

signed the pledge of total abstinence, and upwards of seventy joined the Association. The Doxology was then sung, and the Chairman pronounced the Benediction.

The meeting, from the first to the last, was one of the most interesting and pleasant Temperance meetings we ever attended; and it is hoped that the Temperance cause, in Montreal, has received such an impetus as will cause it to wend its widening way, till at last intemperance, with its mighty train of evils, shall be banished from our city and our country, and thousands shall spring up to call the once despised and calumniated Temperance society blessed. And, while the young men are so nobly coming forward to the rescue of poor inebriates, let not the ladies look on with indifference—for, after all, it is to their help we must look to obtain complete success. It is in you, ye mothers, wives, and daughters of Canada, that the chief hopes of the friends of the Temperance cause are placed. Let all—high and low, rich and poor—rally round the flag of total abstinence; and then may we hope soon to hear the funeral knell of the last drunkard.

THE DISEASES CONSEQUENT UPON MODERATE DRINKING.

When the deadly snare of so-called moderate drinking was dragged from its hiding place, and stripped of its false assumption of self-denial, then indeed the evil was probed to its core, and intemperance stood forth naked and confessed, and without a remaining prop to lean upon. Moderate drinking, it has been proved, owes its evil to its being a masked vice, to its serving as an excuse and example to hard drinkers, and lastly to its being the school from whence proceeds all that open intemperance, with its disastrous consequences, which has, from all time, desolated the fair face of our earth. Although much has been said and written upon the moral evils attendant upon the moderate use of alcohol, whether fermented or distilled, sufficient stress has not been laid upon the fact, that moderate drinking too has its victims; that in countless instances it tends to shorten life, and is the prolific source of dire moral evils, which, although not within the grasp of the law, are not the less productive of calamitous, nay, tragical results to human happiness.

It is now my intention to discuss some of those forms of maladies which are to be distinctly traced to the moderate but daily use of fermented liquors—of that class of alcoholic drinks which stimulate to a morbid degree the organs of digestion, so that an excess of blood is generated from moderate quantities of solid food, and the system becomes subject to that state termed Plethora, the prolific source of many mortal maladies. By way of illustration I propose observing some of the effects consequent upon one of the most decent, as well as popular modes, of indulgence in drinking—we shall suppose ourselves present at a dinner party among the higher classes. Now, observe the host, he is still in the vigor of manhood, his portly frame has never known an hour's illness, his ruddy, goodhumored countenance beams with the very soul of hospitality; he is not ungrateful to the Giver of all for the plenty piled upon his board, nor for the sparkling wines which he daily imbibes from crystal goblets, but little does he know that the hour of retribution is at hand, that he has for many years, and unconsciously, been transgressing the laws of health—that the rich blood which mantles over his broad cheeks is now forming in fatal excess—that the camel's back is laden, and but a single hair required to break it—that he has eaten his last meal, and drunk his last draught of wine! Perhaps that day as he left the counting-house he felt a passing vertigo, but ascribed it to the

noise of omnibuses thundering past, or to the distracting rush of pedestrians on the way, or to the heat of the dog days—but see! in the midst of an animated discourse, his countenance has changed, at times purple, he falters forth a few words in a husky voice, incoherently perhaps, or he makes an effort to recover himself, or stares wildly for a few seconds, and then falls back insensible, apparently into a profound sleep—alas! it is the sleep of death! All is now dread and confusion among the guests, they rise tumultuously, one calls for water, another for harshorn, and those who, in the dreadful scene, best preserve their presence of mind, send for medical aid. The physician arrives, to his practised gaze one look suffices, he pronounces the attack to be apoplexy. To the anxious inquiries of the dying man's friends, he may respond by that instinctive shake of the head which has ever chilled the stoutest heart, or he may qualify his sentence by assuming, should his patient survive the immediate effect of the attack, that a palsy will remain, or imbecility take possession of his faculties during the remainder of his existence.

This is so far from being an overdrawn picture, that there is not a medical man of considerable practice, who cannot recall many such cases within his experience. I do not pretend to say that the catastrophe always ensues at the dinner table, but it does so frequently; and it is a fact beyond all dispute, that thousands among the well-to-do classes are annually hurried to the grave by this form of sudden death, which is solely to be ascribed to the daily stimulation of the system, caused by the limited, and, in the usual acceptance of the word, moderate introduction of the purest products of fermentation.

But the diseases of plethora, or excess of blood, are by no means confined to apoplexy. It gives rise to all those acute diseases by which the strong man is cut off; inflammations, gout, and rheumatism, which extend to the heart, and in warm climates, fevers, tropical dysenteries, and hepatic inflammations. In those of delicate frames, indulgence in moderate drinking induces obstinate dyspepsia, and functional diseases of the liver, accompanied by that degree of mental depression which may amount to hypochondria, and the tendency to commit suicide—this was the class of patients that Abernethy was called upon to treat—almost all were port wine and sherry drinkers. If this state of the system be allowed to continue beyond a certain period, the condition of plethora subsides, and an opposite condition is produced which is recognized under the popular term of debility. The countenance becomes sallow, the bowels obstinately constive, all the functions are more or less deranged, and the body is now prepared for the reception of a variety of diseases in which chronic or slow inflammations bear the chief proportion. It was at this stage that the lamented Dr. Moreton of the London university put a violent end to his unhappy life.

With respect to spirits or alcohol separated from its constituents, but little requires to be said. It will suffice for our purpose to say, that, by the medical profession at large, its use as an article of diet is denounced in the most uncompromising terms. Alcohol is a specific poison. It exerts its deleterious agency chiefly upon the brain. No dram-drinker, even should he not exceed his daily glass, can ever be said to be a healthy man—the habit tells upon him sooner or later, and this fact is so notoriously true, that no intelligent practitioner ever fails to satisfy himself upon that point, before entering upon the treatment of disease.

MEDICUS.

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