

THE GREAT DRUG DELUSION

H. G. Ludlow, in which the author (who lived on the Hudson near Poughkeepsie) describes his addiction to that drug, and his cure by his unaided determination.

Such cases are, however, common enough; but the strong-minded never reach the clinic of the physician, and are consequently ignored by him.

There are, in fact, three main classes of men and women.

1. Afraid to experiment with anything, lest——.
2. Enslaved by anything that appeals to them.
3. Able to use anything without damaging themselves.

I hesitate to admit either of the two former classes to the title of Freeman. Since the year 1898 I have been principally occupied in studying the effects of various drugs upon the human organism, with special reference to the parallelisms between the psychical phenomena of drug-neuroses, insanities, and mystical illuminations. The main object has been to see whether it is possible to produce the indubitably useful (see William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*) results of "ecstasy" in the laboratory. In pursuit of this laudable aim, I attempted to produce a "drug-habit" in myself. In vain. My wife literally nagged me about it: "Don't go out without your cocaine, sweetheart!" or "Did you remember to take your heroin before lunch, big boy?" I reached the stage where one takes a sniff of cocaine every five minutes or so all day long; but though I obtained definitely toxic results, I was always able to abandon the drug without a pang. These experiments simply confirmed the conclusion which I had already adopted, provisionally, on theoretical grounds: that busy people, interested in life and in their work, simply cannot find the time to keep on with a drug. As Baudelaire says: A perfect debauch requires perfect leisure. A prominent newspaper correspondent of my acquaintance had actually reached a stage where the privation of opium was torture to him. The stress of the war threw additional work on him; but instead of accentuating his need, it made it impossible for him to find the time to smoke. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" is sound psychology. A colleague of my own, who participated in my experiments, found himself on several occasions "in the clutches of the drug-fiend." But those occasions were all characterised by one fact: he was, for external reasons,