



Welcome to the book *Smoking and Drinking* (1868), by James Parton, the tobacco portion only. To go to the "[Table of Contents](#)" immediately, [click here](#).

Tobacco pushers and their accessories conceal the breadth of [tobacco effects](#), the enormity of the [tobacco holocaust](#), and the long record of documentation.

The concealment process is called the "[tobacco taboo](#)." Other pertinent words are "censorship" and "disinformation."

Here is the text by James Parton (1822-1891) of an early exposé (1868) of tobacco dangers, interwoven with 19th century style social commentary. It cites facts you rarely ever see, due to the "[tobacco taboo](#)."

The phrase "[tobacco taboo](#)" is the term for the pro-tobacco censorship policy—to not report most facts about tobacco.

As you will see, information about the tobacco danger was already being circulated in 1868, 96 years before the famous 1964 Surgeon General Report. Be prepared.

Note the already-known [generational deterioration data](#).

## *Smoking and Drinking*

by James Parton

(Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1868)

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## P R E F A C E.

**THE** next very important thing that man has to attend to is his health.

In some other respects, progress has been made during the last hundred years, and several considerable obstacles to the acquisition of a stable happiness have been removed or diminished.

In the best parts of the best countries, so much knowledge is now freely offered to all the young as suffices to place within their reach all existing knowledge. We may say with confidence that the time is not distant when, in the United States, no child will live farther than four miles from a school-house, kept open four months in the year, and when there will be the beginning of a self-sustaining public library in every town and village of a thousand inhabitants. This great business of making knowledge universally accessible is well in hand; it has gone so far that it must go on till the work is complete. In this country, too, if nowhere else, there is so near an approach to perfect freedom of thinking, that scarcely any one, whose conduct is good, suffers inconvenience from professing any extreme or eccentricity of mere opinion. I constantly meet, in New England villages, men who differ as widely as possible from their neighbors on the most dividing of all subjects; but if they are good citizens and good neighbors, I have never observed that they were

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the less esteemed on that account. Their peculiarities of opinion become as familiar as the color of their hair, or the shape of their every-day hat, and as inoffensive. This is a grand triumph of good sense and good nature; or, as Matthew Arnold would say, of the metropolitan over the provincial spirit. It is also recent. It was not the case fifty years ago. It was not the case twenty years ago.

The steam-engine, and the wondrous machinery which the steam-engine moves, have so cheapened manufactured articles, that a mechanic, in a village, may have so sufficient a share of the comforts, conveniences, and decencies of life, that it is sometimes hard to say what real advantage his rich neighbor has over him. The rich man used to have one truly enviable advantage over others: his family was safer, in case of his sudden death. But a mechanic, who has his home paid for, his life insured, and a year's subsistence accumulated, is as secure in this respect as, perhaps, the nature of human affairs admits. Now, an American workingman, anywhere out of a few largest cities, can easily have all these safeguards around his family by the time he is forty; and few persons can be rich before they are forty.

We may say, perhaps, speaking generally, that, in the United States, there are no formidable obstacles to the attainment of substantial welfare, except such as exist in the nature of things and in ourselves.

But in the midst of so many triumphs of man over material and immaterial things, man himself seems to dwindle and grow pale. Not here only, but in all the countries that have lately become rich enough to buy great quantities of the popular means of self-destruction, and in which women cease to labor as soon as their husbands and parents acquire a little property, and in which children sit

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in school and out of school from five to nine hours a day, and in which immense numbers of people breathe impure air twenty-two hours out of every twenty-four. In the regions of the United States otherwise most highly favored, nearly every woman, under forty, is sick or sickly; and hardly any young man has attained a proper growth, and measures the proper size around the chest. As to the young girls and school-children, if, in a school or party of two hundred, you can pick out thirty well-developed, well-proportioned, robust, ruddy children, you will do better than I have sometimes been able to do.

This begins to alarm and puzzle all but the least reflective persons. People begin to wonder why every creature, whether of native or foreign origin, should flourish in America, except man.

Not that there is anything mysterious with regard to the immediate causes of this obvious decline in the health and robustness of the race. Miss Nightingale tells us that more than half of all the sickness in the world comes of breathing bad air. She speaks feelingly of the time, not long passed, when the winds of heaven played freely through every house, from Windsor Castle to the laborers cottage, and when every lady put forth muscular effort in the polishing of surfaces. That was the time when bread was an article of diet, and the Devil had not invented hot biscuit. The agreeable means of self-destruction, now so cheap and universal, were unknown, or very costly; and the great mass of the people subsisted, necessarily, upon the plain fare which affords abundant nourishment, without overtasking the digestive powers. Terrible epidemics, against which the medical science of the time vainly contended, swept off weakly persons, shortened the average duration of life, and raised the standard of health.

But now we can all pervert and poison ourselves if we

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will, and yet not incur much danger of prompt extinction. Indeed, it is hard for the most careful and resolute person to avoid being a party to the universal violation of natural law. Children, of course, are quite helpless. How could I help, at eight years of age, being confined six hours a day in a school, where the word "ventilation" was only known as an object of spelling? How could I help, on Sunday, being entombed in a Sunday-school room, eight or nine feet high, crowded with children, all breathing their utmost? I hated it. I loathed it. I protested against it. I played truant from it. But I was thirteen years' old before I could escape that detested basement, where I was poisoned with pernicious air, and where well-intentioned Ignorance made virtue disgusting, contemptible, and ridiculous, by turns.

As all our virtues support one another, so all the [vices](#) of modern life are allies.

Smoking and drinking are effects, as well as causes. We waste our vital force; we make larger demands upon ourselves than the nature of the human constitution warrants,

and then we crave the momentary, delusive, pernicious aid which tobacco and alcohol afford. I suppose the use of these things will increase or decrease, as man degenerates or improves.

This subject, I repeat, is the next great matter upon which we have to throw ourselves. The republication of these essays is only to be justified on the ground that every little helps.

I think, too, that the next new sensation enjoyed by the self-indulgent, self-destroying inhabitants of the wealthy nations will be the practice of virtue. I mean, of course, the real thing, now nearly forgotten, the beginning of which is self-control, and which leads people to be temperate and pure, and enables them to go contrary to custom and fashion, without being eccentric or violent about it.

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That kind of virtue, I mean, which enables us to accept hard duties, and perform them with cheerful steadfastness; which enables us to make the most of our own lives, and to rear glorious offspring, superior to ourselves.

It is surprising what a new interest is given to life by denying ourselves one vicious indulgence. What luxury so luxurious as just self-denial! Who has ever seen any happy people that were not voluntarily carrying a heavy burden? Human nature is so formed to endure and to deny itself, that those mistaken souls who forsake the world, and create for themselves artificial woes, and impose upon themselves unnecessary tasks, and deny themselves rational and beneficial pleasures, are a thousand times happier than those self-indulgent and aimless men, whom we see every afternoon, gazing listlessly out of club-windows, wondering why it is so long to six o'clock.

I heard a young man say, the other day, that smoking had been the bane of his life, but that after abstaining for seven months, during which he made no progress in overcoming the desire to smoke, he had come to the conclusion that he was past cure, and must needs go on, as long as he lived. He *was* going on, when he made the remark, smoking a pipe half as big and twice as yellow as himself. It, was a great pity. That daily longing to smoke, with the daily triumphant struggle against it, was enough of itself to make his life both respectable and interesting. During those seven months, he was a man. He could claim fellowship with all the noble millions of our race, who have waged a secret warfare with Desire, all the days of their lives. If he had kept on, if he had not lapsed under the domination of his tyrant, he would, probably have ascertained what there was in his way of life which kept alive

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in him the craving for stimulation. In all probability, he would have conquered the desire at last

[brain, freed from the dulling, lowering influence, regains a portion of its natural vivacity; and that vivacity frequently finds worthy objects upon which to expend itself.](#)

[NEW YORK, September, 1868.](#)

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## SMOKING

I HAVE sometimes thought that there are people whom it does pay to smoke: those hod-carriers on the other side of the street, for example. It cannot be a very pleasant thing to be a hod-carrier at this season of the year, when a man who means to be at work at seven A.M. must wake an hour before the first streak of dawn. There is an aged sire over there, who lives in Vandewater Street, which is two miles and a quarter from the building he is now assisting to erect. He must be astir by half past five, in order to begin his breakfast at six, and at half past six he is in the car, with his dinner-kettle in his hand, on his way up town. About the time when the more active and industrious readers of this magazine begin to think it is nearly time to get up, this father of a family makes his first ascent of the ladder with a load of mortar on his shoulder. At twelve, the first stroke of the bell of St. George's Church (it is New York where these interesting events occur) sets him at liberty, and he goes in quest of his kettle. On very cold days, the dinner-kettle is wrapped in its

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proprietor's overcoat to keep the cold dinner from freezing stiff. But we will imagine a milder day, when the group of hod-carriers take their kettles to some sunny, sheltered spot about the building, where they sit upon soft, commodious boards, and enjoy their repast of cold meat and bread. The homely meal being concluded, our venerable friend takes out his short black pipe for his noontide smoke. How he enjoys it! How it seems to rest him! It is a kind of conscious sleep, ending, perhaps, in a brief unconscious sleep, from which he wakes refreshed for another five hours of the heavy hod.

Who could wish to deny a poor man a luxury so cheap, and so dear? It does not cost him more than ten cents a week; but so long as he has his pipe, he has a sort of refuge to which he can fly from trouble. Especially consoling to him is it in the evening, when he is in his own crowded and most uninviting room. The smoke that is supposed to "poison the air" of some apartments seems to correct the foulness of this; and the smoker appears to be a benefactor to all its inmates, as well as to those who pass its door.

Besides, this single luxury of smoke, at a cost of one cent and three sevenths per diem, is the full equivalent of all the luxuries which wealth can buy! None but a smoker, or one who has been a smoker, can realize this truth; but it is a truth. That short black pipe does actually place the hod-carrier, so far as mere luxury goes, on a par with Commodore Vanderbilt or the Prince of Wales. Tokay, champagne, turtle, game,

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and all the other luxurious commodities are not, taken altogether, so much to those who can daily enjoy them, as poor Paddy's pipe is to him. Indeed, the few rich people with whose habits I chance to be acquainted seldom touch such things, and never touch them except to please others. They all appear to go upon the system of the late Lord Palmerston, who used to say to his new butler, "Provide for my guests whatever the season affords; but for *me* there must be always a leg of mutton and an apple-pie." Let the Prince of Wales (or any other smoker) be taken to a banqueting-hall, the tables of which should be spread with all the dainties which persons of wealth are erroneously supposed to be continually consuming, but over the door let there be written the terrible words, "[No smoking](#)." Then show him an adjoining room, with a table exhibiting Lord Palmerston's leg of mutton and apple-pie, plus a bundle of cigars. If any one doubts which of these two feasts the Prince of Wales would choose, we tell that doubting individual he has never been a smoker.

Now the short pipe of the hod-carrier is just as good to him as the regalias could be that cost two hundred dollars a thousand in Havana, and sixty cents each in New York, If you were to give him one of those regalias, he would prefer to cut it up and smoke it in his pipe, and then he would not find it as good as the tobacco he usually smokes. The poor laborer's pipe, therefore, is a potent equalizer. To the enjoyment of pleasures purely luxurious there is a limit which is

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soon reached, and I maintain that a poor man gets as much of this *kind* of pleasure out of his pipe as a prince or a railroad king can extract from all the costly wines and viands of the table.

If there is a man in the world who ought to smoke, that ancient hod-carrier is the man. A stronger case for smoking cannot be selected from ordinary life. Does it pay him? After an attentive and sympathetic consideration of his case, I am compelled reluctantly to conclude that it does not.

The very fact that it tends to make him [contented](#) with his lot is a point against his pipe. It is a shame to him to be contented.

Ed. Note: Dr. R. B. Carter [said likewise in 1906](#).

To a young man the carrying of the hod is no dishonor, for it is fit that young men should bear burdens and perform lowly tasks. But the hod is not for gray hairs. Whenever, in this free and spacious America, we see a man past fifty carrying heavy loads upon his shoulders, or performing any hired labor that requires little skill or thought, we know that there must have been some great defect or waste in that man's life.

The first dollar that George Law ever earned, after leaving his father's house, was earned by carrying the hod at Albany. But with that dollar he bought an arithmetic and spelling-book; which, when winter closed in and put a stop to hod-carrying, he mastered, and thus began to prepare to build the "High Bridge" over the Harlem River, where he made a million dollars by using steam hod-carriers instead of Irish ones. The pipe is one of the points of difference between the hod-carrier content



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with his lot and the hod-carrier who means to get into bricklaying next spring. Yonder is one of the latter class reading his "*Sun*" after dinner, instead of steeping his senses in forgetfulness over a pipe. He, perhaps, will be taking a contract to build a bridge over the East River, about the time when his elderly comrade is buried in a corporation coffin.

Of course, there are vigorous and triumphant men who smoke, and there are dull, contented men who do not. It is only of the general tendency of the poor man's pipe that I wish to speak. I mean to say that it tends to make him satisfied with a lot which it is his chief and immediate duty to alleviate. He ought to hate and loathe his tenement-house home, and when he goes to that home in the evening, instead of sitting down in stolid selfishness to smoke, he should be active in giving his wife (who usually has the worst of it) the assistance she needs and deserves. Better the merry song, the cheerful talk, the pleasant stroll than this dulling of the senses and the [brain](#) in smoke. Nobler the conscious misery of such a home, than the artificial lethargy of the pipe. It is an unhandsome thing in this husband to steal out of his vile surroundings into cloudland, and leave his wife and children alone to their noisome desolation.

If it does not pay this hod-carrier to smoke, it pays no man. If this man cannot smoke without injustice to others, no man can.

Ladies, the natural enemies of tobacco, relented so far during the war as to send tobacco and pipes to the

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soldiers, and worked with their own fair hands many a pouch. Indeed, the pouch industry continues, though we will do the ladies the justice to say that, as their pouches usually have every excellent quality except fitness for the purpose intended, few of them ever hold tobacco. Does the lady who presented General Sheridan the other evening, in New York, with those superb and highly decorated tobacco-pouches suppose the gallant General has had, or will ever have, the heart to profane such beautiful objects with the noxious weed?

It is evident from these gracious concessions on the part of the ladies, that they suppose the soldier is a man whose circumstances call imperatively for the solace of smoke; and really, when the wearied men after a long day's march gathered round the camp-fire for the evening pipe, the most infuriate hater of the weed must have sometimes paused and questioned the science which forbids the indulgence. But, reader, did you ever travel in one of the forward cars of a train returning from the seat of war, when the soldiers were coming home to re-enlist? We need not attempt to describe the indescribable scene. Most readers can imagine it. We allude to it merely as a set-off to the pleasant and picturesque spectacle of the tired soldiers smoking round the camp-fire.

In truth, the soldier is the last man in the world who should smoke; for the simple reason, that while he, more than any other man, has need of all his strength, smoking robs him of part of it. It is not science alone which establishes this truth. The winning boat of

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Harvard University, and the losing boat of Yale, were not rowed by smokers. One of the first things demanded of a young man who is going into training for a boat-race is, *Stop smoking!* And he himself, long before his body has reached its highest point of purity and development, will become conscious of the lowering and disturbing effect of smoking one inch of a mild cigar.

No smoker who has ever trained severely for a race, or a game, or a fight, needs to be told that smoking reduces the tone of the system and diminishes all the forces of the body. He *knows* it. He has been as conscious of it as a boy is conscious of the effects of his first cigar. Let the Harvard crew smoke during the last two months of their training, and let the Yale men abstain, and there is one individual prepared to risk a small sum upon Yale's winning back her laurels.

A soldier should be in training always. Compelled to spend nine tenths of his time in laboriously doing nothing, he is called upon occasionally, for a few hours or days or weeks, to put forth exertions which task human endurance to the uttermost. The soldier, too, of all men, should have quiet nerves; for the phantoms of war scare more men than its real dangers, and men's bodies can shake when their souls are firm. That two and two make four is not a truth more unquestionably certain than that smoking does diminish a soldier's power of endurance, and does make him more susceptible to imaginary dangers. If a regiment were to be raised for the hardest service of which

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men can ever be capable, and that service were to be performed for a series of campaigns, it would be necessary to exclude from the commissariat, not tobacco only, but coffee and tea. Each man, in short, would have to be kept in what prize-fighters call "condition"; by which term they simply mean the natural state of the body, uncontaminated by poison, and unimpaired by indolence or excess. Every man is in duty bound to be "in condition" at all times; but the soldier,— it is part of his profession to be "in condition." When remote posterity comes to read of the [millions and millions of dollars expended](#) during the late war in curing soldiers untouched by bayonet or bullet, the enthusiasm of readers will not be excited by the generosity displayed in bestowing those millions. People will lay down the book and exclaim:

"How ignorant were our poor ancestors of the laws of life! A soldier in hospital without a wound! How extremely absurd!"

To this weighty and decisive objection minor ones may be added. The bother and vexation arising from the pipe were very great during the campaigns of the late war. Half the time the smokers, being deprived of their accustomed stimulant, were in that state of [uneasy longing](#) which smokers and other simulators know. Men were shot during the war merely because they *would* strike a light and smoke.

The [desire](#) sometimes overcame all considerations of [prudence](#) and soldierly duty. A man out on picket, of a chilly night, knowing perfectly well that lighting his pipe

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would have the twofold effect of revealing his presence and inviting a bullet, was often [unable to resist](#) the temptation. Many men, too, risked capture in seeking what smokers call "a little fire." A fine, stalwart officer of a Minnesota regiment whose



natural forces, if he had given nature a fair chance, would have been abundantly sufficient for him without the aid of any stimulant has told me there were nights when he would have gladly given a month's pay for a light.

Readers probably remember the incident related in the newspapers of one of our smoking generals, who, after being defeated by the enemy, heard of the arrival of gunboats which assured his safety, and promised to restore his fortunes. The first thing he did was to send an aid on board a gunboat to ask if they had any cigars. He was right in so doing. It was a piece of strategy necessitated by the circumstances. Let any man who has been in the habit of smoking ten to twenty cigars a day be suddenly deprived of them at a time when there is a great strain upon body and mind, and he will find himself reduced to a state bordering upon [imbecility](#).

Knowing what I know of the smoking habits of some officers of high rank, I should tremble for the success of any difficult operation, to be conducted by them in presence of an enemy, if their cigars had given out the evening before; nor could a spy do his employers a better service than to creep into the tents of some generals the night before an engagement, and throw all their cigars and tobacco into a pail of water.

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Of all men, therefore, the soldier is the very last man who could find his account in a practice which lowers [the tone of his health](#), reduces his power of endurance, litters his knapsack, pesters him with a system of flints and tinder, and endangers his efficiency in critical moments. If all the world smoked, still the soldier should abstain.

Sailors and other prisoners experience so many dull hours, and possess so many unused faculties, that some cordial haters of tobacco have thought that such persons might be justified in a habit which only lessens what they have in superfluity. In other words, sailors, being in a situation extremely unfavorable to spiritual life, ought not merely to yield to the lowering influence of the forecabin, but add to it one more [benumbing](#) circumstance.

On the contrary, they ought to strive mightily against the paralyzing effects of monotony,—not give up to them, still less aggravate them. There is no reason, in the nature of things, why a sailor, after a three years' voyage, should not step on shore a man more alert in body and mind than when he sailed, and all alive to communicate the new knowledge he has acquired and the wonders he has seen. Why should he go round this beautiful world drugged?

We must, therefore, add the sailor to the hod-carrier and the soldier, and respectfully take away his pipe. I select these classes, because they are supposed most to need artificial solace, and to be most capable of enduring the [wear and tear](#) of a

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[vicious habit](#). Each of these classes also can smoke without much [offending others](#), and each is provided with an "expectorator" which disgusts no one. The hod-carrier and the soldier have the earth and the sailor the ocean. But, for all that, the pipe is an injury to them. Every man of them would be better without it.

But if we must deny *them* the false solace of their pipe, what can be said of the all-but-universal smoking of persons supposed to be more refined than they, and whose occupations furnish them no pretence of an excuse? We now see painters in their

studios smoking while they paint, and sculptors pegging away at the marble with a pipe in their mouths. Clergymen hurry out of church to find momentary relief for their tired throats in an ecstatic smoke, and carry into the apartment of fair invalids the odor of ex-cigars. How it may be in other cities I know not, but in New York a parishioner who wishes to confer upon his clergyman a *real* pleasure can hardly do a safer thing than send him a thousand cigars of a good clerical brand. It is particularly agreeable to a clergyman to receive a present which supplies him with a luxury he loves, but in which he knows in his inmost soul he ought not to indulge. No matter for all his fine arguments, there is not one clergyman in ten that succeeds in this short life in reducing his conscience to such a degree of obtuseness that he can buy a box of cigars (at present prices) without a qualm of self-reproach. Editors, writers for the press, reporters, and others who haunt

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the places where newspapers are made, are smokers, except a few controlling men, and a few more who are on the way to become such. Most of the authors whose names are familiar to the public smoke steadily; even the poets most beloved do so. Philosophers have taken to the pipe of late years. Mr. Dickens, they say, toys with a cigar occasionally, but can hardly be reckoned among the smokers, and never touches a cigar when he has a serious task on hand. Mr. Prescott smoked, and O, how he loved his cigar. It was he who, when his physician had limited him to one cigar a day, ran all over Paris in quest of the largest cigars that Europe could furnish. In my smoking days I should have done the same. Thackeray smoked, he was very particular in his smoking; the scent of a bad cigar was an abomination to him. That Byron smoked, and loved "the naked beauties" of tobacco, he has told us in the most alluring verses the weed has ever inspired. Milton, Locke, Raleigh, Ben Jonson, Izaak Walton, Addison, Steele, Bolingbroke, Burns, Campbell, Scott, Talfourd, Christopher North, Lamb, were all smokers at some part of their lives.

Among our Presidents, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, General Jackson, and probably many others, were smokers. Daniel Webster once smoked. Henry Clay, down to a late period of his life, chewed, smoked, and took snuff, but never approved of either practice, and stopped two of them. General Grant smokes, but regrets that he does, and has reduced his daily allowance of cigars. Edwin Booth smokes, as

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do most of the gentlemen of his arduous profession. Probably a majority of the physicians and surgeons in the United States, under forty years of age, are smokers; and who ever knew a medical student that did not smoke furiously? This, perhaps, is not to be wondered at, since doctors live upon the bodily sins of mankind.

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The question is, Does it pay these gentlemen to smoke? *They* know it does not. It would be gross arrogance in any individual to lift up his voice in rebuke of so many illustrious persons, but for the fact that there is scarcely one of them who does not feel that the practice is wrong, or, at least, absurd. Almost all confirmed smokers will go so far as to admit that they wish they had never acquired the habit Few of them desire their boys to acquire it. None recommend it to other men. Almost all smokers, who are not Turks,

Chinamen, or Indians, appreciate at once the wisdom of Sir Isaac Newton's reply to one who asked him why he never smoked a pipe. "Because," said he "I am unwilling to make to myself any necessities."

Nor can any intelligent smoker doubt that the [fumes of tobacco](#) are [hostile](#) to the vital principle. We smokers and ex-smokers all remember how our first cigar sickened us; we have all experienced [various ill effects](#) from what smokers call "smoking too much"; and very many smokers have, once or twice in, their lives, risen in revolt against their tyrant, given away their pipes, and lived free men long enough to become conscious that their whole being

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had been torpid, and was alive again. No, no! let who will deny that smoking is unfriendly to life, and friendly to all that wars upon life, smokers will not question it, unless they are very ignorant indeed, or very young. It will be of no avail to talk to *them* of the man who lived to be a hundred years old and had smoked to excess for half a century. Smokers have that within which keeps them well in mind that smoking is [pernicious](#). If there are any smokers who doubt it, it is the few whom smoke is rapidly killing; such, for example, as the interesting professional men who smoke an excellent quality of cigars and "break down" before they are thirty-five. It is not honest, legitimate hard work that breaks so many people down in the prime of life. It is bad habits.

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Smoking is a barbarism. This is the main argument against what is termed moderate smoking. There is something in the practice that allies a man with barbarians, and constantly tends to make him think and talk like [a barbarian](#). Being at New Haven last September, a day or two before the opening of the term at [Yale College](#), I sat in one of the public rooms of the hotel late one evening, hoping some students would come in, that I, might see what sort of people college students are in these times. Yale College hath a pleasant seat. Who can stroll about upon that beautiful College Green, under those majestic elms, without envying the youth who are able to spend four long years of this troublesome life in the tranquil acquisition of knowledge amid scenes so refined and engaging?

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The visitor is bewitched with a wild desire to give the college two or three million dollars immediately, to enable it to become, in all respects, what it desires, aims, and intends to become. Visions of the noble Athenian youth thronging about the sages of eld, and learning wisdom from their lips, flit through his mind, as he wanders among the buildings of the college, and dodges the colored men who are beating carpets and carrying furniture.

In this exalted frame of mind, suppose the stranger seated in the room of the hotel just mentioned. In the middle of the small apartment sat one fat, good-humored, uneducated man of fifty, smoking a cigar,—about such a man as we expect to find in the "office" of a large livery stable. At half past ten a young man strolled in, smoking, who addressed the elder by a military title, and began a slangy conversation with him upon the great New Haven subject,—boat-racing. About eleven, three or four other

young men came in, to whom cigars were furnished by the military chieftain. All together they blew a very respectable cloud, and the conversation, being so strongly reinforced, became more animated. Boating was still the principal theme. The singular merits of Pittsburg oars were discussed. A warm dispute arose as to who was the builder of a certain boat that had won a race three years ago. Much admiration was expressed for the muscle, the nerve, and, above all, for the style and method, of the crew of the Harvard boat, which had beaten the Yale boat a few weeks before.

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Nevertheless, it did not occur to me that these smoking and damning gentlemen could be members of the college. I supposed they were young loafers of the town, who took an interest in the pleasures of the students, and were exchanging opinions thereon with their natural chief, the lord of the stable.

At length one said to another, "Will Jones be here this week?" The reply was: "No, I wrote to the fellow; but, damn him, he says he can't get here till next Thursday." "Why, what's the matter with the cuss?" "O, he's had the fever and ague, and he says there's no pull in him." This led me to suspect that these young fellows were the envied youths of whom I had been dreaming under the elms,—a suspicion which the subsequent conversation soon confirmed.

There was nothing wrong or harmful in the subject of their talk. The remarkable circumstance was, that all the difference which naturally exists, and naturally appears, between an educated and an uneducated person was obliterated; and, it seemed, too, that the smoke was the "common element" in which the two were blended. It was the cigar that kept the students there talking boat till midnight with an elderly ignoramus, and it was the cigar that was always drawing them down to his level. If he had not handed round his cigar-case, they would have exhausted all the natural interest of the subject in a few minutes, and gone home to bed. All of them, too, as it happened, confessed that smoking lessens the power of a man to row a boat, and lamented that a certain student would be lost to

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the crack crew from his unwillingness to give up his pipe.

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Smoking lures and detains men from the society of ladies. This herding of men into clubs, these dinners to which men only are invited, the late sitting at the table after the ladies have withdrawn, the gathering of male guests into some smoking-room, apart from the ladies of the party,—is not the cigar chiefly responsible for these atrocities? Men are not society; women are not society: society is the mingling of the two sexes in such a way that each restrains and inspires the other.

Ed. Note: Dr. Charles B. Towns said [likewise in 1915](#).

That community is already far gone in degeneracy in which men prefer to band together by themselves, in which men do not crave the society of ladies, and value it as the chief charm of existence. "What is the real attraction of these gorgeous establishments?" I asked, the other evening, of an acquaintance who was about to enter one of the new club-houses on Fifth Avenue. His reply was: "No women can enter

them! Once within these sacred walls, we are safe from everything that wears a petticoat."

Are we getting to be Turks? The Turks shut women in; we shut them out The Turks build harems for their women; but we find it necessary to abandon to women our abodes, and construct harems for ourselves.

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Humiliating as the truth is, it must be confessed, tobacco is woman's rival, her successful rival. It is the cigar and the pipe (it used to be wine and punch) that enable men to endure one another during the whole of a long evening. Remove from every club-

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house all the means of intoxication,—i. e. all the wine and tobacco,—and seven out of every ten of them would cease to exist in one year. Men would come together for a few evenings, as usual, talk over the evening papers, yawn and go away, perhaps go home,—a place which our confirmed clubbists only know as a convenience for sleeping and breakfasting. One of the worst effects of smoking is that it [deadens](#) our susceptibility to tedium, and enables us to keep on enduring what we ought to war against and overcome. It is drunken people who "won't go home till morning." Tyrants and oppressors are wrong in drawing so much revenue from tobacco; they ought rather to give it away, for it tends to enable people to sit down content under every kind of oppression.

Men say, in reply to those who object to their clubs, their men's dinner-parties, and their smoking-rooms: "Women overwhelm society with superfluous dry goods. The moment ladies are invited, the whole affair becomes a mere question of costume. A party at which ladies assist is little more than an exhibition of wearing apparel. They dress, too, not for the purpose of giving pleasure to men, but for the purpose of inflicting pain on one another. Besides, a lady who is carrying a considerable estate upon her person must devote a great part of her attention to the management of that estate. She may be talking to Mr. Smith about Shakespeare and the musical-glasses, but the thing her mind is really intent upon is crushing Mrs. Smith with her new lace. Even dancing is nothing but an exceed-

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ingly laborious and anxious wielding of yards of silk trailing out behind!" etc. Smoky diners-out will recognise this line of remark. When ladies have left the table, and are amusing themselves in the drawing-room in ways which may sometimes be trivial, but are never sensual, men frequently fall into discourse, over their cigars, upon the foibles of the sex, and often succeed in delivering themselves of one or more of the observations just quoted. As these noble critics sit boozing and smoking, they can sometimes hear the brilliant run upon the piano, or the notes of a finely trained voice, or the joyous laughter of a group of girls,—all inviting them to a higher and purer enjoyment than steeping their senses in barbarous smoke. But they stick to their cigars, and assume a lofty moral superiority over the lovely beings, the evidence of whose better civilization is sounding in their ears.



Now, one of the subtle, mysterious effects of tobacco upon "the male of our species" is to disenchant him with regard to the female. It makes us read the poem entitled *Woman* as though it were only a piece of prose. It takes off the edge of virility. If it does not make a man less masculine, it keeps his masculinity in a state of partial torpor, which causes him to look upon women, not indeed without a certain curiosity, but without enthusiasm, without romantic elevation of mind, without any feeling of awe and veneration for the august Mothers of our race. It tends to make us regard women from what we may style the "*Black*

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*Crook*" point of view. The young man who boasted that he had seen the "*Black Crook*" [Ed. Note: by Charles M. Barras (1826-1873) (Buffalo: Rockwell, Baker & Hill, 1866)] forty-seven times in three months must have been an irreclaimable smoker. Nothing but the dulled, sensualized masculinity caused by this [peculiar poison](#) could have blinded men to the ghastly and haggard ugliness of that exhibition. The pinched and painted vacancy of those poor girls' faces; the bony horrors of some of their necks, and the flabby redundancy of others; the cheap and tawdry splendors, the stale, rejected tricks of London pantomimes; three or four tons of unhappy girls suspended in the air in various agonizing attitudes,—to think that such a show could have run for seventeen months! Even if science did not justify the conjecture, I should be disposed, for the honor of human nature, to lay the blame of all this upon tobacco.

To a man who is uncorrupt and properly constituted, woman remains always something of a mystery and a romance. He never interprets her quite literally. She, on her part, is always striving to remain a poem, and is never weary of bringing out new editions of herself in novel bindings. Not till she has been utterly conquered and crushed by hopeless misery or a false religion does she give up the dream of still being a pleasant enchantment. To this end, without precisely knowing why, she turns the old dress, re-trims it, or arrays herself in the freshness of a new one, ever striving to present herself in recreated loveliness. Uncontaminated man sympathizes with this intention, and easily lends himself to the renewed charm. Have

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you not felt something of this, old smokers, when, after indulging in the stock jests and sneers at womankind, you lay aside your cigars, and "join the ladies," arrayed in bright colors and bewitching novelties of dress, moving gracefully in the brilliant gas-light, or arranged in glowing groups about the room? Has not the truth flashed upon you, at such moments, that you had been talking prose upon a subject essentially poetical? Have you never felt how mean and low a thing it was to linger in sensual stupefaction, rather than take your proper place in such a scene as this?

It is true, that a few women in commercial cities,—a few bankers' and brokers' wives, and others,—bewildered by the possession of new wealth, do go to ridiculous excess in dressing, and thus bring reproach upon the art. It were well if their husbands did no worse. Now and then, too, is presented the melancholy spectacle of an extravagant hussy marring, perhaps spoiling, the career of her husband by tasteless and unprincipled expenditures in the decoration of her person. But is it wholly her fault? Is he not the purse-holder? Is it not a husband's duty to prevent his wife from



dishonoring herself in that manner? When men are sensual, women will be frivolous. When men abandon their homes and all the noble pleasures of society in order to herd together in clubs and smoking-rooms, what right have they to object if the ladies amuse themselves in the only innocent way accessible to them? The wonder is that they confine themselves to the innocent delights of the toilet. A

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husband who spends one day and seven evenings of every week at his club ought to expect that his wife will provide herself both with fine clothes and some one who will admire them. Besides, for one woman who shocks us by wasting upon her person an undue part of the family resources, there are ten who astonish us by the delightful results which their taste and ingenuity contrive out of next to nothing. It would be absurd to say that smoking is the cause of evils which originate in the weakness and imperfection of human nature. The point is simply this: tobacco, by disturbing and impairing virility, tends to vitiate the relations between the sexes, tends to lessen man's interest in women and his enjoyment of their society, and enables him to endure and be contented with, and finally even to prefer, the companionship of men. And this is the true reason why almost every lady of spirit is the irreconcilable foe of tobacco. It is not merely that she dislikes the stale odor of the smoke in her curtains, nor merely that her quick eye discerns its hostility to health and life. These things would make her disapprove the weed. But instinct causes her dimly to perceive that this ridiculous brown leaf is the rival of her sex. Women do not disapprove their rivals; they hate them.

Ed. Note: For related views, see

- Dr. John Lizars, [\*The Use and Abuse of Tobacco\*](#) (Edinburgh: 1859), [pages 120-121](#);
- Meta Lander, [\*The Tobacco Problem\*](#) (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1882), [pages 177](#), [198-199](#), [221-222](#), [238-242](#), [255-256](#), [260-262](#), [306](#), and [370-371](#); and
- Dr. Herbert H. Tidswell, [\*The Tobacco Habit: Its History and Pathology\*](#), (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1912) , [p 7](#).

Smoking certainly does blunt a man's sense of cleanliness. It certainly is an unclean habit. Does the reader remember the fine scene in "Shirley," in which the lover soliloquizes in Shirley's own boudoir, just after that "stainless virgin" has gone out? She had gone

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away suddenly, it appears, and left disorder behind her; but every object bore upon it the legible inscription, *I belong to a lady!* "Nothing sordid, nothing soiled," says Louis Moore. "Look at the pure kid of this little glove, at the fresh, unsullied satin of the bag." This is one of those happy touches of the great artist which convey more meaning than whole paint-pots of common coloring. What a pleasing sense it gives us of the sweet cleanness of the high-bred maiden! If smokers were to be judged by the places they have *left*,—by the smoking-car after a long day's use, by the dinner-table at which they have sat late, by the bachelor's quarters when the bachelor has gone down town,—they must be rated very low in the scale of civilization.

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We must admit, too, I think, that smoking dulls a man's sense of the rights of others. Horace Greeley is accustomed to sum up his opinion upon this branch of the subject by saying: "When a man begins to smoke, he immediately becomes a hog." He probably uses the word "hog " in two senses: namely, *hog*, an unclean creature; and *hog*, a creature devoid of a correct sense of what is due to other creatures.

"Go into a public gathering," he has written, "where a speaker of delicate lungs, with an invincible repulsion to tobacco, is trying to discuss some important topic so that a thousand men can hear and understand him, yet whereinto tender twenty smokers have introduced themselves, a long-nine projecting horizontally from beneath the nose of each, a fire at one end and a fool

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at the other, and mark how the puff, puffing gradually transforms the atmosphere (none too pure at best) into that of some foul and pestilential cavern, choking the utterance of the speaker, and distracting (by annoyance) the attention of the hearers, until the argument is arrested or its effect utterly destroyed."

If these men, he adds, are not blackguards, who are blackguards? He mitigates the severity of this conclusion, however, by telling an anecdote:

"Brethren," said Parson Strong, of Hartford, preaching a Connecticut election sermon, in high party times, some fifty years ago, "it has been charged that I have said every Democrat is a horse-thief; I never did. What I *did* say was only that every horse-thief is a Democrat, and *that* I can prove."

Mr. Greeley challenges the universe to produce a genuine blackguard who is not a lover of the weed in some of its forms, and promises to reward the finder with the gift of two white blackbirds.

Mr. Greeley exaggerates. Some of the best gentlemen alive smoke, and some of the dirtiest blackguards do not; but most intelligent smokers are conscious that the practice, besides being in itself unclean, dulls the smoker's sense of cleanliness, and, what is still worse, dulls his sense of what is due to others, and especially of what is due to the presence of ladies.

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The cost of tobacco ought perhaps to be considered before we conclude whether or not it pays to smoke; since every man who smokes, not only pays his share of the whole expense of the weed to mankind, but he also supports and justifies mankind in incurring that

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expense. The statistics of tobacco are tremendous, even to the point of being incredible. It is gravely asserted, in Messrs. Ripley and Dana's excellent and most trustworthy Cyclopædia, that the consumption of cigars in Cuba—the mere consumption—amounts to ten cigars per day for every man, woman, and child on the island. Besides this, Cuba exports two billions of cigars a year, which vary in price from twenty cents each (in gold) to two cents. In the manufacture of Manilla cheroots,—a small item in the trade,—the labor of seven thousand men and twelve hundred women is absorbed.

Holland, where much of the tobacco used in [smoky Germany](#) is manufactured, employs, it is said, one million pale people in the business. In Bremen there are four thousand pallid or yellow cigar-makers. In the United States the weed exhausts four hundred thousand acres of excellent land, and employs forty thousand sickly and cadaverous cigar and tobacco makers. In England, where there is a duty upon tobacco of seventy-five cents a pound, and upon cigars of nearly four dollars a pound, the government derives about six million pounds sterling every year from tobacco. The French government gets from its monopoly of the tobacco trade nearly two hundred million francs per annum, and Austria over eighty million francs.

It is computed that the world is now producing one thousand million pounds of tobacco every year, at a *total* cost of five hundred millions of dollars. To this must be added the cost of pipes, and a long catalogue of smoking conveniences and accessories. [Ed. Note: and [health costs](#).]

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In the London Exhibition there were four amber mouth-pieces, valued at two hundred and fifty guineas each. A plain, small, serviceable meerschaum pipe now costs in New York seven dollars, and the prices rise from that sum to a thousand dollars; but where is the young man who does not possess one? We have in New York two (perhaps more) extensive manufactories of these pipes; and very interesting it is to look in at the windows and inspect the novelties in this branch of art. In Vienna men earn their living (and their dying too) by smoking meerschaums for the purpose of starting the process of "coloring." Happily, the high price of labor has hitherto prevented the introduction of this industry into America.

An inhabitant of the United States who smokes a pipe only, and good tobacco in that pipe, can now get his smoking for twenty-five dollars a year. One who smokes good cigars freely (say ten a day at twenty cents each) must expend between seven and eight hundred dollars a year. Almost every one whose eye may chance to fall upon these lines will be able to mention at least one man whose smoking costs him several hundred dollars per annum,—from three hundred to twelve hundred. On the other hand, our friend the hod-carrier can smoke a whole week upon ten cents' worth of tobacco, and buy a pipe for two cents which he can smoke till it is black with years.

All this inconceivable expenditure—this five hundred millions per annum—comes out of the world's surplus, that precious fund which must pay all the

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cost, both of improving and extending civilization. Knowledge, art, literature, have to be supported out of what is left after food, clothes, fire, shelter, and defence have all been paid for. If the surest test of civilization, whether of an individual or of a community, is the use made of surplus revenue, what can we say of the civilization of a race that expends five hundred millions of dollars every year for an indulgence which is nearly an unmitigated injury? The surplus revenue, too, of every community is very small; for nearly the whole force of human nature is expended necessarily in the unending struggle for life.

The most prosperous, industrious, economical, and civilized community that now exists in the world, or that ever existed, is, perhaps, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Yes, take it for all in all, Massachusetts, imperfect as it is, is about the best thing man has yet done in the way of a commonwealth. And yet the surplus revenue of Massachusetts is set down at only three cents a day for each inhabitant; and out of this the community has to pay for its knowledge, decoration, and luxury. Man, it must be confessed, after having been in business for so many thousands of years, is still in very narrow circumstances, and most assuredly cannot afford to spend five hundred millions a year in an [injurious](#) physical [indulgence](#).

It is melancholy to observe what a small, mean, precarious, grudging support we give to the best things, if they are of the kind which must be sustained out of our surplus. At Cambridge the other day, while

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looking about among the ancient barracks in which the students live, I had the curiosity to ask concerning the salaries of the professors in Harvard College,—supposing, of course, that such learned and eminent persons received a compensation proportioned to the dignity of their offices, the importance of their labors, and the celebrity of their names. Alas! it is not so. A good reporter on the New York press gets just about as much money as the President of the College, and the professors receive such salaries as fifteen and eighteen hundred dollars a year. The very gifts of inconsiderate benefactors have impoverished the college, few of whom, it seems, have been able to give money to the institution; most of them have merely *bought* distinction from it. Thus professorships in plenty have been endowed and *named*; but the college is hampered, and its resources have become insufficient, by being divided among a multitude of objects.

I beg the reader, the next time he gives [Harvard University](#) a hundred thousand dollars, or leaves it a million in his will, to make the sum a *gift*,—a gift to the trustees,—to be expended as *they* deem best for the general and permanent good of the institution, and not to neutralize the benefit of the donation by conditions dictated by vanity.

Yale, I have since learned, is no better off. At all our colleges, it seems, the professors either starve upon twelve or fifteen hundred dollars a year, or eke out a subsistence by taking pupils, or by some other arduous extra labor. But what wonder that learning pines, when we every year waste millions

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upon millions of the fund out of which alone learning can be supported!

It is so with all high and spiritual things. How the theatre languishes! There are but four cities in the United States where a good and complete theatre could be sustained. In the great and wealthy city of New York there has never been more than one at a time, nor always one.

How small, too, the sale of good books, even those of a popular cast! One of the most interesting works ever published in the United States is the "*Life of Josiah Quincy*," by his son Edmund Quincy. It is not an abstruse production. The narrative is easy and flowing, interspersed with well-told anecdotes of celebrated men,—Washington, Lafayette, John Adams, John Randolph, Hancock, Jefferson, and many others. Above all, the book exhibits and interprets, in the most agreeable manner, a triumphant human life, showing how it came to pass that Josiah Quincy, in this perplexing and

perilous world, was able to live happily, healthily, honorably, and usefully for ninety-three years! Splendid triumph of civilization! Ninety-three years of joyous, dignified, and beneficial existence! One would have thought that many thousands of people in the United States would have hurried to their several bookstores to bear away, rejoicing, a volume recounting such a marvel, the explanation of which so nearly concerns us all. The book has now been published three months or more, and has not yet sold more than three thousand copies! Young men cannot waste their hard-earned

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money upon a three-dollar book. It is the price of a bundle of cigars!

Mr. Henry Ward Beecher has recently told us, in one of his "Ledger" articles, how he earned his first ten dollars, and what he did with it. While he was a student in Amherst he was invited to deliver a Fourth-of-July temperance address in Brattleboro', forty miles distant. His travelling expenses were to be paid; but the brilliant scheme occurred to him to walk the eighty miles, and earn the stage fare by saving it. He did so, and received by mail after his return a ten-dollar bill,—the first ten dollars he had ever possessed, and the first money he had ever earned. He instantly gave a proof that the test of a person's civilization is the use he makes of his surplus money. He spent the whole of it upon an edition of the works of Edmund Burke, and carried the volumes to his room, a happy youth. It was not the best choice, in literature, perhaps; but it was one that marked the civilized being, and indicated the future instructor of his species. Suppose he had invested the sum (and we all know students who would make just that use of an unexpected ten-dollar bill) in a new meerschaum and a bag of Lone-Jack tobacco! At the end of his college course he would have had, probably, a finely colored pipe,—perhaps the prettiest pipe of his year; but he would not have had that little "library of fifty volumes," the solace of his coming years of poverty and fever and ague, always doing their part toward expanding him from a sectarian into a man of the world,

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and lifting him from the slavery of a mean country parish toward the mastership of a metropolitan congregation. His was the very nature to have been quenched by tobacco. If he had bought a pipe that day, instead of books, he might be at this moment a petty D.D., preaching safe inanity or silly eccentricity in some obscure corner of the world, and going to Europe every five years for his health.

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We all perceive that smoking has made bold and rapid encroachments of late years. It is said that the absurdly situated young man who passes in the world by the undescriptive name of the Prince of Wales smokes in drawing-rooms in the presence of ladies. This tale is probably false; scandalous tales respecting conspicuous persons are so generally false, that it is always safest and fairest to reject them as a matter of course, unless they rest upon testimony that ought to convince a jury.

Nevertheless, it is true that smoke is creeping toward the drawing-room, and rolls in clouds where once it would not have dared to send a whiff. One reason of this is, that the cigar, and the pipe too, have "got into literature," where they shed abroad a most alluring odor. That passage, for example, in "*Jane Eyre*" [Ed. Note: by Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855) (New

York: New York Pub. Co., 1847)] where the timid, anxious Jane, returning after an absence, scents Rochester's cigar before she catches sight of his person, is enough to make any old smoker feel for his cigar-case; and all through the book smoke plays a dignified and attractive part. Mr. Rochester's cigars, we feel, must be of excellent quality (thirty cents each, at least); we see

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how freely they burn; we smell their delicious fragrance. Charlotte Brontë was, perhaps, one of the few women who have a morbid love of the odor of tobacco, who crave its stimulating aid as men do, and therefore her Rochester has a fragrance of the weed about him at all times, with which many readers have been captivated. "*Jane Eyre*" is the book of recent years which has been most frequently imitated, and consequently the circulating libraries are populous with smoking heroes. Byron, Thackeray, and many other popular authors have written passages in which the smoke of tobacco insinuates itself most agreeably into the reader's gentle senses. Many smokers, too, have been made such by the unexplained rigor with which the practice is sometimes forbidden. Forbidden it must be in all schools; but merely forbidding it and making it a dire offence will not suffice in these times. Some of the most pitiable [slaves of smoke](#) I have ever known were brought up in families and schools where smoking was invested with the irresistible charm of being the worst thing a boy could do, except running away. Deep in the heart of the woods, high up in rocky hills, far from the haunts of men and schoolmasters (not to speak of places less salubrious), boys assemble on holiday afternoons to sicken themselves with furtive smoke, returning at the close of the day to relate the dazzling exploit to their companions. In this way the habit sometimes becomes so tyrannical, that, if the victims of it should give a sincere definition of "vacation," it

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would be this, "The time when boys can get a chance to smoke every day." I can also state, that the only school I ever knew or heard of in which young men who had formed the habit were induced to break themselves of it was the only school I ever knew or heard of in which all students above the age of sixteen were allowed to smoke. Still, it *must* be forbidden. Professor Charlier, of New York, will not have in his school a boy who smokes even at home in his father's presence, or in the street, and he is right; but it requires all his talents as a disciplinarian and all his influence as a member of society to enforce the rule. Nor would even his vigilance avail if he confined himself to the cold enunciation of the law: Thou shalt not smoke.

To forbid young men to smoke, without making an honest and earnest and skilful attempt to convince their understandings that the practice is [pernicious](#), is sometimes followed by deplorable consequences. At the Naval Academy at Annapolis, not only is smoking forbidden, but the prohibition is effectual. There are four hundred young men confined within walls, and subjected to such discipline that it is impossible for a rule to be broken, the breaking of which betrays itself. The result is, that nearly all the students chew tobacco,—many of them to very great excess, and to their most serious and manifest injury. That great national institution teems with abuses, but, perhaps, all



the other deleterious influences of the place united do less harm than this one abomination.

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On looking over the articles upon tobacco in the Encyclopedias, we occasionally find writers declaring or conjecturing that, as smoking has become a habit almost universal, there must be, in the nature of things, a reason which accounts for and justifies it. Accounts for it, *yes*; justifies it, *no*.

So long as man lives the life of a pure savage, he has good health without ever bestowing a thought upon the matter. Nature, like a good farmer, saves the best for seed. The mightiest bull becomes the father of the herd; the great warrior, the great hunter, has the most wives and children. The sickly children are destroyed by the hardships of savage life, and those who survive are compelled to put forth such exertions in procuring food and defending their wigwams that they are always "in training." The pure savage has not the skill nor the time to extract from the wilds in which he lives the poisons that could deprave his taste and impair his vigor. Your Indian sleeps, with scanty covering, in a wigwam that freely admits the air. In his own way, he is an exquisite cook. Neither Delmonico nor Parker nor Professor Blot ever cooked a salmon or a partridge as well as a Rocky Mountain Indian cooks them; and when he has cooked his fish or his bird, he eats with it some perfectly simple preparation of Indian corn. He is an absolutely *unstimulated* animal. The natural working of his internal machinery generates all the vital force he wants. He is as healthy as a buffalo, as a prize-fighter, as the stroke-oar of a university boat.

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But in our civilized, sedentary life, he who would have good health must fight for it. Many people have the insolence to become parents who have no right to aspire to that dignity; children are born who have no right to exist; and skill preserves many whom nature is [eager to destroy](#).

Civilized man, too, has learned the trick of heading off some of the diseases that used to sweep over whole regions of the earth, and lay low the weakliest tenth of the population. Consequently, while the average duration of human life has been increased, the average tone of human health has been lowered. Fewer die, and fewer are quite well.

Very many of us breathe [vitiating air](#), and keep nine tenths of the body quiescent for twenty-two or twenty-three hours out of every twenty-four.

Immense numbers cherish [gloomy, depressing opinions](#), and convert the day set apart for rest and recreation into one which aggravates some of the worst tendencies of the week, and counteracts none of them.

Half the population of the United States violate the laws of nature every time they take sustenance; and the children go, crammed with indigestion, to sit six hours in hot, ill-ventilated or unventilated school-rooms. Except in a few large towns, the bread and meat are almost universally inferior or bad; and the only viands that are good are those which ought not to be eaten at all. At most family tables, after a course of meat which has the curious property of being both soft and tough, a wild profusion of ingenious puddings, pies, cakes, and other abominable trash, beguiles the young, disgusts

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the mature, and injures all. From bodies thus imperfectly nourished, we demand excessive exertions of all kinds.

Hence, the universal craving for artificial aids to digestion. Hence, the universal use of stimulants,—whiskey, Worcestershire sauce, beer, wine, coffee, tea, tobacco. This is the only reason I can discover in the nature of things here for the widespread, increasing propensity to smoke. As all the virtues are akin, and give loyal aid to one another, so are all the [vices](#) in alliance, and play into one another's hands. Many a smoker will discover, when at last he breaks the bond of his [servitude](#), that his pipe, trifling a matter as it may seem to him now, was really the power that kept down his whole nature, and vulgarized his whole existence. In many instances the single act of self-control involved in giving up the habit would necessitate and include a complete regeneration, first physical, then moral.

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Whether the Coming Man will drink wine or be a teetotaler has not yet, perhaps, been positively ascertained; but it is certain he will not smoke. Nothing can be surer than that. The Coming Man will be as healthy as Tecumseh, as clean as Shirley, and as well groomed as Dexter. He will not fly the female of his species, nor wall himself in from her approach, nor give her cause to prefer his absence. We are not left to infer or conjecture this; we can ascertain it from what we know of the messengers who have announced the coming of the Coming Man. The most distinguished

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of these was Goethe,—perhaps the nearest approach to the complete human being that has yet appeared. The mere fact that this admirable person lived always unpolluted by this seductive poison is a fact of some significance; but the important fact is, that he *could not* have smoked and remained Goethe. When we get close to the man, and live intimately with him, we perceive the impossibility of his ever having been a smoker. We can as easily fancy Desdemona smoking a cigarette as the highly groomed, alert, refined, imperial Goethe with a cigar in his mouth.

In America, the best gentleman and most variously learned and accomplished man we have had—the man, too, who had in him most of what will constitute the glory of the future—was Thomas Jefferson [1743-1826], Democrat, of Virginia. He was versed in six languages; he danced, rode, and hunted as well as General Washington; he played the violin well, wrote admirably, farmed skilfully, and was a most generous, affectionate, humane, and great-souled human being. It was the destiny of this ornament and consolation of his species to raise tobacco, and live by tobacco all his life. But he knew too much to use it himself, or, to speak more correctly, his fine feminine senses, his fine masculine instincts, revolted from the use of it, without any assistance from his understanding.

There is no trace of the pipe in the writings of Washington or Franklin; probably they never smoked; so that we may rank the three great men of America—Washington, [Franklin](#), and Jefferson—among the

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exempts. Washington Irving, who was the first literary man of the United States to achieve a universal reputation, and who is still regarded as standing at the head of our literature, was no smoker. Two noted Americans, Dr. Nott and [John Quincy Adams](#), after having been slaves of the weed for many years, escaped from bondage and smoked no more. These distinguished names may serve as a set-off to the list of illustrious smokers previously given.

Among the nations of the earth most universally addicted to smoking are the Turks, the Persians, the Chinese, the Spanish,—all slaves of tradition, submissive to tyrants, unenterprising, averse to improvement, despisers of women. Next to these, perhaps, we must place the Germans, a noble race, renowned for two thousand years for the masculine vigor of the men and the motherly dignity of the women. Smoking is a blight upon this valuable breed of men; it [steals away from their minds](#) much of the alertness and decision that naturally belong to such minds as they have, and it [impairs their bodily health](#). Go, on some festive day, to "Jones's Woods," where you may sometimes see five thousand Germans—men, women, and children—amusing themselves in their simple and rational way. Not one face in ten has the clear, bright look of health. Nearly all the faces have a certain tallowy aspect,—yellowish in color, with a dull shine upon them. You perceive plainly that it is not well with these good people; they are not conforming to nature's requirements; they are not the Germans of

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Tacitus [55- c 117],—ruddy, tough, happy, and indomitable. To lay the whole blame of this decline upon smoking, which is only one of many bad habits of theirs, would be absurd. What I insist upon is this: Smoking, besides doing its part toward lowering the tone of the [bodily health](#), [deadens our sense](#) of other physical evils, and makes us submit to them more patiently. If our excellent German fellow-citizens were to throw away their pipes, they would speedily toss their cast-iron sausages after them, and become more fastidious in the choice of air for their own and their children's breathing, and reduce their daily allowance of lager-bier. Their first step toward physical regeneration will be, must be, the suppression of the pipe.

One hopeful sign for the future is, that this great subject of the physical aids and the physical obstacles to virtue is attracting attention and rising into importance. Our philanthropists have stopped giving tracts to hungry people; at least they give bread first. It is now a recognized truth, that it takes a certain number of cubic yards for a person to be virtuous in; and that, consequently, in that square mile of New York in which two hundred and ninety thousand people live, there must be—absolutely *must* be—an immense number of unvirtuous persons. No human virtue or civilization can long exist where four families live in a room, some of whom take boarders. The way to regenerate this New York mile is simply to widen Manhattan Island by building three bridges over the East

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River, and to shorten the island by making three lines of underground or overground railroad to the upper end of it. We may say, too, there are circles—not many, it is true, but some—in which a man's [religion](#) would not be considered a very valuable acquisition, if, when he had "got" it, he kept on chewing tobacco. Such a flagrant and abominable violation of the Creator's laws, by a person distinctly professing a special veneration for them, would be ludicrous, if it were not so pernicious.

The time is at hand when these simple and fundamental matters will have their proper place in all our schemes for the improvement of one another. The impulse in this direction given by the publication of the most valuable work of this century—Buckle's "*History of Civilization in England*"—will not expend itself in vain. If that author had but lived, he would not have disdained, in recounting the obstacles to civilization, to consider the effects upon the best modern [brains](#) of a [poison](#) that lulls their noblest faculties to [torpor](#), and enables them languidly to endure what they ought constantly to fight

It is not difficult to stop smoking, except for one class of smokers,—those whom it has radically injured, and whose lives it is shortening. For all such the discontinuance of the practice will be almost as difficult as it is desirable. No rule can be given which will apply to all or to many such cases; but each man must fight it out on the line he finds best, and must not be surprised if it takes him a great deal longer than "all

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summer." If one of this class of smokers should gain deliverance from his [bondage](#) after a two years' struggle, he would be doing well. A man who had been smoking twenty cigars a day for several years and should suddenly stop, would be almost certain either to relapse or fall into some worse habit—chewing, whiskey, or opium. Perhaps his best way would be to put himself upon half allowance for a year and devote the second year to completing his cure,—always taking care to live in other respects more wisely and temperately, and thus lessen the [craving](#) for a stimulant. The more smoke is hurting a man, the harder it is for him to stop smoking; and almost all whom the practice is destroying rest under the delusion that they could stop without the least effort if they liked.

The vast majority of smokers—seven out of every ten, at least—can, without the least danger or much inconvenience, cease smoking at once, totally and forever. As I have now given a trial to both sides of the question, I beg respectfully to assure the brotherhood of smokers that it does *not* pay to smoke. It really does not. I can work better and longer than before. I have less headache. I have a better opinion of myself. I enjoy exercise more, and step out much more vigorously. My room is cleaner. The bad air of our theatres and other public places disgusts and infuriates me more, but exhausts me less. I think I am rather better tempered, as well as more cheerful and satisfied.

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I endure the inevitable ills of life with more fortitude, and look forward more hopefully to the coming years. It did not pay to smoke, but, most decidedly, it pays to stop smoking.

## Other Writings on Tobacco Effects

[Tobacco Effects Censorship: A Reason The Predicted Nonsmoking Future Did Not Occur](#)

[Selling to Children: A Reason The Predicted Nonsmoking Future Did Not Occur](#)

[\*The Use and Abuse of Tobacco,\*](#)  
by Dr. John Lizars (1859)

[\*Tobacco and Its Effects: Report to the Wisconsin Board of Health\*](#)  
by G. F. Witter, M.D. (1881)

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[In interim, pending completion of this site,  
to add the section on alcohol,  
you can obtain this book via your local library.]

object; we passed thirteen drunken men within a walk of an hour,—many of them were so far gone as to be totally unable to walk. . . . In passing between Paris and London, I have been more struck by drunkenness in the streets of the former than in those of the latter." Horatio Greenough gives similar testimony respecting Italy: "Many of the more thinking and prudent Italians abstain from the use of wine; several of the most eminent of the medical men are notoriously opposed to its use, and declare it a poison. One fifth, and sometimes one fourth, of the earnings of the laborers are expended in wine."

I have been surprised at the quantity, the emphasis, and the uniformity of the testimony on this point. Close observers of the famous beer countries, such as Saxony and Bavaria, where the beer is pure and excellent, speak of this delicious liquid as the



chief enemy of the nobler faculties and tastes of human nature. The surplus wealth, the surplus time, the surplus force of those nations, are chiefly expended in fuddling the brain with beer. Now, no reader needs to be informed that the progress of man, of nations, and of men depends upon the use they make of their little surplus. It is not a small matter, but a great and weighty consideration,—the cost of these drinks in mere money. We drinkers must make out a very clear case in order to justify such a country as France in producing a *billion and a half of dollars* worth of wine and brandy per annum.

The teetotalers, then, are right in their leading po-

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sitions, and yet they stand aghast, wondering at their failure to convince mankind. Mr. E. G. Delavan writes from Paris within these few weeks:

"When I was here thirty years since, [French King] Louis Philippe [1830-1848] told me that wine was the curse of France; that he wished every grapevine was destroyed, except for the production of food; that total abstinence was the only true temperance; but he did not believe there were fifteen persons in Paris who understood it as it was understood by his family and myself; but he hoped from the labors in America, in time, an influence would flow back upon France that would be beneficial I am here again after the lapse of so many years, and in place of witnessing any abatement of the evil, I think it is on the increase, especially in the use of distilled spirits."

The teetotalers have underrated the difficulty of the task they have undertaken, and misconceived its nature. It is not the great toe that most requires treatment when a man has the gout, although it is the great toe that makes him roar. When we look about us, and consider the present physical life of man, we are obliged to conclude that the whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint. Drinking is but a symptom which reveals the malady. Perhaps, if we were all to stop our guzzling suddenly, *without* discontinuing our other bad habits, we should rather lose by it than gain. Alcohol supports us in doing wrong! It prevents our immediate destruction. The thing for us to do is, to strike at the [causes of drinking](#), to cease the [bad breathing](#), the bad eating, the [bad reading](#), the

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bad feeling and [bad thinking](#), which, in a sense, necessitate bad drinking. For some of the teetotal organizations might be substituted Physical Welfare Societies.

The Human Race is now on trial for its life! One hundred and three years ago last April, James Watt, a poor Scotch mechanic, while taking his walk on Sunday afternoon on Glasgow Green, conceived the idea which has made steam man's submissive and untiring slave. Steam enables the fifteen millions of adults in Great Britain and Ireland to produce more commodities than the whole population of the earth could produce without its assistance. Steam, plus the virgin soil of two new continents, has placed the means of self-destruction within the reach of hundreds of millions of human beings whose ancestors were almost as safe in their ignorance and poverty as the beasts they attended. At the same time, the steam-engine is an infuriate propagator; and myriad creatures of its producing—creatures of eager desires, thin brains, excessive vanity, and small self-control—seem formed to bend the neck to the destructive tyranny of



fashion, and yield helplessly to the more destructive tyranny of [habit](#). The steam-engine gives them a great variety of the means of self-extirpation,—air-tight houses, labor-saving machines, luxurious food, stimulating drinks, highly wrought novels, and many others. Let all women for the next century but wear such restraining clothes as are now usual, and it is doubtful if the race could ever recover from the effects; it is doubtful

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if there could ever again be a full-orbed, bouncing baby. Wherever we look, we see the human race dwindling.

The English aristocracy used to be thought an exception, but Miss [Florence] Nightingale [1820-1910] says not. She tells us that the great houses of England, like the small houses of America, contain

- great-grandmothers [[1650's-1700's](#)] possessing constitutions without a flaw,
- grandmothers [1700's-1750's] but slightly impaired,
- mothers [1750's-1800's] who are often ailing and never strong,
- daughters [1800's-1850's] who are miserable and hopeless invalids.

Ed. Note: See similar analyses by  
[Dr. John Lizars \(1859\)](#),  
[Dr. Hippolyte Depierris \(1876\)](#),  
[Rev. John Wight \(1889\)](#),  
[Dr. Charles Slocum \(1909\)](#),  
[Dr. Herbert Tidswell \(1912\)](#),  
[Prof. Bruce Fink \(1915\)](#),  
[Higley and Frech \(1916\)](#),  
and a  
[related tobacco-caused birth-defects medical history overview](#).

And see data on the pattern of linking smoking to national collapses dating from [the Spanish conquistadores' conquest of Mexico](#) [1519].

André Thevet tracked underlying sexual impact, and [so reported in 1555](#).

And the steam-engine has placed efficient means of self-destruction within reach of the kitchen, the stable, the farm, and the shop; and those means of self-destruction are all but universally used.

Perhaps man has nearly run his course in this world, and is about to disappear, like the mammoth, and give place to some nobler kind of creature who will manage the estate better than the present occupant. Certainly we cannot boast of having done very well with it, nor could we complain if we should receive notice to leave. Perhaps James Watt came into the world to extinguish his species. If so, it is well. Let us go on eating, drinking, smoking, over-working, idling, men killing themselves to buy clothes for their

wives, wives killing themselves by wearing them, children petted and candied into imbecility and diphtheria. In that case, of course, there will be no Coming Man, and we need not take the trouble to inquire what he will do.

But probably the instinct of self-preservation will assert itself in time, and an antidote to the steam-

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room. There, whether he raves or droops, he is the most miserable wretch on earth; for, besides the bodily tortures which he suffers, he has to endure the most desolating pang that a decent human being ever knows,—the loss of his self-respect. He abhors himself and is ashamed; he remembers past relapses and despairs, he cannot look his own children in the face; he wishes he had never been born, or had died in the cursed hour, vividly remembered, when this appetite mastered him first. As his health is restored, his hopes revive; he renews his resolution and he resumes his ordinary routine, subdued, distrustful of himself, and on the watch against temptation. Why he again relapses he can hardly tell, but he always does. Sometimes a snarl in business perplexes him, and he drinks for elucidation. Sometimes melancholy oppresses him, and he drinks to drive dull care away. Sometimes good fortune overtakes him, or an enchanting day in June or October attunes his heart to joy, and he is taken captive by the strong delusion that now is the time to drink and be glad. Often it is lovely woman who offers the wine, and offers it in such a way that he thinks he cannot refuse without incivility or confession. From conversation with the inmates of the Inebriate Asylum, I am confident that Mr. Greeley's assertion with regard to the wine given at the Communion is correct. That sip might be enough to awaken the desire. The mere odor of the wine filling the church might be too much for some men.

There appears to be a physical cause for this ex-

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treme susceptibility. Dr. [Albert] Day has once had the opportunity to examine the brain of a man who, after having been a drunkard, reformed, and lived for some years a teetotaler. He found, to his surprise, that the globules of the brain had not shrunk to their natural size. They did not exhibit the inflammation of the drunkard's brain, but they were still enlarged, and seemed ready on the instant to absorb the fumes of alcohol and resume their former condition. He thought he saw in this morbid state of the brain the physical part of the reason why a man who has once been a drunkard can never again, as long as he lives, safely take one drop of any alcoholic liquor. He thought he saw why a glass of wine puts the man back instantly to where he was when he drank all the time. He saw the citadel free from the enemy, swept and clean, but undefended, incapable of defence, and its doors opened wide to the enemy's return; so that there was no safety, except in keeping the foe at a distance, away beyond the outermost wall. There are many varieties of these occasional drunkards, and, as a class, they are perhaps the hardest to cure. Edgar Poe was one of them; half a glass of wine would set him off upon a wild, reckless debauch, that would last for days. All such persons as artists, writers, and actors used to be particularly subject to this malady, before they had any recognized place in the world, or any acknowledged right to exist at all. Men

whose labors are intense, but irregular, whose gains are small and uncertain, who would gladly be

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