

Temperance

The Liquor Bar.

A Bar to heaven, a Door to hell—
Whoever named it, named it well.

A Bar to manliness and wealth,
A Door to want and broken health.

A Bar to honor, pride and fame,
A Door to sorrow, sin and shame.

A Bar to hope, a Bar to prayer,
A Door to darkness and despair.

A Bar to honored, useful life,
A Door to brawling, senseless strife,

A Bar to all that's true and brave,
A Door to every drunkard's grave.

A Bar to joys that home imparts,
A Door to tears and broken hearts.

A Bar to heaven, a Door to hell—
Whoever named it, named it well.

Alcohol on its Trial—

'Found Guilty.' By Sir Victor Horsley.

I believe that everybody is now aware that alcohol economically, hygienically, and medically cannot be called an advantage to the community; but it is definitely an evil.

I must say that for a long time I thought that to promote temperance it was not necessary that we ourselves should be total abstainers. But after all varieties of work in hospitals and private practice and in social life, I have found that being a total abstainer has been of great advantage to me in endeavoring to promote temperance. Therefore I suggest that those who are not total abstainers and yet wish to forward the cause of temperance, will do so with great profit and greater success if they become total abstainers. The reason is this, that if we wish to promote temperance we find at once that we have to contend against custom, and the custom of taking alcohol we must look at from two points of view—taking it for social purposes, and taking it for medical purposes.

Again and again one is told by one's friend that scientific people say that alcohol is a food. I am very glad to have this opportunity again of just touching upon this point for a moment, because the whole difficulty has arisen from our using scientific and popular expressions as meaning the same thing, and they do not. If you use the term food in the ordinary sense of the word, you mean you have taken something into the body which the body can oxidize, can burn up and use for its own purpose, and from which the body derives an advantage in accelerated nervous work, and in the greater warmth of the body.

As a matter of fact, scientific observation proves that alcohol does not do these things; and yet it is perfectly true for anyone to say, using the expression 'food' in a scientific sense, that alcohol is a food because it is certainly to a considerable extent oxidized in the body, which has been the kind of definition used by scientists to describe food—something that is used up in the body—but that is quite a different thing from saying that it is used up in the body for profit. Well, alcohol is not used up in the body in that way, which is what we understand popularly by the term food. So alcohol is not a food in the popular, or, one might say, the proper sense of the word.

It has been said that if you get rid of a stimulating substance like alcohol you actually diminish the cheerful feeling of the nation. That is like saying that total abstainers habitually suffer from melancholia. That is obviously a converse proposition. Well, I have a large acquaintance among total ab-

stainers, and, as far as I have seen, they are more cheerful individually than the persons who take alcohol. But I also wish to insist upon this point, that the so-called gaiety resulting from alcohol is a deception. When people are under the influence of small doses of alcohol they do appear to be talking more cheerfully; the fact is, they are more emotional. And the question is, can that be called an advantage to the nation? I contend, at any rate, that such gaiety is not real cheerfulness; and it is only another instance of the well-known deceptive effects of that very remarkable substance.

Now I come to the medical side of the question, because, undoubtedly, you can promote temperance by discussing with your friends its use, first, as a household remedy, and, secondly, as a drug. I suppose every household, except the households of abstainers, who know better, has somewhere stored away a bottle of brandy for emergencies.

People take alcohol as a household remedy chiefly for fainting. If anyone faints it is immediately assumed that they must have some brandy, and, undoubtedly, out of that unfortunate practice the habit of intemperance in many cases has subsequently arisen.

That is well known to you. But if you want to get people to give up the habit of pouring brandy down the unfortunate victim's throat, what can you propose instead? Something must be done, in some cases, to stop the syncope. Syncope is not necessarily a dangerous condition, but it may be—you never know.

Well, then, there are two things you ought to do. The first thing is to afford immediate relief, and then to provide against a relapse, because people go from one faint to another. If people faint, they faint for two reasons. They faint either because their nervous system has given out, or they faint because their heart has given out, not altogether because that would be death, but it has gone below the pitch whereby there is afforded sufficient circulation in the brain to keep up consciousness. So, too, if it has arisen from a nervous affection, it shows the brain has not been irrigated with sufficient blood.

Now, to give alcohol to a person with nervous fainting is to lead to the cultivation of the alcohol habit. All you have to do with such a person fainting, as they would say from weakness—from a mere nervous affection—is to place them in a comfortable position and give them something hot to drink; and hot water is quite enough. It is not necessary to give even ammonia; hot water is quite sufficient. You want reflexly to stimulate the nervous system, and you do it with hot water. The same thing applies to the heart. If a person is fainting from trouble of the heart, which shows the heart muscle is weak, this is a more serious condition; but you will find hot water revives the patient, and, meanwhile, you can be having food prepared.

The next thing to do is to feed the muscles of the heart, and hot milk is, perhaps, the quickest way really of feeding muscle. If you could inject hot milk into the circulation it might be injurious to the blood, but it would stir up the heart. But as that is impossible, we give it to the patient to drink as soon as they have been stimulated to the point of

swallowing, which is very simple. Now, why is alcohol bad for this condition, for we know it has been customary to give it? That, of course, is a fair question; it undoubtedly acted as a reflex stimulant. The mere taking of strong brandy into the pharynx stimulates the nerves, which reflexly excite the heart. But it is bad, even in small quantities, it weakens the heart muscles; in fact, it does the thing you do not want.

But not only that. A good many people faint because the whole circulatory system has not enough blood in it, and the heart cannot contract with advantage—with mechanical advantage—because the cavities are of the heart, and the unfortunate heart has less blood than ever. So alcohol is not the best thing we have to handle. The best thing we have to handle is the hot water in the kitchen boiler.

When I was a student every patient that went into the operating theatre for a serious operation was given beforehand two, three, or four ounces of brandy. Curiously enough, this was a relic of the past, of the time, because the records exist, when, before the fortunate discovery of anaesthetics, the poor patient was made half drunk with alcohol. Then, because chloroform was to be given, it became unnecessary to give so much brandy. Still, people thought brandy was very useful to prevent shock, and so they gave brandy. But if you were to propose to an operating surgeon nowadays that you should poison the patient beforehand with a dose of brandy he would stare at you, and he would point out to you immediately that, physiologically, it was a poor thing to do. I, personally, do not order alcohol for a patient; I do not find it necessary.

Drunkenness a Form of Insanity.

Physicians often have claimed that intemperance is a subject more germane to their profession than to that of the minister and the reformer. Better results may be expected when each understands more clearly the other's point of view. A suggestive paper on this topic was read recently before the British Medical Association at Toronto by Dr. T. M. Crothers, superintendent of a hospital in Hartford, Ct. He argued that inebriety is a disease of the brain and nervous system, that often it is beyond the control of its victims, and that the theory that the excessive drinking of alcohol liquors is a moral condition is untrue. In the case of the periodic drinker, who drinks excessively for a short period and then abstains, it is an acute mania, or insane impulse, resembling epilepsy in its sudden, convulsive attack. It develops in another form of insanity in the constant, so-called moderate drinker, who is the most degenerate and defective of all inebriates. Atmospheric conditions often bring on the insanity which craves alcoholic stimulants. Some persons drink only at the seashore, others only on high elevations, and others only in certain climates and seasons. Dr. Crothers believes that the treatment of inebriates belongs to physicians, and that confusion concerning it will continue till medical men teach the public the facts concerning the disease and rational methods of treatment. They must study it and lift it out of the field of credulity and quackery. The results of study of those who, like Dr. Crothers, have had many years of experience in treating drunkards, deserve the thoughtful consideration of temperance reformers. The time is not so far distant when all insane persons were held morally responsible for their condition and their punishment as criminals as the only remedy.—'Congregationalist and Christian World.'

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