

drunk beer to excess for some time before I saw him. In the other case with convulsions a similar history was discovered. These men were respectively twenty-eight and thirty-two years of age, and seemed vigorous, healthy men. One I have lost sight of, but the other occupied the same house for three years after his illness, became a teetotaller, and has had the best of health. In none of these five cases was any other inmate of the house affected, although at one house the drinking water contained as much as 1.3 grain of lead per gallon. Each patient was married and has a family, and their occupations did not bring them into contact with lead.

Alcohol, then, has a very powerful influence in intensifying the effects of lead. My friend, Mr. Abbott, late of Almond-bury, tells me that the worst case of lead poisoning he has seen is that of an inebriate painter; while a practitioner in a neighboring township, where an epidemic of "water-supply lead poisoning" is occurring, assures me that the case of the landlord of a beer-house is the most severe one he has had under his care.

Although Dr. Clifford Allbutt has observed the frequent concurrence of spirit drinking and lead poisoning, he thinks the increased ingestion of leaden water which is taken with the spirit explains what is evidently not a mere coincidence. Here I should join issue with Dr. Clifford Allbutt, and allot a considerable share of the toxic work to the alcohol. As we have seen, both alcohol and lead interfere with metabolism and check excretion. The result is: the alcohol locks in the lead; the lead chains up the alcohol. A combination like this accentuates the action of lead, or produces a hybrid sort of affection partly alcoholic and partly plumbic, as in the two cases with general convulsions.

My cases justify, I think, the views I hold, but my contention is further strengthened by a knowledge of the remarkable way in which the kidneys excrete lead. In one of my cases I was uncertain whether the patient was suffering from plumbism or hidden malignant disease. To decide the question, I had, not only the drinking water, but the patient's urine, analysed