and then he drank deep. But, as he himself had the frankness to confess, he could abstain but he could not be moderate. When Hannah More pressed him one day, at Bishop Porteus's table, to take a little wine, he replied: "I cannot drink a *little*, child: therefore I never touch it. *Abstinence* is as easy to me as *temperance* would be difficult." Hence his indulgence in tea, and his defence of that popular beverage when so virulently attacked by Mr. Jonas Hanway.†

Hazlitt revelled in tea, which was his Hippocrene; though the beverage kept him in a state of constant nervous fever. He never touched any but black tea, and was very particular about its quality, always using the most expensive that could be got. He used, when living alone, to consume nearly a pound in a week. "A cup of Hazlitt's tea," says Mr. Patmore, "was a peculiar thing; I have never tasted anything like it. He always made it himself; half filling the teapot with tea, pouring the boiling water over it, and then almost immediately pouring it out, using with it a great quantity of sugar and cream. To judge from its occasional effect upon myself, I should say that the quantity Hazlitt drank of this tea produced ultimately a most injurious effect upon him; and in all probability hastened his death, which took place from disease of the digestive organs. But its immediate effect was agreeable, even to a

stances, taken in poisonous excess, but one common feature is very constant, viz. the production of muscular tremor. . . . The paralyzing influence of narcotic doses of tea is further displayed by the production of a particularly obstinate kind of dyspepsia, while coffee disorders the action of the heart to a distressing degree. I believe that a very much larger amount of illness is caused by intemperate indulgence in these narcotics than is commonly supposed."—Dr. Anstie *On Stimulants and Narcotics*, pp. 249, 250.

* In his pamphlet, Johnson describes himself as a "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has for many years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnights, and with tea welcomes the morning." This last phrase was thus parodied by Tyers; "*Te* veniente die—*te* decedente."—Croker's *Johnson*, 8vo edition, p. 105.

degree of fascination; and not feeling any subsequent reaction from it, he persevered in its use to the last, notwithstanding two or three attacks similar to that which terminated his life." *

This, however, was an abuse of the pleasant beverage. Hazlitt might, in like manner, have abused beef, or even water. Before his excessive indulgence in tea, he had abused ardent spirits, which had probably as much to do with the disease of his stomach and liver as his abuse of tea. Haydon writes of Hazlitt in his *Autobiography*, on the 25th of June 1815, just after the battle of Waterloo: "As for Hazlitt, it is not to be believed how the destruction of Napoleon affected him. He seemed prostrated in mind and body; he walked about unwashed, unshaved, hardly sober by day, and always intoxicated by night, literally, without exaggeration, for weeks; until at length, wakening as it were from his stupor, he at once left off all stimulating liquors, and never touched them after." *

Many brain-workers, however, do not possess the moral courage to give up alcohol in favor of tea. There is usually excitability enough in the brain of the thinker to keep him awake without resorting to artificial methods. These only serve to exaggerate the wakefulness which ought rather to be guarded against than provoked by narcotic stimulants. Carried to excess, the use of alcohol in any of its forms produces moral as well as physical injury to the brain-worker. Yet bards have sung its praises in all ages, though the greatest poets have been independent of artificial inspiration. Milton said the true epic poet who shall sing of the gods and then descend among men, must drink water out of a wooden bowl. Wordsworth also avowed himself to be "a simple water-drinking

* P. G. Patmore, *My Friends and Acquaintances*, ii. pp. 312, 313.
† Haydon's *Autobiography*, by T. Taylor, i. p. 279.

bard," though it has been very different with the poets of his own and preceding generations. *

Hessius, a German poet, famous in the sixteenth century, thought that there could be no greater disgrace than to be vanquished in a drinking-bout; and Drummond said of Ben Jonson that "drink was the element in which he lived." "His rugged face," says Aubrey, "was knotted and seamed by jovial excesses acting on a scorbutic habit." After quaffing "seas of Canary" at the "Mermaid," he would reel home to bed, and after a profuse perspiration, rise again to his dramatic studies. It is even said that Shakespeare died shortly after a "merry bout" with Ben Jonson and Drayton at Stratford-on-Avon, where he "drank too hard"; though Charles Knight says that the tradition, though it still survives, is not much to be relied on. Yet Shakespeare, while in London, was a regular frequenter of the "Mermaid," with Beaumont and Fletcher, Carew, Donne, and Jonson; and temperance in drink was not one of the virtues of that age. Marlowe was killed in a drunken quarrel, in his thirtieth year. Greene, the dramatist, led as turbulent a life as Marlowe. According to his own account of himself, "gluttony with drunkenness was his only delight." After falling from one stage of degradation to another, he "died of a surfeit" while in such a state of poverty that he was unable to leave his bed for lack of clothes.

Cowley died of a fewer caught through lying out in the

* "If in any manner we can stimulate this [the poetic] instinct, new passages are opened into nature, the mind flows into and through things hardest and highest, and the metamorphosis is possible. This is the reason why the bards love wine, mead, narcotics, coffee, tea, opium, the fumes of sandal-wood and tobacco, or whatever other species of animal exhilaration. . . . But never can any advantage be taken of nature by a trick. The spirit of the world, the great calm presence of the Creator, comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine. The sublime vision comes to the pure and simple soul in a clean and chaste body. That which we owe to narcotics is not an inspiration, but some counterfeit excitement and fury."—Emerson, *Essays*; "The Poet."

fields all night; he had been dining with a friend, drank deep, and was unable to find his way home. * Lovelace, who sang in praise of wine, died, says Aubrey, in a cellar in Long Acre. Otway died in a public-house on Tower Hill,—some say of hunger, others of drink. † Boyse was run over by a hackney coach when drunk; and Savage, who, during the later part of his life, lived chiefly on drink, died in Bristol jail. Among the other "five fathom deep" men of the time were Rochester, Congreve, Sheffield, Parnell, Churchill, Prior, and Shadwell. Andrew Marvell drank copiously of wine to exalt his muse. Shenstone says of Sommerville, a brother poet, that "he drank himself into pains of the body in order to get rid of pains of the mind."

Addison, when vexed by the Countess of Warwick, his wife, resorted to the tavern, and sought consolation in the bottle. There is a room in Holland House where Addison composed his later writings; a bottle of Canary stood on a table at one end of the room, and Addison's visits to it were so frequent, that before his paper was finished the bottle was emptied. Steele was a toper, and wrote many of his articles for *The Tatler* in the taverns which he frequented. Even the correct Pope is said to have hastened his death by drinking spirits and feeding on highly seasoned dishes. When Goldsmith was arrested by his landlady for rent, he sent to Dr. Johnson to inform him of his great distress. The doctor sent him a guinea, and promised to come immediately, which he did. But Goldsmith had already changed the guinea, and "had a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him" when he arrived. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and asked Goldsmith how he proposed to pay the rent? The latter answered that he had the MS. of a novel ready for the press. It was the *Vicar*

* Spence's *Anecdotes* (edition 1858), p. 10.
† *Ibid.* p. 162.

of Wakefield! Johnson took it to a bookseller, and sold it for £60; the rent was paid, the sheriff's officer withdrew and Goldsmith, after rating the landlady, insisted on her giving him a bowl of punch!

The excesses of the poet Burns are well known, and have been often used to point a moral. But he had many temptations, and fell before them as stronger men have done. When he was remonstrated with by a lady, one of his intimate friends, for joining drinking companions, he answered: "Madam, they would not thank me for my company if I did not drink with them; so I must give them a slice of my constitution." Even the Rev. John Logan, author of "The Cuckoo" and many hymns and paraphrases, sought relief from melancholy in the fatal solace of drink. On one occasion he so far forgot himself as to appear in the pulpit in a state of intoxication. He abandoned the church for the press, and ended his fitful career as a literary man about town.

Sir. Walter Scott was a man of sober habits. But for that he could not have accomplished so large an amount of brain-work. His only indulgence in alcohol was an occasional tumbler of whisky-toddy, which he preferred to the most precious "liquid ruby" that ever flowed from the cup of a prince. He reduced his quantity as he grew older, and smoked a cigar or two instead. He took care to warn his son against strong drink. "Even drinking what is called a certain quantity every day," he said, "hurts the stomach; and by hereditary descent, yours is delicate."

Byron was intemperate only by fits and starts. At times he would almost starve himself, and smoked and chewed tobacco to prevent corpulency, of which he had a horror; but at other times he would drink to excess. Much of his poetry is said to have been composed under the influence of gin. Wine and laudanum made him savage, suspicious, and quarrelsome. "The thing that gives

me the highest spirits," he said, "is a dose of salts. But one can't take *them* like champagne."* There seems to have been a dash of insanity in Byron throughout his life, as exhibited in his moodiness, melancholy, and misanthropy. He himself often feared that he should fall a victim to his morbidity, and, like Swift, "die at the top." Haydon takes another view of his character. "I am convinced," he said, "that Byron's excesses were not from love of vice, but experiments for a new sensation on which to speculate. After debauchery, he hurried away in his gondola, and spent the night on the waters. On board a Greek ship, when touching a yataghan, he was overheard to say: 'I should like to know the feeling of a murderer.'"

Keats took refuge from the malicious criticism with which his *Endymion* was received, in the dilirium of drink; but it was followed by despondency, amounting almost to despair. Haydon, who knew him intimately, says that: "For six weeks he was scarcely sober; and to show what a man will do to gratify his appetites when they get the better of him, he once covered his tongue and throat as far as he could reach with cayenne pepper, in order to appreciate 'the delicious coldness of claret in all its glory,' to use his own expression." †

There were two things that the amiable Charles Lamb could not pass—in the city, an exhibition of Punch and Judy, and, in the country, a public-house. During the long walks which he took about Hampstead and Highgate,

* Moore, *Life of Byron*, 8vo edition, p. 536. For the same reason, Dryden, before sitting down to study and composition, always took physic, and observed a careful regimen in respect of drink and diet.

† Haydon's *Autobiography* (by T. Taylor), ii. p. 9. In one of Keat's letters the following passage occurs: "Talking of pleasure, this moment I am writing with one hand, and with the other holding to my mouth a nectarine. Good God, how fine! It went down soft, pulpy, slushy, oozy—all its delicious *embonpoint* melted down my throat like a large beautiful strawberry."—Lord Houghton, *Life and Letters of Keats*, (edition 1867), p. 260.

he had always before him the prospect of some wayside inn. "Now we have walked a pint," he would say.* On one occasion Professor Wilson accompanied him in a ramble, when suddenly Lamb disappeared. Wilson turned and followed him into a tap, when he overheard the order of "a pint of porter." "Make it a pot," said Wilson over Lamb's shoulder; and a grateful look was the reply. But towards the end of Lamb's life, Mr. Proctor says that the pipe was the only thing in which he really exceeded. Lamb attempted to give it up, and wrote his "Farewell to Tobacco"; but tobacco, he said, stood in its own light, and he returned to his "idol," which, like Robert Hall, the Congregational minister, he continued "to burn." † Cowper, the poet, was on intimate terms with the Rev. Wm. Bull, the dissenting minister at Olney. He described the reverend gentleman as "a man of letters and of genius, who can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. But," he added, "he smokes tobacco—nothing is perfect! 'Nihil est ab omnia, parte beatum.'"

De Quincey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge indulged

* P. G. Patmore, *My Friends and Acquaintances*, i. p. 52.

† The Rev. Robert Hall learnt to smoke in the company of Dr Parr, who was a profound scholar as well as smoker. A friend one day found the preacher blowing an immense cloud of smoke, and, looking surprised, Hall said: "O, I am only qualifying myself for the society of a Doctor of Divinity, and this (holding up his pipe) is my test of admission." A member of his congregation expostulated with him as to the injuriousness of the habit, and left with him a copy of Dr. Adam Clarke's pamphlet *On the Use and Abuse of Tobacco*, with the request that he would read it. In a few days Mr. Hall returned it with the remark: "Thank you, sir, for Adam Clarke's pamphlet: I can't refute his arguments, and I can't give up smoking." He was more vehement in his denunciation of brandy. A minister of his own denomination, too much addicted to its use, said to him one day: "Friend Hall, I will thank you for a glass of brandy-and-water."—"Call it by its right name," was the reply; "ask for a glass of liquid fire and distilled damnation, and you shall have a gallon." The man turned pale, and seemed for a time struggling with anger. At last he stretched out his hand and said; "Brother Hall, I thank you from the bottom of my heart." From that time he ceased to take brandy-and-water.—*Olinthus Gregory's Memoir.*

largely in opium De Quincey left behind him in his *Confessions of an Opium Eater*, perhaps the most vivid picture ever painted of the delirious joys and agonizing horrors of the abuse of opium. Coleridge first resorted to opium as a relief from pain; the needed relief was found, and Coleridge resorted to opium again. The desire for it grew; the use of the drug became a habit; with every dose, the will to resist it diminished, until at length the indulgence in opium became an imperious necessity.* It reached an excess that has seldom been equalled: it prostrated his powers; broke up his family; and for the greater part of fourteen years left him a miserable wreck. His mind became distempered and unsteady; his memory lost continuity; and his will became paralyzed. In his lucid moments, he was overwhelmed with a sense of self-degradation; but having lost all self-control and decision of character, he continued fast in the chains in which he had bound himself. Fortunately, by dint of great efforts, he was enabled at length to break his bonds and to spend his remaining years in comparative honor and usefulness, though full of weakness and suffering.

Unhappily, however, the indulged desire for narcotics does not die with the victim, but descends like an inheritance of poison in the blood and brains of the unborn. Coleridge's son Hartley, though endowed with remarkable gifts, was cursed by an appetite for drink which blasted his whole life. He was spiritual yet sensual: he lived in dreams and was swayed by impulse; he was unable to control his desires, and his life became a wreck. He "sang like a cherub, and drank like a fis.h" He lost his Oriel

* Saint Augustine thus explains the progress of unhallowed desire in the human heart, which is applicable to indulgence in strong drink, opium, and narcotics generally; "Ex voluntate pervissa, facta est *libido;* et dum servitur libidine, facta est *consuetudo;* et dum consuetudini non resistatur, facta est *necessitas.*"—*Confess*, lib. 8, c. p. 5.

Fellowship through intemperance. He took to letters, but his disease pursued him. While at Leeds, writing the *Yorkshire Worthies*, he disappeared for days and weeks together; the printer's boys were sent in search of him, and usually found him in an obscure beershop. He went to the Lakes and was no better. One of his best friends, ceased to call upon him: "It was so ridiculous and pitiable," he said, "to find the poor, harmless creature, amid the finest scenery in the world, and in beautiful summer weather, dead-drunk at ten o'clock in the morning." It was the same to the end. And yet Hartley was a most affectionate and lovable creature. That he was fully aware of the wrongness of his course, is evident from his numerous melancholy plaints in stanzas and sonnets; but his will was paralyzed. He "knew the right and yet the wrong pursued"; he met temptation more than half-way, and laid himself down, a perfectly willing victim, at its feet.

Edgar Allen Poe, that vivid and wayward genius, was another victim to self-indulgence. It may possibly have resulted, to some extent, from his unhappy origin, and his untoward bringing up. The poison may, as in the case of Hartley Coleridge, have been bred in his blood and brain; and entitles him to our pity and commiseration, rather than to his utter condemnation. We can never trace the proximate, still less the ultimate causes, which lead to a man's break-down in life. We see his follies, but know not their predestined beginnings. We witness his errors, but have no idea what his inherent weaknesses and temptations have been. To use Burns's words:—

> "What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

Many literary men, who work for bread, for money, or for reputation, have had at one time or another, a touch of the student's disease, the *Morbus Eruditorum*. This is quite

independent of their indulgence in narcotics. It is simply the result of over-excitement of the brain; for, the more delicate the instrument, the more liable it is to be thrown out of tune. Even physicians, who know the results of over brain-work, are sometimes found as reckless of their health as those who write for daily bread. Haller, for instance, was an excessive brain-worker. He lived in his library; took his meals there: slept there; and sometimes passed months without leaving it. Bichat also cut short his life by his excessive application to study. His constitution was so undermined by it, that an accidental fall on his head so shook his frame that he never rallied, but died at the early age of thirty-one.

The late Dr. Todd, the physiologist, cut short his life by his devotion to learning and science. He was accustomed to rise at six. After two or three hours of mental work, he swallowed his breakfast, and went out to visit his patients, which occupied him the greater part of the day. At a late hour, with his physical powers exhausted, he dined, after which he set to work upon his *Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology* or his *Physiological Anatomy and Physiology of Man*, both of which were published at the same time. Of course no human constitution could stand such a strain of body and mind. His brain was overworked, his body was unexercised, and his stomach was loaded with food which it could not digest; and thus this brilliant and useful physician passed away at the age of fifty.

Brain workers, of all others, require the most repose; and every attempt to stimulate the thinking organ into abnormal activity, should above all things be avoided. Sleep deserted poor Goldsmith towards the end of his career, and at last he slept "the sleep that knows no waking" in his forty-fifth year. His biographer says of him: "Sleep had deserted him; his appetite was gone, and in the state of weakness, to which he had been reduced, that want of

sleep might in itself be fatal." It then occurred to Dr. Turton to put a very pregnant question to his patient. "Your pulse," said he, "is in a greater disorder than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have: Is your mind at ease?"—"No, it is not," was Goldsmith's melancholy answer.* These were his last words.

Sleeplessness, as we have said, is one of the penalties of over brain-work, and it is usually accompanied by depression of spirits, which often ends in profound melancholy. Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to Locke, described himself as "not having slept an hour a night for a fortnight together, and for five days together not a wink." This was caused partly by his prolonged study, and partly by the distress occasioned by the destruction of his laboratory and MSS. by fire. The consequence was a temporary aberration of intellect, from which he recovered after a few months' rest. Pinel, however, held that the study of the exact sciences acted as a preservative of the mind against derangement—always subject, of course, to the study being pursued with regularity and in moderation. The balance of the mind is liable to be deranged by excessive and prolonged study—literally by abuse of the prerogative of thinking; for a debauch of the mind is as unjustifiable and injurious as a debauch of the body.

The want of natural rest leads, in some constitutions, to hypochondria and melancholy. The feelings and thoughts become morbid, and all nature seems wrapped in gloom. Chaucer, in his *Dream*, of which Blanche, Duchess of Gloucester, was the subject, described himself as the victim of nervous melancholy, arising from the habitual want of sleep, accompanied with the dread of death. Blaise Pascal, author of the *Pensées*, characterized by Bayle as "one of the sublimest spirits in the world," so injured his brain by

*Forster, *Life of Goldsmith* (edition 1863), p. 461.

excessive study that he became the victim of intense melancholy. He fancied that he saw a burning abyss close by his side, into which he was in constant danger of falling. He died of organic disease of the brain, as was clearly demonstrated by an autopsy, at the early age of thirty-nine.

Even wits and humorists have suffered from melancholy. Men who have set theatres and circuses in a roar have been the subjects of profound depression of spirits. The humorist Hoffman held that evil was always concealed behind apparent good, and that the devil had a whisk of his tail in everything. One day, a poor broken-down dyspeptic consulted Abernethy. The doctor looked at his tongue, felt his pulse, and inquired after his symptoms. "Well," said the frank Abernethy, "I don't think there is much the matter with you. You want stirring up: you want cheerfulness. Go and see that clever fellow Grimaldi; you will get a good hearty laugh; that will do you more good than physic."—"Alas!" said the patient, "*I am Grimaldi!*"

Molière, the dramatist and humorist, was the victim of hypochondria; as were Tasso, Johnson, Swift, Byron, Beethoven, and others. No wonder that Johnson was melancholy. He himself said that he could not remember the day that he had passed free from pain. Swift quitted Pope's house in disgust, after a few days' melancholy intercourse. Tasso supposed himself to be surrounded by fiery darts, unearthly noises, hissings, tinklings, and ringing of bells. What crowns of thorns surround the heads of the kings of intellect!

Benvenuto Cellini, Cardan, Blake, Rousseau, Goethe, Swedenborg, Shelly, and Napoleon were subject to strange hallucinations. Even Galileo was subject to attacks of hypochondria, occasioned in great measure by his sleepless nights, which he nevertheless spent in astronomical observations. "I cannot," he said, "keep my restless brain

from grinding on." Yet he lived to the age of seventy-eight. Napoleon's plan for getting rid of his hallucinations was a good one; he made up for excessive labor by excessive repose.

Smollett was subject to sleeplessness and dyspepsia. He went abroad for change of air and scene. He suffered alike in body and mind. Wherever he went he saw only himself. He was disappointed with everything; all was barren. He saw no beauty in the Venus de Medicis at Florence, while the Pantheon at Rome only reminded him of "a huge cock-pit open at the top." He returned to England and published his travels. Their appearance drew upon him Sterne's sarcastic notice in the *Sentimental Journey*. "The learned Smellfungus," he said, "travelled from Boulogne to Paris, from Paris to Rome, and so on; but he set out with the spleen and jaundice, and every object he passed by was discolored and distorted. He thought he wrote an account of them; but it was nothing but an account of his miserable feelings. . . . He had been flayed alive, and bedevilled, and worse used than Saint Bartholomew at every stage he had come at. 'I'll tell it,' said Smellfungus, 'to the world.'—'You had better tell it,' said I, 'to your physician.'"

The poet Cowper suffered from the profoundest melancholy. This, as we have seen, was caused by the want of digestion. "I have a stomach," he said, "that quarrels with everything, and not seldom with its bread and butter." Sir James Mackintosh said of his case: "If Cowper had attended to Bacon's admonition that 'torpid minds cannot engage too soon in active life, but that sensibility should stand back until it has passed the meridian of its years,' instead of being one of the most wretched, he would have been one of the happiest of men." It is a remarkable circumstance, that it was in one of the intervals between his fits of profound melancholy that Cowper composed that

masterpiece of humor, *The Diverting History of John Gilpin*. The mirth seemed to be the rebound of his sadness. He himself said of this work: "Strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood, perhaps, had never been written at all."

So true it is, to use the words of Thomas Hood—also a sleepless man, whose wit was sharpened on the grindstone of pain—that—

> "There's not a string attuned to mirth,
> But has its chord of melancholy."

Or, in the words of Keats:—

> "Aye, in the very temple of Delight
> Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine."

When Cowper's *John Gilpin* was published—and it first appeared anonymously—Henderson the actor went up and down England, setting large rooms of people in a roar, at that wonderful production of the most melancholy of men; and amongst his audiences was to be seen the great Mrs. Siddons herself, who shook her sublime sides and clapped her majestic hands in ecstacy at the exhibition.

John Leech, the artist, to whom we owe so much enjoyment from his humorous drawings in *Punch*, was a great sufferer from want of sleep. "Nature," says Lord Bacon, "is best conquered by obeying her;" but Leech did not obey nature. It is true he occasionally hunted, but his ordinary life consisted in work. He worked on when the warning voice of his physician told him that his constitution required rest. He suffered from excessive nervous sensibility, so that the slighest noise became torment to him. We all remember the angry caricatures which he launched at the organ-grinders in *Punch*, as we also remember the furious letters of Dr. Babbage in the *Times* at the same tormentors. Artist and author were alike tortured by barrel-organs,