

The following report of a meeting for the discussion of the great tobacco question is published for the benefit of those who, from a variety of circumstances, are precluded the benefit of public meetings on this important subject / British Anti-Tobacco Society.

Contributors

British Anti-Tobacco Society.

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SMOKE NOT! No. 10.

"SHUN SMOKING AS YOU WOULD SELF-DESTRUCTION."

LANCET.

THE FOLLOWING

REPORT OF A MEETING

FOR THE

DISCUSSION

OF THE

GREAT TOBACCO QUESTION,

IS PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO, FROM A VARIETY OF
CIRCUMSTANCES, ARE PRECLUDED THE BENEFIT OF PUBLIC
MEETINGS ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

ONE PENNY.

MANCHESTER:

WILLIAM BREMNER, 15, PICCADILLY.

LONDON: HOULSTON AND WRIGHT.

AND OF ALL BOOKSELLERS, OF WHOM ALSO MAY BE HAD OTHER
PUBLICATIONS OF THE BRITISH ANTI-TOBACCO SOCIETY.



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REPORT.

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	1857

On Thursday evening, October 8th, 1857, "The Great Tobacco Question" was submitted for discussion, at the Mechanics' Institution, Pendleton, under the presidency of John Hewitt, Esq., solicitor, who was supported by the Rev T. G. Lee, Rev. J. Spencer Hill, Robert Gardner, Esq., Mr. Joseph Johnson, and Mr. Reynolds, the Secretary of the British Anti-Tobacco Society. The Rev. T. G. Lee opened the meeting with prayer. The Chairman, after reading the bill by which the meeting had been convened, viz:—A Question of Vital Importance affecting the interest of all classes, &c. said:—We are met to night for the purpose of submitting our views on this great subject. I consider it to be one of very great and increasing interest. The practice of smoking, is undermining the health, weakening the resources, and endangering the position of our country. We have all heard of the prowess of the Turks in former periods of their history. But indulgence in the use of tobacco has reduced them to a powerless, subdued, and despised condition. No one whose opinion was worth receiving would, on that subject, attempt disapproval. We all know what has formerly been ascribed to British arms, but it may be, that we as a nation, shall be reduced to a similar position with Turkey, if the use of tobacco increased as it has done, in this country, since 1821, at which time the consumption was twelve ounces per head for the whole population, but in 1853 it had increased, according to the statistics furnished by Mr. Reynolds, to nineteen ounces per head, and the probability is that in 1857 it will reach twenty-four ounces per head. This state of things demands our concern and exertion for its suppression. He was glad to see so large an audience, and glad to see a good many young people. He hoped there would be a spirited discussion, as that was one principal object for which the meeting had been called. Mr. Hewitt then called on Mr. Reynolds to submit the principles of the Society which he represents.

Mr. REYNOLDS, on rising, said:—While I look on this large and intelligent audience, I am reminded of what some of my most intimate friends said, when I first proposed the establishment of an Anti-Tobacco Society:—"You may as well set a trap, and try to catch the devil, as to think of getting the people of this country to attend meetings for the suppression of smoking." Others said:—"You will have hard work to sustain an Anti-Tobacco enterprise. Look at Dr. — and Mr. —, some of our greatest preachers—look also at the habits of leaders in both lords and commons, besides, some of our greatest medical men are either smokers or snuff takers." Unhappily my predictions concerning some of them are already verified, they have broken down, others are on the road, and nothing can avert the pending consequences, but the abandonment of their habits. The following principles were then submitted:—

1.—That the physical laws of our Great Creator, as displayed in the animal economy, involve a solemn responsibility on the part of every intelligent being, to avoid any practice which to his knowledge has a tendency to interfere with those laws.

2.—That as tobacco is a narcotic poison of a virulent nature, its introduction into the human system, either by smoking, chewing, or

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snuffing, is calculated seriously to interfere with the laws of our nature, and ought, therefore, to be *entirely* rejected.

3.—That as smoking *especially* has a tendency to encourage the drinking usages of society, not only by creating morbid thirst, but also by impairing the appetite for food, and thus inducing recourse to a falsely supposed substitute; it ought, therefore, to be discountenanced by every lover of morality.

4.—That as smoking keeps multitudes who indulge in it from public worship, and thus excludes them from the means which God has appointed for their instruction and salvation; it ought to be looked upon as an impediment to the high elevation of which our nature is capable, and avoided as a fruitful source of evil.

5.—That as such of the uses of tobacco as are deprecated by this Society rob those who addict themselves to them of *time, talent, and pecuniary resources*; the misapplication of these endowments ought to excite, in the minds of those who are looking with anxiety on "the world lying in wickedness," a deep and anxious concern that this infringement of the inspired precept, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," should exist no longer.

6.—That as the use of tobacco has assumed in this country a magnitude of fearful extent, it is the imperative duty of every lover of mankind to unite in suitable efforts to remove this rapidly increasing evil, by exhibiting its *injurious effects* on the health—its *degrading consequences* on the morals, and its *enslaving power* on the habits of its deluded victims; and, also, by seeking to deter others, *especially* the young, from acquiring these *unnecessary, offensive, and expensive* practices.

Time will not allow me, to expatiate on the several topics which these principles contain, and I must content myself with a few discursive observations. I hesitate not to affirm, and I believe that every smoker present is prepared to confirm the affirmation, that there is no practice existing in society which is more antagonistic, to the real happiness of mankind, than the use of tobacco. There is nothing more repulsive to the natural instincts and sensibilities, and until these are blunted by the torpor producing, and intoxicating poison of tobacco, is it possible to derive any pleasure from its use. This I need not attempt to prove. No one present can forget what he suffered, when he first began to smoke or chew. The effects are indescribable, and the injury which it produces when long continued are irreparable. It is worth any effort, within the compass of human agency, to accomplish the great object of preventing the young from touching this ensnaring weed. The evils which are resulting in their history no language can describe, and the faithful testimony of every smoker present, of riper years, would be, to the effect, that if he had not begun he never would. The laws of our nature, which were intended by our All-wise Creator to contribute to our happiness, and His beneficent designs, are by the use of tobacco and snuff, defeated to an extent, which cannot be contemplated by mere casual observers of these exceptionable habits. Nor are the victims of them at all conscious of the injury which they habitually, but surely, inflict on themselves by their use. Working men, we want you to guard against every habit of life which is calculated to injure you in mind, body, or estate. Thousands of instances might be adduced, in proof of the working man's hinderance in the journey of life, by the use of the pipe. Not long since I saw a poor fellow, in a suburban part of Manchester, pale and emaciated, with a short pipe in his mouth and a sack on his back. It was painful to witness his exhaustion. He told me that he

consumed eight half-ounces of tobacco a-week—seven he smoked and one he chewed—this he had done for about thirty years. He had scarcely a tooth left in his head. How fearfully are the creatures of God marred by indulgence in vicious habits of life! An enslaved snuff-taker once heard me say, that next to dying an unpardoned transgressor, I should shrink from the idea of being laid in my coffin with my nostrils charged with snuff. From that time he abandoned the habit to which, for twenty-eight years, he had been addicted, and he is now become a comely and comparatively healthy looking person. It is difficult to convince the young of the dangerous tendency of bad habits, but for their sake, I must mention one case with which I became acquainted a few days ago. A Manchester tradesman, whose countenance indicated considerable disease, entered a room in which I was sitting. I elicited from him, that at the age of fifteen his father advised him to smoke for tooth-ache. After smoking he went to bed drunk, and as the pain returned day after day, he sought relief from the pipe, and with the same result. Notwithstanding this he continued to smoke. He is now in the forty-sixth year of his age. About four years ago his sight began to fail, and he took to snuff, hoping to improve his sight, and to make snuff a substitute for his pipe. In this he was disappointed. He could not get on without tobacco. His nervous system is now so weak that whenever he smokes a dry pipe he is so overpowered that he is obliged to lie down, and sometimes has recourse to brandy and water to counteract the effects of tobacco. Loss of memory, the frequent consequence of smoking, prevents his even remembering the text when he attends a place of worship, and he says that it is no use for him to read as he cannot recollect one sentence after another.* *What a fearful penalty to pay!* It is affecting to think of the alarming extent to which the young addict themselves to this habit. Sunday school teachers and Sunday school scholars are alike involved in it. To my astonishment last Sunday afternoon I saw a Sunday school teacher, who went to pay a religious visit to a sick and dying man, smoking a pipe in the sick room! Reformatories and ragged schools are filled with Sunday school deserters. Out of fifteen boys at Blackley Reformatory twelve have smoked, eight have chewed, and ten say they stole money with which to buy tobacco! Fathers take care! They are nearly all the sons of smokers. Tobacco is emphatically a thirst creator. It induces the use of drink in three ways. It occasions thirst by its influence on the mouth and throat—it creates an uneasy sensation in the stomach, by that portion of the saliva which must necessarily be swallowed, and which is impregnated with the poisonous properties of tobacco—and the prostration which it produces can only be relieved by the counteraction of a stimulating beverage. Should there be temperance reformers present, permit me to say, *that all your efforts to suppress intemperance will assuredly prove abortive unless smoking be suppressed.* (To this sentiment a simultaneous shout of hear! hear! reverberated through the room.)

* The advice given to this Tobacco victim was to ask help of God to enable him to overcome the habit of smoking. To keep a basin of water by his side, with a sponge in it, and frequently to apply it suddenly to the scalp of his head—to wash from head to foot with cold water every morning, and to well rub himself with a rough towel. He now says, "*I am quite another man. My appetite is improved, my hand is become steady, and I can now write my name, which I had not done for a long time before, without having my hand guided.*" Smokers! surely such results from less than a month's abstinence from tobacco fumes, although that abstinence may be attended with inconvenience, will induce many of you to follow his example.

I wish to be distinctly understood. I do not recommend to you the use of stimulating drinks. I say Smoke not! Drink not! *But if you do smoke, tobacco will inflict on you much greater injury if you drink water, tea, or coffee than if you take a moderate quantity of diffusive stimuli.* To this every physiologist, who has considered the subject, will readily subscribe. Besides, every smoker present knows that drinking is mainly traceable to smoking. Smoke and drink are like sole and upper leather—they will go together. Not to attempt the suppression of smoking, is comparable to watching the ravages of fire with an unemployed engine by one's side. To attempt the suppression of drunkenness without attacking its superinducing cause—Smoking—is comparable to playing an engine on the smoke instead of the fire. This morning, in a neighbouring town, I called at an inn to inquire about the departure of a train, and there I saw four persons sitting in the bar with long pipes in their mouths and each of them with a glass before him. But in order to give place to other gentlemen, I shall only add, that the habits under consideration very greatly tend to keep up and extend sickness, drunkenness, penury, crime, and lunacy, and unless something be done to stop these evils at their source, inevitable and fearful consequences must inevitably befall our country.

The Rev. T. G. LEE next addressed the audience, who said:—It afforded him great pleasure to witness so large a gathering on such an interesting occasion. Too much importance, he thought, could not be attached to such a movement. It was an affecting sight to see so many youths, and even boys, walking about the streets with pipes and cigars in their mouths. The increase of this practice was everywhere apparent, and unless some steps were taken to suppress it, very serious consequences must inevitably occur, in the future history of our country. The connexion between smoking and drinking, which had been submitted by Mr. Reynolds, added to the effects of tobacco on the system, was to him a question of a very grave character. He had taken considerable pains to acquaint himself with the probable outlay for intoxicating drinks in the townships of Pendleton, Pendlebury, and Broughton, and the result of his investigations, had brought to light that upwards of £7,000 were annually spent for drinks than the whole rental of those three important townships. It was, he believed, an impossibility to prevent the increased consumption of strong drinks, while the habit which so extensively led to their use was so greatly on the increase. The Anti-Tobacco movement, he believed, would prove an important auxiliary, to other kindred efforts which have for their object the advancement of our fellow-countrymen in the scale of being, and he sincerely hoped that he might soon see far less smoking than he had been accustomed to witness.

The Rev. J. S. HILL fully concurred in the objects of the meeting. It had been to him a cause of lamentation that so injurious a habit as smoking should have grown to such an extent. When he was very young, he drew a few whiffs from his father's pipe, but it made him so ill that he tumbled into a cradle, but he could not remember how he got out, and he never made another attempt to smoke. He had known many instances of injurious consequences resulting from the use of tobacco, and he felt it to be his duty to give his countenance to an effort, which he considered, so extensively calculated to improve the social condition of the working-classes. Their families, as well as their health, would derive much benefit by the proper appropriation of their time and their money. Many privations must necessarily be endured when indulgence in the habit of smoking and its kindred vice

absorbed the resources, and weakened the energy of those whose entire dependence for the necessities of life for themselves and their families was on the sweat of their brow. The danger to the young which smoking involved could not be over estimated, and he felt happy in uniting in such an effort.

Mr. GARDNER moved the following resolution :—

“ That as the use of tobacco has assumed in this country a magnitude of fearful extent, it is the imperative duty of every lover of mankind to unite in suitable efforts to remove this rapidly increasing evil, by exhibiting its *injurious effects* on the health—its *degrading consequences* on the morals, and its *enslaving power* on the habits of its deluded victims ; and, also, by seeking to deter others, *especially* the young, from acquiring these *unnecessary, offensive, and expensive*, practices.”

In submitting this resolution, he said :—I cannot refrain from giving expression to my feelings on this subject. I consider that smoking is of even greater consequence than my friend Mr. Reynolds makes it appear to be. I believe that the use of tobacco is doing more to destroy both the physical and mental constitutions than habits of drinking, while smoking must necessarily induce the use of intoxicating drinks. The statements of Mr. Lee with respect to the quantity of strong drink consumed in this neighbourhood has quite startled me. This state of things, and the increased habit of smoking which I constantly observe, has induced me, contrary to my usual habit, to take part in this effort, which I consider to be of very great importance to the community at large. It is a serious thing to destroy the health and vigour of the body and the mind, for which every one is accountable to his Maker. Besides, penury, dissipation, and crime must follow bad habits of life. I have been very much affected by what I have seen in the history of many of my friends. Only a few days ago, a gentleman told me that he was going from home for the improvement of his health. I said to him : I am afraid you are accustomed to a very bad habit. I fear you smoke tobacco. His nervous, emaciated appearance led to this conclusion, and he made the confession that it was so. He smoked three or four cigars a-day. He knew that it was a bad habit, and he believed that it was the cause of his illness. I entreated him to give it up at once. He said he would gladly do so if he could, but he was afraid to make a promise. He was, however, determined to try, and he hoped that, on his return, he should be able to say, I have left off smoking. The other day I called on a gentleman, whom I found smoking a cigar. I took it from him, and he instantly offered me one, but I told him that I wished he would let me put the one I had into the fire, as I feared it was his greatest enemy. “ I know,” he said, “ my dear friend, that it is my greatest enemy, but I have smoked so long that I cannot live without it.” When I see to what an extent the practice has grown, and the dominant power which it exerts over the sensibilities, I do earnestly hope that the young, especially who are present, will be influenced by what they have heard, to avoid a practice which is attended with so many disastrous consequences, and that all will unite in doing what they can to discountenance it. It is distressing to see to what an extent the evil prevails. For many years I have strictly observed habits of temperance ; and now, in the 77th year of my age, I am usually in the enjoyment of good health, and I wish others to have that pleasure which it is my happiness to feel. I rejoice to see so many present, and I have much pleasure in moving the resolution.

Mr. JOHNSON, in seconding the resolution, said :—I have had my

attention particularly called to this subject, by some very recent facts with which I have become acquainted. The representative of a cigar merchant in London, told me that his employer's brother, and his employer's son, had both died from paralysis of the brain, in consequence of smoking. A vendor of tobacco, had himself spoken in terms of commendation, of efforts for the suppression of smoking. He knew a person in Manchester who, some years ago, was second to none as an arithmetician, but by the excessive use of tobacco, he had become a complete wreck. On one occasion, he left London in coaching days, with a box of cigars, and smoked them all, before he arrived in Manchester. He is now incapable of associating together two distinct ideas. This person was well known to the Chairman.

After a few pointed observations by the Chairman, he said :—The subject is now open to discussion, and whatever any of the audience may think proper to say we shall be most happy to hear.

After repeated efforts to elicit discussion, a person of the name of Hill, arose to commend, and to condemn smoking, and to protect tobacco from its merited renunciation. After blowing hot, and cold, for some time, his evidence was in favour of the cause he arose to oppose. He thought smoking sometimes produced very bad effects, and so might other things. Mr. Johnson had referred to a person who smoked a box of cigars in his way from London to Manchester, and if he had taken too much porridge, it would have made him ill, and it was not right to say, that cigars had done all the mischief. It was easy enough to make out a case, but not so easy to prove it. He could hardly think, that tobacco could be so injurious to the intellect as it had been represented, and he was unwilling to have the working man's pipe put out. He had not many comforts, and the enjoyment of a pipe, to those who had not much food, was often a great luxury. Smoking had been called a vice, and he thought that was going too far. He was not a smoker himself, but he did not like to have the habits of those who did smoke interfered with, but he believed that people would be better without tobacco than with it, and especially the boys.

Mr. REYNOLDS said, in reply :—The caution against ascribing too much to tobacco was altogether uncalled for. Extreme cases had been stated, but they were cases of individual history and confession. Besides, "Attacking vice in the abstract would certainly be safe fighting, but that would only, be fighting with shadows." The injuries which arose from smoking, cannot by any possibility be overstated. Either physically, mentally, or socially. I have known many young men rising up in life with bright prospects, in full health and vigour, whose habits of smoking have proved their entire overthrow. Not long since in St. Paul's Churchyard, in London, I saw one of my early companions, whose father had settled him in life as an attorney, and he might have realized a fortune, but he smoked away his time, his health, and his practice. He became a hypochondriac, and laboured under the impression that he had been bitten in the leg by a mad dog. At the age of forty-five he went with his wife and several children to seek a home in a foreign country. That tobacco does weaken the intellect, and induce lunacy, every medical man in the kingdom, if he made the investigation, and reported faithfully, would testify to this truth. There is only one man in the Norwich Union Bethel who is not a smoker, and only six women who do not take snuff. Medical gentlemen, who are best capable of deciding this point, are not only of my opinion, but they have given me permission to use their names in favour of my opinion. Dr. Webster, the medical

superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, some time ago read a paper before the members of the Medical and Chirurgical Society on the Cause of Diseases of the Brain, in which he stated that tobacco is one principal cause, and in support of the opinion he referred to the statistics of insanity in Germany. That smoking by the young leads to dishonesty, is everywhere admitted. In the Reformatory at Blackley, recently erected at a cost of £4,000, out of fifteen boys twelve confess that they have been smokers, eight chewers, and ten to having stolen money with which to buy tobacco. As to the comfort of the working-man; let the working-man tell his own tale. I was one morning walking with a friend, when we came in contact with a labouring man in the act of smoking. I said to him, "You have a fine morning for your amusement." "Yes," he replied, "and this is my greatest comfort." This comfort, he confessed, cost him one tenth of his earnings—that it sometimes took him to a public-house, from whence he went home very late, with a heavy head—that he sometimes smoked when he knew he ought to be at church—that it sometimes made him tremble, and he feared he should have paralysis—that it occasionally made him feel giddy, as if he were drunk! That it does pauperise the working-classes not only do their wives and children know, but the inmates of poor-houses also painfully proves. A tradesman in the town of Richmond, says, "*I can put my hand on the shoulders of nine men out of ten in our poor-house and say, if it had not been for your pipe you would never have been here, and there are many more around me who will be sure to end their days there.*" As to sickness, every smoker knows, that nothing injures his health more than smoking. Nearly all the inmates of Manchester Infirmary who promenade within its boundaries may be occasionally seen with pipes in their mouths, nor will all the medicines in Manchester cure them. Working-men, you know we are your friends, and well-wishers. We would go a mile to save a dog, if he were in danger of falling from a rotten bridge into the water, lest he should be drowned, and what would we not do to help you to fight the battle of life, and induce you to avail yourselves of all the means which are provided for your present and eternal well-being? The time is not far distant, in which the pulpit, as well as the platform, will be made use of, for the purpose of exposing and condemning the practice of smoking, and I rejoice to know that yesterday, Mr. Stowell spoke of this degrading vice in relation to the British army, and placed tobacco in its proper place, the antecedent of the glass.

Mr. JOHNSON said, that between smoking and porridge there could be no analogy. When nature was satisfied she said *enough*, but the cigar smoker said *more! more!* Besides, there was no provision in the human system for the consumption of smoke. Food was not only agreeable, but it was necessary. Disastrous consequences indeed must have followed a gentleman's taking porridge all the way from London to Manchester.

As no further remarks could be elicited in opposition to the objects of the meeting, the resolution was submitted and carried unanimously and enthusiastically.

Mr. GARDNER proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for his able services, which the Rev. T. G. LEE seconded, which terminated the proceedings.