, in this country, who exhibits our theory of life in his habits, methods, and manner of living, who has any disposition to be a drunkard, or who is in any danger of becoming one