

IV. Concerning "Past Illnesses", the statements of patients should be critically examined, for example, he may say that he has had "rheumatism". This may only mean painful points to him, and may be of no importance whatever, but if he has had "acute inflammatory rheumatism" he has likely been confined to bed for a week or two at least, with fever, painful and swollen joints, etc. In the male a history of gonorrhœa may be obtained without difficulty, but syphilis may have occurred with such slight and transitory manifestations as to have escaped the patient's observation or memory. It may, therefore, be necessary to rehearse with him the various primary and secondary signs of the disease, or perhaps do a Wassermann reaction.

Concerning environment, note particularly the home surroundings. Are they sanitary? Are there family worries from sickness or other causes? While at work is the environment healthful? Is he over-worked or exposed to gases, fumes, dust, etc.? On account of social intercourse, is he up too late at night, or does he consume too much food, drink (alcohol, tea, coffee), tobacco, etc.?

Determine as nearly as possible the actual amount of tea, coffee, alcohol, and tobacco used.