

late lamented *confrère*, the distinguished New Jersey surgeon, Dr. Isaac N. Quimby, came to his death through the severe strain and exposure incurred while defending himself against the extortionate claim of a tenant who sustained an injury on his premises, while it was alleged she was in an intoxicated state.

These civil actions in our time of popular government and a political judiciary for every conceivable sort of an injury, imaginary or real, are becoming so common and so oppressive that the owners of property are in constant peril of having their small inheritance or perchance the earnings of a lifetime swept away by a single suit for damages.

Was the plaintiff intoxicated at the time of injury, was it then through contributory negligence, and, if so, death resulting, what *rôle*, if any, did the alcoholic state play as a factor in causing it through its operations on the system?

These questions are often very difficult to answer, indeed, although under many circumstances we may gain much valuable knowledge by a proper investigation and a critical examination of the injured. Caution must be observed, however, that in our connection with the case an error may not be committed and injustice imposed.

For example, it is a very general custom with the laity, when one suffers from syncope or shock, from any cause whatever, to at once administer alcoholics with an unstinted hand.

Hence, should one have lost much blood or be very young, a comparatively small quantity of liquor may produce marked intoxication.

It is my experience in hospitals that there were few patients admitted with fractures of the limbs who had not been given alcoholics before they were sent in. But in these it is not exceptional to observe positive symptoms of intoxication unless there was evidence of free drinking before injury.

But in quite a few of them injured, when we see them early, they are boisterous, hilarious or unmanageable and present other indubitable evidence of pre-traumatic intoxication.

If we are in doubt, then, we should note the odor of the