

12527a. Do you regard alcohol as an economical food?—Undoubtedly. It is about one of the cheapest classes of the foods which are more especially termed stimulant-narcotics.

12528a. Do you think the excessive use of alcohol has a weakening tendency, and that the effects are discernable in the offspring of persons who use it excessively?—Yes, undoubtedly, although, as I said before, the child might not be led along the line of intemperance in alcoholic liquors. He might be intemperate in other ways.

12529a. For instance, is there a tendency to brain or nervous weakness in the child of such parents?—Undoubtedly; where the child is the result of a connection while the parent was under the influence of liquor, he could not help being so. We have undoubted evidences of epilepsy and insanity having been caused under such circumstances.

12530a. I see that at one time you were one of the secretaries of the Liberal Temperance Union, one object of which, among others, was “the advocacy and support of a license law discriminating between distilled and fermented liquors.” Will you explain just what that means?—What we meant was that there should be a very much less tax or license for the simple sale of beer and wine than there should be in the case of spirituous liquors. The Ontario Government have to a certain degree adopted our suggestions in reference to that; and they also, as the result of some investigations which I made for the then Commissioner, the Hon. Mr. Hardy, made some slight changes in the direction of favouring beer and wine, especially wine, and raising slightly the alcohol limit. These were the lines on which we were trying to move. I do not wish to convey, however, that we wished the indiscriminate issue of wine and beer licenses, as was the case under the old wine and beer act.

12531a. Did the union propose to discriminate against one branch of the liquor trade, because they believed a large amount of danger attended on that branch of the trade?—Because men might more easily go to excess in the case of distilled liquors than in the case of fermented liquors.

12532a. The union, then, recognized the fact that there were certain dangers attendant on that branch of the trade?—Undoubtedly.

12533a. And they desired legislation with the view of lessening those dangers?—Undoubtedly.

12534a. That is, they were in favour of the legislation that was in the line of their belief, in regard to that branch of the business?—And in what they considered would be in the line of the belief of the vast majority of the people.

12535a. I notice also that the union proposed not only “to reclaim persons addicted to the excessive use of intoxicants,” but “to enlist licensed vendors of intoxicating liquors upon the side of temperance.” Will you explain how that was to be done?—Why not?

12536a. I want to know how?—By not hounding them down as social pariahs, as outcasts of society; showing them the distinction which existed in this way, and enlisting them, as they were enlisted in the Washington movement, in which, in very many instances, well-known hotel-keepers not only gave their halls up to the use of the movement, but subscribed towards it. I do not think there are very many men in the trade who are desirous of having it disreputable or having drunken loafers around. Practically speaking, there are very few men in the trade who really wish to sell to the man who has had more liquor than is good for him.

12537a. But the union evidently thought there were some, and they desired?—They desired, as far as possible, either to get these men out of the trade, or to help them to change.

12538a. That is, to sell only to those who were not drunk?—Yes; in other words, to elevate the status of the trade.

12539a. I notice this among the objects of the union: “The union recognizes the duty or expediency, in many cases, of total abstinence.” In what cases would that be, if alcohol be a food?—In the cases I have mentioned, if there is no such thing as moderation, then to leave it entirely alone. In such cases, men substitute sugar in large quantities for alcohol.

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