

accidents is often the result of the dulling by drink of the keenness of men's mental faculties.

Drink-caused poverty is the parent of a great mortality.

Recent investigations and deliverances by eminent medical men have given us knowledge of the fact that tuberculosis frequently finds its origin in drinking practices and facilities, and that its progress is accelerated by the same cause.

This applies to many other vital disturbances and weaknesses, which are not directly attributed to strong drink.

In Great Britain and the United States extensive investigations have been made to ascertain how far the death rate of the community was affected by indulgence in strong drink. One method adopted was an inquiry among a large number of physicians as to how many of the deaths for which they gave certificates were traceable directly or indirectly to the drinking habits of the deceased or someone else.

In England, Dr. Norman Kerr undertook such an inquiry "with the avowed object of demonstrating and exposing the falsity of the perpetual total assertion that sixty thousand drunkards die every year in the United Kingdom." His conclusions were that the statement which he started to disprove fell short of fully expressing the magnitude of the evil it represented. Dr. Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson after a careful inquiry, was convinced that ten per cent. of all the deaths in Great Britain come earlier than they would were it not for the drinking habit.

A widespread and thorough investigation made in the United States in the year 1890 among physicians chosen

with the assistance of the editors of leading medical magazines led to the conclusion stated in the New Voice that "the total per cent. of mortality from drink would appear to approximate in the United States the per cent. calculated by Dr. Richardson for England and Wales."

In Canada, as a rule, the people drink less than in Great Britain and the United States, yet scarcely a day passes without some newspaper story of some terrible fatality directly attributed to strong drink. It is well known that diseases of many organs are caused or accelerated by intemperance. Everyone can think of some life which he is certain has been shortened because of the liquor evil, though no one would say it ended in a drink-caused death. We are probably well within the mark if we estimate the number of deaths from drink in Canada as being one-half the proportion calculated for Great Britain and the United States. This means that five per cent. of our mortality may be said to be the result of this evil.

Vital statistics are not as complete as they ought to be for every part of Canada, and reliable records are not available for all the Provinces, excepting the figures that are obtained at the decennial census. An approximate estimate of the total number of deaths may, however, be secured by taking the known death rate for one year in the Province of Ontario, and applying it proportionately to the population of the whole Dominion for the year 1908. Following this plan, we obtain the result, which may be taken as fairly accurate, that the total number of deaths in the Dominion of Canada for the year 1908 was 94,786.