

this condition, the result of *intemperance*, of excesses of various kinds, committed for the most part in ignorance of their fatal consequences.

Of four hundred and twenty cases of congenital idiocy which were examined in Massachusetts, some information was obtained respecting the progenitors of three hundred and fifty-nine cases, save only four, it was found that one or the other, or both of the immediate progenitors of the unfortunate sufferer, had in some way or other widely departed from the normal condition of health, and violated the natural laws. That is to say, one or the other, or both of them, had been very unhealthy, or had inter-married with blood-relations, or had been *intemperate*, or had been guilty of sensual excesses which impair the constitution. The idiotic child is just as much the result of some vice or weakness in the constitution of the parent as the sour and the crabbe-apple are the necessary product of a wild and bad stock.

A Report made to the State of Massachusetts, by a Board of Commissioners appointed in 1846 to investigate the condition of Idiots in that State, has the following:—“In some families which are degraded by drunkenness and vice, there is a degree of combined ignorance and depravity which degrades humanity. It is not wonderful that feeble-minded children are born in such families, or, being born, that many of them become idiotic. Out of this class, domestics are sometimes taken by those in better circumstances; and they make their employers feel the consequences of suffering ignorance and vice in the community. Probably the habitual use of alcoholic drinks does a great deal to bring families into that low and feeble condition of body alluded to as a prolific cause of idiocy. Out of three hundred and fifty-nine idiots, the condition of whose parents was ascertained, ninety-nine idiots were the children of drunkards. The use of alcoholic drinks or other stimulants by parents, *begets an appetite* for them in their offspring.” In one of Dr. Conolly’s early reports of Hanwell, of the causes assigned for insanity we find that in two hundred and eighty-one cases, thirty-seven were from intemperance. Calmeil states that, out of one hundred and seventy-six patients received into the Lunatic Hospital at Charenton in 1857, alcoholic excess was assigned as the principal cause of insanity in sixty cases. In A.D. 1858 there were forty-two such cases out of one hundred and seventy-four. Dr. Chapen at the King’s County Lunatic Asylum, lays much stress on the adulteration of alcoholic drinks as a cause of insanity, even among those who are habitually temperate. In the asylums and hospitals for the insane in Russia, there were treated in the year 1856, on the whole 3,616 patients, of whom 2,087—57·4 per cent.—were sent out cured or improved; 388—10·7 per cent.—died; and 1,150 remained under care. The form of insanity in one-sixth was drunkard’s delirium. Alcoholic intoxication was by far the most common cause, so that in Pultowa, out of one hundred and eight patients, ninety-five males—fifty-two out of fifty-five—owed their disease to this cause. Among these patients there prevailed a *special tendency to imbecility*. The Inspectors of States’ Prisons, in their Eighth Annual Report, observe:—“From the great number of intemperate persons who have been annually committed to our prisons, it is evident that the traffic in intoxicating liquors has not only been the cause of intemperance and pauperism, but also of a large amount of crime.” We particularly ask attention to the tables annexed, illustrative of the evils which spring from the vice of drunkenness, proving how like other great sinful habits, it becomes stereotyped in human nature, requiring the most rigid and hard-to-be-endured discipline to eradicate it. The results of prison experience in Britain shows, that even after separation from old haunts, and from evil associates, it never answers to send the liberated back again to mix in early scenes; and we know this to be equally true of the inebriate; it is absolutely essential that he avoid evil company, and throughout his whole life, the vow of the Rechabite must be on his head, and on the heads of his family.