mother of the child, the questions to be determined concerning her are:—

(1.) Whether she has been delivered of a child?

(2.) Whether the signs of delivery correspond as to time, etc., with the appearances observed on the child?

In conclusion, then, we can say that the only absolutely fixed requirement of the Medical Examiner in making an autopsy is the investigation of the three great cavities, and that in addition to this he shall according to his judgment make his work so complete in every case as to be reasonably satisfied of the cause of death, or of the fact that the cause of death cannot be learned by an examination of the dead body.

HEALTH OF CRIMINAL WOMEN.¹

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THE word criminal, though commonly applied to the inmates of penal institutions, includes in its strict sense all persons who commit an offense against law, whether convicted or otherwise.

In America the number of such persons within the precincts of each State depends not only upon the amount of its population, the stringency of its laws, and the vigilance of its police force, but also upon the number and size of its cities, and the industries which it carries on.

Wherever men and women are herded together, as in the poor and squalid portions of large cities, or great numbers are employed at special work, as in our manufacturing towns, there will be found rife those influences which make criminals of men, and even more surely of women.

The physical condition of individuals often deteriorates, *pari passu*, with the moral nature, especially in those cases where intemperance and unchastity are the underlying vices.

To study the diseases of such a class with the hope of arriving at any but the most general conclusions seems a formidable task; and yet, since the inmates of our jails, houses of correction, and prisons are but representatives of a much larger number who walk our streets, scattering contagion, both moral and physical, and filling our hospitals and dispensaries with patients, it seems worth while to see what can be deduced by a careful examination of a number sufficiently large to represent the class under consideration.

The object of this paper is, therefore, to ascertain, if possible, the extent and direction of the influence which a life of crime exerts upon the health of individuals, and as our observations have been mainly confined to criminal women, we have limited our study to this class.

The statistics which we shall present have been taken from the records of the Massachusetts State Reformatory Prison for Women, and extend over a period of four years.

During this time 2196 women were committed to the prison for crimes, which, for the sake of convenience, we have classified under the following heads, namely, —

Class I. Offenses against person and property.

Class II. Offenses against chastity.

¹ Read before the American Social Science Association.

Case III. Offenses against public order.

The first class (offenses against person and property) includes all the cases of assault, fraud, larceny, arson, burglary, manslaughter, etc. In this class we find but 310 commitments. The larger number of these women were of foreign birth or parentage; their ages ranged between fifteen and fifty-three years; nearly all could read and write, and about half were unmarried. Many were sentenced for the first time.

In the second class (offenses against chastity) there were 515 commitments. A larger proportion were of American birth or parentage than in either of the other classes; most of them could read and write, and more than half were unmarried.

The third class (offenses against public order) includes the cases of drunkenness, vagrancy, disturbers of the peace, common railers and brawlers, idle and disorderly persons (which is but another name for either drunkenness or unchastity), etc.; 1271 such persons were committed. They were mainly of foreign birth. Among the number were many old women, though the average age was about thirty years. A large number could neither read nor write, and fully three fourths were married.

It is safe to say that of the whole number committed during the four years more than four fifths were intemperate, and more than three fourths were unchaste.

Turning now to the hospital record, we find 2076 cases of illness during this time. Some of these were readmissions of the same individual. A small proportion were infants, which, with the cases recorded under the head of "slight ailments," we have thought best to exclude, thus leaving 1704 cases of illness, of which a careful diagnosis was made, and a record of symptoms and treatment kept.

Upon tabulating these, we find syphilis to be the prevailing disease, three hundred and five cases being on record: To these might be added more than as many more, in whom the disease was not in a sufficiently active form to make their admission to the hospital a necessity.

With these figures before us it is safe to conclude that one woman out of every four committed to the prison was syphilitic. Thirty-two of these cases were found under Class I, one hundred under Class II, and one hundred and seventy-three under Class III.

Of the one hundred women sentenced for larceny, who were sick in the hospital during the last two years, eighty-six were known to be unchaste.

Next in frequency we find cases of alcoholism, of which there were one hundred and ninety-eight; of these one hundred and seventy-one were found in Class III, eleven and sixteen in Classes I. and II. respectively.

Twenty-five cases of delirium tremens occurred, all but two of which belong in Class III.

There were one hundred and thirty-nine cases of tonsillitis, which were very equally distributed among the three classes. One hundred and one of these occurred during the winter of 1878 and 1879.

Dyspepsia and rheumatism were common ailments, though but sixty-three cases of each were sufficiently acute in character to need admission to the hospital. The number treated from the dispensary was large. These patients were as widely distributed as the habit of intemperance.

Only thirty well marked cases of insanity were recorded during the four years, and several of these were recommitments to the prison of women who had been transferred to a lunatic hospital during a previous sentence. Twenty of the thirty belonged under Class III.; also twelve of the fifteen epileptics who found shelter in the hospital.

Paralysis, neuralgia, and hysteria prevail most largely in Class I. in proportion to the number of commitments; here, also, are found the greatest number of cases of anæmia and diabetes.

Of the seven cases of puerperal fever which occurred five belong to Class II. (offenses against chastity), also eight of the fifteen cases of masturbation placed under special treatment. Diseases of the eyes, malarial fever, miscarriages, and pulmonary consumption, occur in excess also in the second class. Of the last named affection there were in all twenty-eight cases, in most of which the disease was established when the women were committed to the prison.

But four cases of pneumonia and eight of pleurisy occurred: Twenty-one cases of bronchitis were treated in the hospital.

Seventy-two cases of uterine disease were sufficiently severe to need hospital care for a time; a larger number of women were able to work, but required medical supervision.

Coming now to the surgical patients, we find but thirty-two cases in Class I., against sixty-five in Class II., and one hundred and sixty-two in Class III. Abscesses and ulcers occurred in great numbers, as might be expected in a population like this. Rectal diseases also were common.

Twenty-four deaths occurred among adults at the prison during the four years; of this number, one died of alcoholism, two of apoplexy, one of brain softening, one of diabetes, one of œdema, and one of gangrene of the lungs, one of heart disease, one of enterocolitis, two of peritonitis, five of phthisis pulmonalis, one of puerperal fever, two committed suicide, and five died of syphilis. Seventeen of these were found under Class III., four under Class I., and three under Class II.

Among the cases of syphilis treated a great variety of conditions were observed. Many women came to the prison in the most revolting state possible, and in which they had, not infrequently, carried on their vile practices for months. Some of these claimed to have sought admission to the general hospitals, but had been refused because of the character of their disease. In other women the initial lesion was still present when they were committed to the prison. A number seemed healthy when they entered, but after a time manifestations of the disease in its later stages appeared. All these cases were treated systematically and thoroughly, with results favorable or otherwise, according to the virulence of the disease, the stage in which treatment was begun, and the length of sentence of the prisoner. The danger of contagion with so many syphilitics collected together was great, and complete isolation in many cases was an absolute necessity. If committed for less than two years they had to be set at liberty before the disease could be brought fully under control, perhaps to become again a source of pollution.

The condition called alcoholism, so often seen in our penal institutions, is one of general depression following long-continued stimulation by intoxicating

liquors, with lack of proper food. It is manifested by trembling of the hands and tongue, twitching of the facial muscles, profuse perspirations, an unsteady gait, and incoherence of thought and expression. One woman out of every eleven committed to the prison was taken into the hospital in this condition. Under a nutritious diet, and rest in bed, these patients soon recovered sufficiently to go to work, but many returned to the hospital later on with some other ailment, most often dyspepsia or rheumatism, those strong allies of intemperance. Some of the cases of delirium tremens were exceedingly violent, but no deaths occurred.

Dyspepsia and constipation of the bowels were the two affections of the digestive tract most common among the prisoners, often taxing the skill and patience of the physician more than many severer maladies. Most of the cases of rheumatism were of a chronic character.

The small number of cases of pulmonary disease leads us to conclude that affections of the respiratory organs are not a necessary accompaniment of prison life; proper food and clothing, good ventilation, and a fair amount of sunlight being here, as everywhere, their best preventives.

There have been sixty-eight births at the prison; only one parturient woman died, although many were so diseased that their infants died before or shortly after birth.

Among the surgical cases indolent ulcers, mainly of the leg, were of frequent occurrence, often detaining women in the hospital for weeks who otherwise were able to work.

Some of the cases of rectal disease were of long standing and exceedingly severe in character, while others were so simple as not to need admission to the hospital during treatment.

An examination of the foregoing cases leads us to the following general conclusions:—

I. Intemperance and unchastity are the two vices which fill our penal institutions with women.

II. The influence of these vices is detrimental to health of body, increasing its susceptibility to disease, and lessening its recuperative power.

III. The diseases which follow as a direct result of these vices are syphilis, alcoholism, dyspepsia, rheumatism, and general anæmia.

IV. Morbid conditions of body react upon the moral nature, increasing and perpetuating the tendency to criminality; hence the importance of careful medical supervision as a reformatory measure.

V. More ample provision should be made in all large cities for the isolation and thorough treatment of venereal patients of both sexes, either by the addition of special wards to the general hospitals or by the establishment of hospitals for this class.

VI. The women who commit high crimes, that is, larceny, burglary, arson, manslaughter, etc., possess a more sensitive nervous organization than those who commit only offenses against chastity and public order.

— A metropolitan journal of wide if not select circulation contains the following choice advertisement: Wanted immediately, a good street-talker on medicine. One who can officiate in the office during the day. A man with a good presence and long hair preferred. Address, with references and salary wanted, —.