

Smoking and chewing tobacco : the evils resulting therefrom a word of counsel to those who have not acquired the habit, and a warning to those who have / by the Secretary of the South-street Wesleyan Sunday School, Camberwell.

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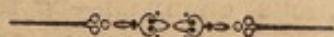
SMOKING AND CHEWING

TOBACCO:

THE EVILS RESULTING THEREFROM.

A WORD OF COUNSEL TO THOSE WHO HAVE
NOT ACQUIRED THE HABIT,
AND A WARNING TO THOSE WHO HAVE.

By the Secretary of the South-street Wesleyan Sunday School, Camberwell.



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SMOKING AND CHEWING TOBACCO :

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WHEN an individual has acquired the habit of using narcotics it is almost useless to attempt to show him the evils of the course he is pursuing, for so great is the hold they take upon a person that once having created the appetite for them, it requires the greatest amount of moral courage to abstain from gratifying it. There is, therefore, more prospect of success in giving a word of warning to those who have not acquired the habit, and enumerating some of the evils attending it. Let us commence by asking the question, Is Tobacco conducive to the health of man? Does it increase his strength, assist him in his work, give him increased capabilities of endurance, or add to his length of life and happiness? The peculiar effects of Tobacco are due to the action of the essential oil of Tobacco in the case of chewing and snuffing, and to that combined with the empyreumatic oil in smoking. Nicotine, as this essential principle is called, is so deadly an alkaloid, that the amount of it contained in one cigar, if extracted and administered in a pure state, would suffice to kill two men. According to the experiments of Vohl and Eulenberg, the nicotine is decomposed in the process of smoking into pyridine, picoline, and other poisonous alkaloids, which can also be obtained in varying quantities by the destructive distillation of other vegetable substances. Nicotine, as for convenience we may continue to call the poisonous principles of tobacco, can enter the body through various channels—by the stomach, by the lungs, by subcutaneous injection, and by the skin itself. But in whatever manner it enters the human system, its effects are, in the main, uniform. The most immediately noticeable symptom following smoking is the undue acceleration of the labouring forces of the heart. Under the stimulus of tobacco the heart beats more quickly, as is evidenced by the rising pulse. To show the action of tobacco upon the heart Dr. Edward Smith, in the year 1864, made a number of experiments, one of which we give as follows:—Pulsation before smoking was $74\frac{1}{2}$ per minute. Smoking six minutes—79, 77, 80, 78, 78, 77 per minute = 78.1 average. Smoking seven



minutes—83, 87, 88, 94, 98, 102, 102 per minute = 93.4 average. Smoking eight minutes—105, 105, 104, 105, 105, 107, 107, 110 per minute = 106 average. After smoking eleven minutes—112, 108, 107, 101, 101, 100, 100, 100, 98, and 91. There was thus a maximum increase of $37\frac{1}{2}$ pulsations per minute. The heart, then, during the act of smoking was doing extra work ; in some of the experiments this additional labour amounting to more than 50 per cent. The effect upon the heart is not caused by direct action upon that organ, but by paralysing the minute vessels which form the batteries of the nervous system. Thus paralysed, they can no longer offer effectual resistance, and the heart, freed from their control, increases the rapidity of its strokes, expanding the vessels, with an apparent accession, but real waste, of force. Its effect in lowering the animal temperature is very striking. When the walls of the blood-vessels are distended with that fluid, the increase in volume decreases the rapidity of the circulation and augments the local warmth. When the walls partially collapse, the circulation becomes quicker, but the heat diminishes. The heat, in fact, is transformed into motion. The poisonous effects of tobacco in large doses are too well known for denial, it is far more important to learn whether tobacco in the quantities daily consumed by its habitual users has a permanently injurious effect upon the human system. It quickly removes the bloom of health from the face, and gives it a pale and haggard look. We cannot pass along the streets without observing the pallid and sunken cheeks of both young and old men caused by this baneful habit. It is highly injurious to the salivary glands, producing dryness in the mouth, and also to the digestive organs, causing the user to spit out the saliva which he ought to swallow, and thereby producing flatulency. There is no doubt whatever that tobacco impairs the constitution, reduces the vigour of body and mind, causing lassitude and inertia, predisposes to disease, and hastens death. Let us here note that it is in no sense a necessary of life. Notwithstanding the vast consumption of it, it is only the minority that use it. The female sex, with very rare exceptions, abstain from this indulgence. If it is at all necessary or beneficial why is it that an entire sex avoids it? Surely woman, with her frailer body and more sensitive mind, stands in greater need of "soothing" and "refreshing." All men do not smoke, and the abstainers are not subject to any inconvenience, but the reverse, therefore we say it is not necessary. The use of tobacco by the young permanently injures the constitution, and what is perhaps worse creates a love for drink, which if not quickly checked, soon develops into a ruling passion. It is a canker-worm which is eating away the health and vitality of future generations. Some steps should be taken to check the

habit of smoking among the young. The habit acquires so great a hold upon the individual that even in sickness there is a craving for it, and the writer's grandfather on his death-bed had the pipe held in his mouth so that he might in some measure satisfy the desire for it—he being too weak to hold it himself. Difficulty of breathing, approaching asthma, has also been recorded. Blatin gives a case of a young officer whose asthma could be attributed to no other cause, and who was cured by simple abstinence and tonic medicines. Tobacco, acting upon the cardiac and pulmonary branches of the pneumogastric, is not likely to leave untouched its gastric terminations. In an animal under the influence of small doses of nicotine the gastric juice is secreted with increased rapidity, and the action of the walls of the stomach is more noticeable. With strong doses or long continued usage this secretion is very considerably diminished, and the peristaltic motion enfeebled. That is to say, the tobacco acts upon the pneumogastric, excites it in small, and paralyzes it in large, doses. The smoker takes his after-dinner pipe or cigar to aid digestion. Undoubtedly it excites the par vagum, increases the gastric secretion, and accelerates the peristaltic motion. Undoubtedly, also, this daily stimulation enfeebles the nerve, and digestion becomes more difficult. The swing back from the excitement causes a reaction, which only an increase in the doses can overcome. The nerve is partially paralysed. The appetite fails, nutrition is impeded, and dyspepsia is brought on. A military man of thirty-seven years fell into a consumption without any other affection antecedent or concomitant than distaste for food, and salivation. Dr. Roques, after various essays, learned that he was a great user of tobacco, which had led to a sort of chronic fluxion of the salivary glands, and an almost total cessation of the digestive functions, and consequently caused the feeble and consumptive state into which he had fallen. Gradual diminution and ultimate abandonment of tobacco led to a cure in about three months. The influence of tobacco upon vision is well known. One of the symptoms produced in acute nicotism is blindness, and chronic nicotism gives rise to similar affections. Thus Mackenzie found that patients afflicted with amaurosis were mostly lovers of tobacco in some form. Sichel found cases of complete amaurosis, which, incurable by other means, were easily conquered by cessation from the weed. Hutchinson found, out of thirty-seven patients, twenty-three were inveterate smokers. The observations of Wordsworth and others have so clearly established the fact that the continued excitement of the optic nerve by tobacco sometimes produces amaurosis, that it is now generally cited in text-books as one of the causes of that disease. Dr. Adam Clarke says, should all other arguments fail to produce a reformation in the

conduct of tobacco-consumers, there is one which is addressed to good-breeding and benevolence, which, for the sake of politeness and humanity, should prevail. Consider how disagreeable your custom is to those who do not follow it. An atmosphere of tobacco effluvia surrounds you whithersoever you go. Every article about you smells of it; your apartments, your clothes, and even your very breath. Nor is there a smell in nature more disagreeable than that of stale tobacco, arising in warm exhalations from the human body, rendered still more offensive by passing through the pores, and becoming strongly impregnated with that noxious matter which was before insensibly perspired. Consider what pain your friends may be put to in standing near you, in order to consult you on some important business, or to be improved by your conversation. Will you oblige them to pay so heavy a tax for the benefit of your advice, when it would have been more honourable to yourself, and comfortable to them, to have had that gratification in a less expensive way? I cannot help saying that I have often suffered a very painful nausea from the cause above assigned. One of the most saddening, if not one of the most disgusting sights we encounter in a walk through the streets of any of our great towns is that of boys, who have scarcely entered their teens, aping the vices or follies of their elders in smoking tobacco. It matters not whether it be a cheap and nasty "weed," a vulgar clay, or a pretentious mock meerschaum that disgraces the mouth of the youthful smoker, the habit is equally repulsive and equally injurious. Perhaps, indeed, the evil practice might be abated if people could only realize all the mischief to health and worldly usefulness that is attributable to the habit of smoking by boys. How few persons realize that the money spent on tobacco in this country would feed and shelter every poor family in the land; that thousands of finer organizations among men awaken in middle life to the consciousness that their brains are being gravely affected by the use of tobacco, only to struggle in vain against its fetters; that, directly and indirectly, tobacco hastens the death of large numbers of persons every year. With these facts in view, parents should remember that the habitual use of tobacco has reached down to mere boys, many of whom strut the streets with cigars in their mouths, while others think it manly to have their smoking-parties. Now, excesses of every kind during the period of growth smite fearfully at the very foundations of future health and life. It is well known that Germans are inveterate smokers. They are often pointed at as proof of the harmlessness of the habit. But a correspondent of the *Times* affirms that the authorities in Germany are taking measures to arrest the practice among the young, on the ground, as attested by the German physicians, that it incapacitates them for the defence

of their country. "Smoking," he adds, "weakens the powers of the stomach at that important crisis of development when the largest quantities of food have to be assimilated to build up the growing frame. It lowers the vitality of the heart. Muscle, energy, endurance, indeed, all that makes the man and the soldier, are thus at stake." Not only parents, but boys themselves should heed this warning. The late Dr. Arnot, in the year 1875, expressed his views as follows:—"Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the effect of tobacco on the health of men, I believe all are agreed that it damages at the root the constitution of youths, if they use it before they reach manhood. Now, common sense and all experience teach that a man weakens his influence immeasurably, if he himself smokes, and tells his boys to abstain. If you can encourage them to do as you do, you stand on a firm footing, and have a mighty purchase on your child. But there is one reason against smoking which is so big that it seems to me to comprehend nearly all others within it. It is that the use of tobacco makes it more difficult to be a Christian. I am accustomed now to pity greatly Christians who are also smokers. The practice not only drains the life-sap out of the smoker's cheeks; it also drains charity out of the smoker's soul. Many smokers succeed in living a Christian life, till their Lord calls them hence, in spite of this great obstruction, just as many youths contrive to wriggle forward into manhood, with somewhat sallow cheeks and somewhat sunken eyes, in spite of the tobacco poison. Yet it remains true that smoke to a greater or less extent diminishes the strength and beneficial effects of a Christian's grace. The tender regard for others: the willingness to suffer rather than inflict an injury: the watchful glad grasping at opportunities of doing to others as you would like them to do to you;—all this is sapped and weakened at the foundation by the smoker's appetites and habits. My neighbours all round do me day by day deliberate injury, who I believe would give me fair treatment if they were not enslaved to tobacco. On the top of a tram car, where we are packed together in a row, with faces within eighteen inches of each other, a man sitting next to me on the wind side takes out his apparatus and prepares his dose. Then he scrapes a match, and the brimstone smoke literally chokes me. The wind has blown out his match, and it is not until I have endured the brimstone three times that I am admitted into the less pungent element of tobacco. It never occurs to him that he is doing me an injury; and if I utter a complaint, five to one he meets it with insolence. The white ashes of the pipe are afterwards shaken out, and scattered like snow over the dress, and it may be into the eyes of the neighbours. The floor meantime, where our feet are resting, is in such a condition that it can neither be described in polite society, nor endured by any but the most

robust. Everywhere the same thing. In crowds at railway stations, or at an illumination, where there is no means of escape, the person next you in the garb and with the mien of a gentleman—and I believe in his heart a gentleman as far as his supreme and selfish devotion to his own gratification in the form of tobacco will permit—will puff the detestable smoke in your face, or in the face of a lady, without apology and without compunction." Sir Benjamin Brodie, Bart., F.R.S., says that the ill effects of tobacco are not confined to the nervous system. In many instances there is a loss of healthy appetite for food, the imperfect state of the digestion being soon rendered manifest by the loss of flesh and the sallow countenance. It is difficult to say what other diseases may not follow the imperfect assimilation of food continued during a long period of time. So many causes are in operation in the human body which may tend, in a greater or less degree, to the production of organic changes in it, that it is only in some instances we can venture to pronounce as to the precise manner in which a disease that proves mortal has originated. From cases, however, which have fallen under my observation, and from a consideration of all the circumstances, I cannot entertain a doubt that if we could obtain accurate statistics on the subject we should find that the value of life in inveterate smokers is considerably below the average. Nor is this opinion in any degree contradicted by the fact that there are individuals who, in spite of the inhalation of tobacco smoke, live to be old, and without any material derangement of the health; analogous exceptions to the general rule being met with in the case of those who have indulged too freely in the use of spirituous and fermented liquors. In the early part of the present century tobacco smoking was almost wholly confined to what was commonly called the lower grade of society. It was only every now and then that any one who wished to be considered a gentleman was addicted to it. But since the war in the Spanish peninsula, and the consequent substitution of the cigar for the tobacco-pipe, the case has been entirely altered. The greatest smokers of the present time are to be found, not among those who live by their bodily labour, but among those who are more advantageously situated, who have better opportunities of education, and of whom we have a right to expect that they should constitute the most intelligent and thoughtful members of the community. Nor is the practice confined to grown-up men. Boys, even at the best schools, get the habit of smoking, because they think it manly and fashionable to do so, not unfrequently because they have the example set them by their tutors, and partly because there is no friendly voice to warn them as to the special ill consequences to which it may give rise where the process of

growth is not yet completed, and the organs are not yet fully developed. Well and wisely did a writer in the "Quarterly Journal of Science," some years ago, say that "Homer sang his deathless song, Raphael painted his glorious Madonnas, Luther preached, Guttenberg printed, Columbus discovered a New World before tobacco was heard of. No rations of tobacco were served out to the heroes of Thermopylæ, no cigar strung up the nerves of Socrates. Empires rose and fell, men lived and loved and died during long ages, without tobacco. History was for the most part written before its appearance. 'It is the solace, the aider, the familiar spirit of the thinker,' cries the apologist; yet Plato the divine thought without its aid. Augustine described the glories of God's city, Dante sang his majestic melancholy song, Savonarola reasoned and died, Alfred ruled well and wisely, without it. Tyrtæus sang his patriotic song, Roger Bacon dived deep into Nature's secrets, the wise Stagirite sounded the depths of human wisdom, equally unaided by it. Harmodius and Aristogeiton twined the myrtle round their swords, and slew the tyrant of their fatherland, without its inspiration. In a word—kings ruled, poets sung, artists painted, patriots bled, martyrs suffered, thinkers reasoned, before tobacco was known or dreamed of. Who of us can realise Moses with a 'churchwarden' in his mouth, or St. Paul smoking a prime Havannah? Think of ancient Greece, of her glory in arts and arms and song, of her poets, sculptors, architects, after whom the moderns toil in vain. We do but follow in their tracks with halting steps and slow, and yet they lived their lives, and thought their deathless thoughts, and gave immortal beauty to the silent stone, without tobacco. What shall we say, then, to this habit? It is in no case necessary or beneficial; it is a social nuisance; it is devoid of all æsthetic beauty; it is an unmanly leaning on a solace to care and labour neither sought nor needed by the weaker sex; it is an enormous and yearly increasing source of national improvidence. Above all, it is the foe to youthful development, the bane of youthful blood and brain." In the matter of health let nature have its course; do not disarrange her workings by habituating yourself to narcotics, or taking into the system alcohol, which interferes with and impedes nature's work, which if unfettered with deleterious foreign substances will do everything which shall promote health, vigour, and longevity. Let a beautiful plant have pure water alone, and it will grow, and bud, and blossom, and live out its natural life; but bring to bear upon it doubtful nostrums, and it will in all probability sicken, and droop, and die.