

~ 1874 ~

Haschish in Melancholia

BY PROFESSOR GIOVANNI POLLI, MILAN

The exhilarating action of *haschish*, the lively turn *it* gives to the ideas, the feeling of happiness and of self-satisfaction which its use produces, suggested to me a trial of it in melancholia.

A lady aged 33 years, robust, a widow with four children, at the end of September, 1862, became sad and morose, sleepless and without appetite. Purgatives, blood-letting, and at a later period quinine, produced no relief. Her strength failed from the anorexia and the constant dyspepsia, her mind was continually tormented by the apprehension of the imminent ruin of her family, and although they were moderately well off she desired to die, that the starvation of the rest might be postponed, and she in consequence abstained from all food. Her breath became offensive her teeth dry and covered with sordes; she was so feeble that she was unable to rise from her bed, and emaciation quickly increased. She could not be consoled; she was always in tears; her nights passed without sleep; and the desire to destroy herself was ever present. She could not be left alone. This condition had lasted fifty days.

No repose had been obtained either by opium, by wine, by food which she had been compelled to take, or by tepid baths, Revulsions to the extremities, sinapisms, and the cold douche down the back were used without any good effect. It was then that I thought of Indian hemp.

I began the administration of the remedy in the form of the sugary and oily sweetmeat called *Dawamesk* by the Egyptians. Of this I gave ten grammes (154 grains) in a strong infusion of coffee; the dose was equivalent to one *gramme* (15.4 *grs.*) or a little less, of the black-brown extract which I used in the experiments on myself. I persuaded my patient to take the dose during the dinner of her family. It produced at first a *sensation of weight at the stomach, and a species of interrupted drowsiness. She talked during the early part of the meal, but afterwards lapsed into a tranquil taciturnity.* The night following, though sleepless, was calm.

Two days after, the same dose was repeated at the same time, and now the patient began to taste food. After dinner *the tranquil taciturnity came on. She saw, she observed, she paid attention, but she could not*

open her mouth to speak. Nevertheless she was not more sad, but calm, and sometimes smiling. *She seemed to dream with open eyes, and the time appeared to her very long.* She slept a little during the night, and awoke in the morning feeling less languid than usual, and with some desire for food.

The day afterwards, the fourth of the treatment, five grammes (77 grs.) were administered in the same manner as before. The digestion was good, and she began to speak without trouble or sadness. She could see her children without crying, and with a kind expression. She still talked of anticipated ills, but she could be brought to better thoughts by reasoning with her.

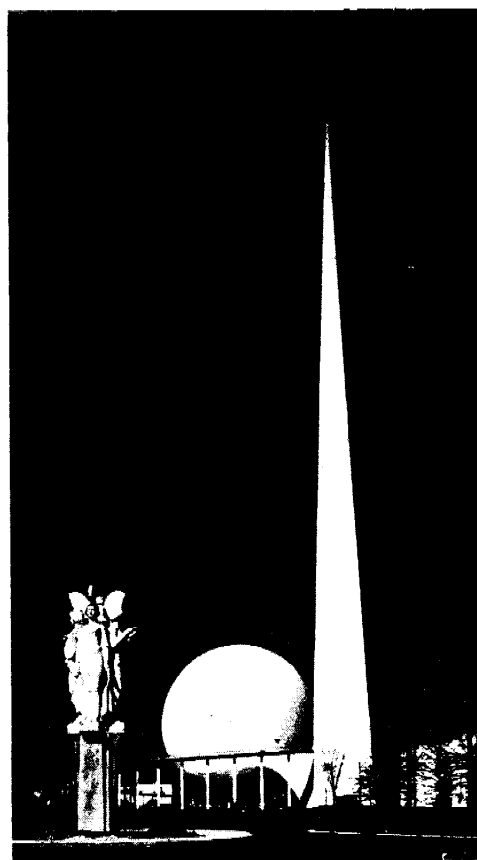
The two following days the same dose of the Indian hemp was given in the same manner, with amelioration of the symptoms. The medicine was then withheld for a day that aloes might be given to relieve constipation. Then two days more of the hemp, and one of the aloes again.

Thus in ten days the patient had taken fifty grammes (77 1.5 grs.) of *Dawamesk*, equal to five grammes (77 grs.) of brown extract of Indian hemp, with a steady and progressive amelioration of all the phenomena; the nights became more tranquil, the intelligence just, the affections natural. *These only remained for a few days: a little loquacity, some inclination to laugh unnecessarily, and a slight muscular feebleness.*

Some months afterwards this lady was perfectly well, lively, and in flourishing health. The cure was permanent.

1939

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR:
Symbolizing the theme of the 1939 Fair were these two familiar objects, visible for miles and remembered through the years—the Trylon and Perisphere. (Brown Brothers)



In a peculiar condition which occurred during the menopausal period we tried *Cannabis Indica*, in the 200th potency and in the mother tincture, fruitlessly.

Among many distressing nervous symptoms the following led to a trial of this remedy: when walking to the family pew, on Sunday, the distance from the door to it appeared so interminably long, and the monot-

ony of that seemingly endless walk became so intolerable that she would drop her handkerchief or fan for the mere sake of stooping and thereby securing a momentary change. With this erroneous idea of *distance* was, of course, associated an equally erroneous 'notion' of the time *requisite* to walk it.

Cannabis-. Indica seemed plainly indicated, but in the doses given was wholly futile. Would five or ten grain doses of the resinous

haschish have proved effectual? It is evident that such questions must be met and answered by us. Tried by our therapeutic formula, S.S. C., Cannabis Indica should remove such mental symptoms, because 'provings' of it have brought them out again and again; indeed this peculiar prolongation of time and space is a 'constant' in the extremely weird phantasmagoria of the haschish dream. ~

1921—Tea and the Irish Question

Professor M. Allen Starr, in an interesting article on tea intoxication in the *Medical Record* of March 19, throws a good deal of light upon poisonous potentialities resident in tea, a subject which is dark indeed to most practitioners. It is curious how certain facts escape the eyes of really good observers. It is those things under our very noses that frequently receive no notice, even if of transcendent importance. People are treated every day in large numbers for all sorts of nervous disturbances, subjected to all sorts of elaborate procedures, and diagnosed eruditely but erroneously who are simply suffering from tea poisoning.

There are two points in Professor Starr's article which are suggestive to us in a way not taken into account by the writer. In the first place he calls attention to the fact that for every person in the British Empire six

pounds of tea are required a year, as against only a pound and a half in the United States; then he alludes to the reports of asylums in Ireland which stress excessive tea drinking as a cause of insanity, the symptoms being insomnia, periods of despondency alternating with states of anxiety, and great restlessness; lastly, English troops in action are freely supplied with tea and carry it instead of water in their canteens. All of which should be considered in relation to the notorious tea addiction of the British statesmen and Irish leaders charged with the conduct of international dealings.

The point which we wish to make is that tea inebriety may be playing a not inconsiderable part in intensifying the conflict growing out of temperamental, ethnical, political and other factors entering into the complex known as the Irish question.