

## WOOD ALCOHOL.

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*"Poisoning by Wood Alcohol—Cases of Death and Blindness from Columbian Spirits and other Methylated Preparations."* Such is the title of an address presented by Dr. Buller, of Montreal, and Dr. Casey Wood, of Chicago, before the fifty-fifth annual session of the American Medical Association, in the section of ophthalmology. The reprint from the *Journal of the American Medical Association* was sent to me in consideration of assistance given the above distinguished men in framing material for address and report.

In all some seventy-two cases are reported of total blindness and death, Dr. Buller furnishing some five or six cases, attributable to the use of wood alcohol or one of its many preparations, of which Jamaica ginger, Florida water, lemon essence, etc., afford but few illustrations. That deaths are so frequent from its use is attributable to laws against the use of grain alcohol, and such states in the United States which have prohibition, and other laws in opposition to the sale of alcoholic stimulants, have the greatest death rate. In one of the cases reported, Jamaica ginger, lemon essence, and "Peruna," occasioned a spree, with the results: blindness and death.

The reprint contains thirty-five pages, which is worthy of the interest of every M.D., in fact, of the interest of everyone.

I submit from page 24 the following (although the whole address should be read very carefully by every M.D., who should convey to his newspaper much of the information therein contained in regard to the deadly methyl alcohol):

### TOTAL NUMBER OF METHYL ALCOHOL VICTIMS.

From Dr. Buller's tables of published histories we have a well-authenticated list of fifty-four cases of methyl alcohol amblyopia, to say nothing of the deaths that are incidentally mentioned, of which no particular record was made. As the proportion of deaths to survivals with blindness is a fairly constant one, and reading the reports intended to describe blindness only, we may put down forty as the minimum number of published deaths.

Reference has already been made to the experience of Dr. Moulton with deaths from wood alcohol on Indian reservations.