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EFFECTS OF THE CIGARETTE

The late Elbert Hubbard, who was drowned when the Lusitania was torpedoed, had the following to say regarding the injury to the physical and moral well-being of young men:

Cigarette smoking begins with an innocent boyish effort to be smart.

It soon becomes a pleasure, then a satisfaction, next a necessity.

The last stage evolves into a third, a condition of fever and unrest, wandering of mind, accompanied by a loss of moral and mental control. This may take two years or ten. But finally a flabbiness of tissue results from taking the smoke into the bronchial tubes, where pure air is required to oxygenize the blood, and a nervous weakness follows that leaves the victim unprotected, a prey to any sort of malady or disorder to which he may be exposed or liable.

Beginning as a habit, the indulgence finally becomes a vice.

The first indication of degeneration is in the youth's secretiveness. He feels his weakness and so seeks to present a bold front. "Bluff" is the chief characteristic. He tries to make an impression—he talks big, is full of promises, plans, and confidential utterance. He confuses dates, times, and places, and often will tell you he has done a thing when he only intended to do it.

Only a strong man is honest; only the healthy tell the truth.

A lie is a disease of the will; hypocrisy is a symptom.

The cigarettist is apt to dream over his work, to dawdle indefinitely. He picks things up and lays them down, and proves for us again and again the maxim that the strong man is the one who can complete a task, not merely begin it.

One marked peculiarity of the cigarette fiend is that often he makes the discovery that cleverness, astuteness, trickery, and untruth are good substitutes for simplicity, frankness, and plain, common honesty.

The cigarettist has an abnormal egotism—he has much faith in himself. If this faith wavers, he rolls a cigarette. Often in advanced stages half the day is given to rolling cigarettes. To roll cigarettes gives

the defective something to do. Nervous, clutching, scratching, searching, yellow-stained hands—hands that alternately play the devil's tattoo and roll cigarettes—these are the hands that forge your name and close over other people's money.

The victim has a fixed belief that he is immune, and that all men are mortal but himself.

He grins at warnings, laughs at the advice of his best friends, and turns your brotherly appeal into a joke.

The man who would quit the cigarette habit must see his own folly, and convince his own mind of the existence of the vice ere it can be eradicated. The trouble is in his brain. There is no salvation for him outside himself. There is no doubt but that the cigarettist is often a man of many good impulses and over and over in his heart there sweep resolves to cease all subterfuge and be true, but these maudlin resolves are not to be trusted any more than you hearken to the promises of a "dope fiend".

The choice between cigarettes and daily doses of cocaine, morphine, or bromide is very slight.

Cigarette smoking is not periodic—it is continuous—a slow, insidious, sure poison.

Its results can be foretold as accurately as the expert alienist can foresee the end of incipient locomotor ataxia. Fortunately, most young men who begin the habit quit it before it gets a vital hold upon them. Were this not so, could the student body, say at Harvard, Yale, or Dartmouth, survive?

These young men smoke cigarettes just as they dabble in strange sins when away from the immediate restraint of family and home. Later, many of them square away and become pillars of society. But for the young man who has become so calloused that he smokes cigarettes in the presence of his mother, sister, or sweetheart, there is little hope.

The poison has already tainted his moral nature, and for him the work of dissolution, disintegration, and degeneration has begun. He is a defective—a physical, mental, and moral defective.

Cigarettes stupefy the conscience, deaden the brain, place the affections in abeyance, and bring the beast to the surface.