

ample proof of the attention and interest which the subject evokes from all classes, on account of its medico-legal aspect. And we have also exhibited to us the appalling fact that, in many vastly important cases, it is impossible to prove whether men are insane or not. There is no reasonable doubt that criminals, instead of suffering the punishment due to their crimes, have, in many instances, been sent to lunatic asylums, and on the other hand, in many other instances, insane persons who were really irresponsible for their actions have suffered the penalty due only to the worst criminals.

#### CAUSES OF INSANITY.

In approaching our subject we may say boldly that, towering above all other causes, stands intoxication; no matter what poisonous substance may be employed, the issue is the same. If the action of alcohol and kindred stimulants were confined to those individuals who indulge in its use, it would not be a matter of so great moment; but all around them must suffer the consequences. And the effects do not cease here. Unfortunately for society, they pass on to succeeding generations unless by an interposition of Providence others do not come. And we find that the subjects of intoxication and vice are excluded in this life from the kingdom of health; and in the life to come, they are shut out of the kingdom of heaven. In view of its bearing upon the question of the increase of insanity, and of the relation of civilization thereto, it is proposed to consider, as near as we may, how far this cause was operative in producing insanity in the earlier ages of mankind. It is certain that at a very early period, even among savages, intoxicants were employed. In India the aboriginal tribes performed their religious rites and observances whilst in a state of intoxication. The West Indians at the time of Columbus brought about a state of intoxication by means of a powder which they snuffed into the nostrils. The California Indians and the Brazilians also used the product of narcotic plants for the same purpose, the object being chiefly to produce a sort of ecstatic state for oracular and visionary purposes. The Peruvian and Mexican priests followed the same practices with like objects. Captain Cook relates a practice among the South Sea Islanders of preparing an intoxicating liquor from the roots of a plant. Of this they drank somewhat sparingly; and the effects described by

Cook appear to have been the same as that which wine produces upon us. It is claimed that the North American Indian—our noble Lo! had no "fire-water" until introduced by his civilized brother. It is more than probable that among uncivilized people who indulged in practices of inebriety the same results followed which we observe to-day in civilized nations, modified doubtless by the absence of certain of the immoral and licentious habits which are indulged in by a portion of the drunken civilized races. Few facts are better known at the present day than that children procreated during alcoholic excess are frequently imbecile, hydrocephalic, or inherit some neurotic defect.

#### DRUNKENNESS IN ANCIENT TIMES.

Among the ancient Jews we find that this potent cause of insanity—intoxication—was not unknown. And we are informed on excellent authority that the fruit of the vine, the same vine which we believe produces the wine of the present day, was used as far back as the time of the flood. About this period a famous postdiluvian planted a vineyard, manufactured a wine that intoxicated, drank to excess himself, and while in that state procreated—and that consanguineously, thus adding another of the causes which at this day takes a front rank. Further proof of the indulgence in strong drink among the Jews from the same authority may be readily adduced in the case of the young man who was brought to the elders to be stoned for his gluttony and drunkenness; the suspicion of Eli in the case of Hannah; the instance of David simulating a drunken man by his staggering walk. Isaiah also shows a familiarity with the primary effects of strong drink when he uses the simile: "As a drunken man staggereth in his vomit;" and in his allusion to their vociferating in song and revelry Joel says, "Awake ye drunkards, weep and howl." From these facts it is evident that this people indulged in intemperate and drunken habits; and though the proof of the prevalence of mental disease is not so near at hand as that the most potent of causes were present, yet the conclusion that neurotic and psychological diseases to some extent prevailed appears inevitable. The ancient Egyptians, long before Joseph was arrayed in fine linen, and had a gold chain about his neck, were a luxurious and profligate people. The splendid works of art, their inventions, and the beautiful products of their manufactories attest unmistakably their claims to an