

# THE NOXIOUS WEED

MARY D. NAGLE

THE REPORT of January, 1964, to the surgeon-general of the United States from the advisory committee on smoking and health may well have rung a reminiscent bell in the minds of history-conscious midwesterners. Citizens of the North Star State among others were scrutinizing the dangers of tobacco addiction nearly a century ago.

As early as May 11, 1876, the Minneapolis *Citizen*, in its weekly column on health and medicine, said that "tobacco, and the use of tobacco in every form, is a habit better not acquired, and when acquired is better abandoned" and went on to aver that "excessive smoking has proved directly fatal." Twenty years later, on October 3, 1896, in the course of a crusade against the habit, the *Progressive Age* of Minneapolis linked tuberculosis with "the very free use of . . . tobacco," and pointed out that smoking was bad for the stomach as well.

Associating poor academic achievement with the use of tobacco, the same paper on

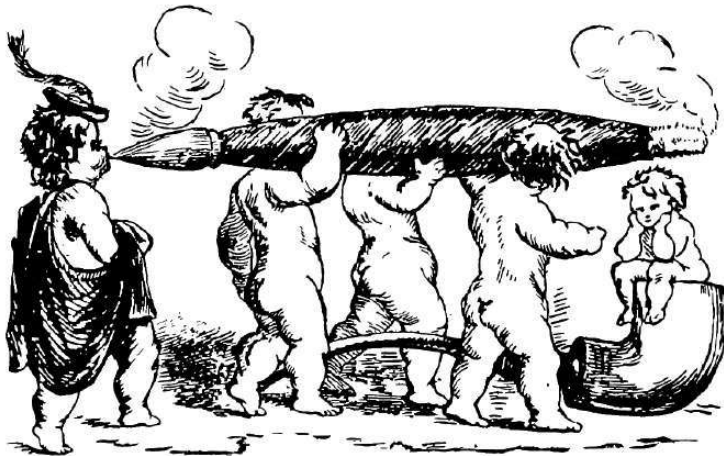
April 25, 1896, quoted a Dr. Seaver of New Haven, Connecticut, who wrote that "among students at Yale, smokers were found to be inferior to non-smokers, in both mental ability and physical vigor." Even earlier, on November 6, 1889, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* had decried the "alarming proportions" that smoking had assumed among Minneapolis school children.

After the turn of the century the No-Tobacco League of America addressed the fair sex, warning that "girls who smoke cigarettes tend to become un-moral, losing their finer feminine self-defense and showing a disposition to yield to the solicitations of the despoiler of virtue." This group further indicted tobacco as "the coarse indulgence of practically every criminal, tough, white slaver, boodler, political corruptionist, law violater, opponent of morals and virtue, traducer of the manly virtues, and others of ill-repute."

Legislative disapproval of tobacco was not lacking. In 1889 a bill was passed by both houses of the Minnesota legislature which forbade sale of cigarettes or tobacco

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# THE LOYAL LEAGUE

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## The No-Tobacco League of America

KEEP THE YOUNG FOLKS CLEAN FROM THE BEIGHT OF NICOTINE

LEAGUE is composed of those who want to be more than MEMBERS of The No-Tobacco League of America. They

**TOBA-CURA** is the **ONLY** Positive CURE for the **TOBACCO HABIT** in every form, smoking, chewing, snuff and cigarettes. It is perfectly harmless and completely destroys the desire for Tobacco in a few days. Constant use of Tobacco soon breaks down the strongest nervous system, and results in loss of vigor. **TOBA-CURA** stimulates the system, builds up the entire system, and restores vitality to stores that can be given in a cup of coffee without the knowledge of the patient. Ask your Druggist for **"TOBA-CURED CURE"** and don't soil your work. 14 Cents by mail to any address upon receipt of 3 boxes for \$2.50. We guarantee three boxes to cure any case or money will be refunded to you. Circular free. **Calumet Remedy Co., Chicago, Ill.** For sale in Minneapolis, Minn., by **Jos. Hoffman & Co., druggists, 101 Washington**

## Tobacco, Tombstones and Profits

BY LUTHER BURBANK

(Reprinted from the Deereborn Independent)

You have seen pictures of military cemeteries near great battlefields.

Upon every headstone is chiseled the inscription, "Killed in action."

If one knew nothing about war, these headstones would be sufficient to impress upon him that war is deadly—that it kills.

How much would you know about tobacco if, upon the tombstone of everyone killed by it were inscribed, "Killed by tobacco"?

You than y all, b It ha come enou it is --to well, tality strail



to minors, and in 1895 the *Minneapolis Journal* of February 6 reported that a bill "was introduced in the state Senate . . . to make excessive smoking a sufficient cause for divorce." Minnesota, however, did not go to the same lengths as its neighbor to the south. Iowa totally banned the sale of cigarettes from 1896 until 1921.

During World War I patriotism and economics were blended in a letter addressed on May 24, 1918, to Senator Knute Nelson. Objecting to a proposed increase in the cigarette ration to soldiers, the writer, a physician, urged that wheat be planted in place

THE UNDATED handbills reproduced above are from a collection of antitobacco literature in the Robbins Gilman Papers, owned by the Minnesota Historical Society. The advertisement for "Toba-Cura" appeared in the *Minneapolis Journal* of December 23, 1893. The pictures are from Clarence P. Hornung, *Handbook of Early Advertising Art* (New York, 1956).

of tobacco. He concluded by describing vividly the "disastrous result" of the habit upon one called to serve his country: "Short of wind from tobacco heart, his digestion deranged, hand trembling from tobacco paresis, acuity of vision impaired, mentality weakened and judgment unbalanced, he is in a poor condition to meet the sudden and excessive strain put upon him."

Thus in the perspective of history it appears that the 1964 statistics on smoking and health have ushered in only another skirmish in man's long war with the weed.



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