

imparted fresh vigour to the healthy man, and enabled him to surmount difficulties and perform deeds or actions which otherwise he would have regarded as beyond his powers. In one or other of these ways they appealed to wants or instincts of our common humanity, and rendered services throughout the ages which, until quite recent times, were considered sufficient in themselves, without regard to any question as to food value. Assuming, for the sake of argument, it could be proved beyond the shadow of a doubt (though this has not yet been done), that stimulants contain no nutritive value whatever, these old and original reasons for taking them—reasons co-existent with the race itself—would still remain.

Here we reach the fundamental factor of the whole situation, although it is one which the extreme sections of the temperance party have either ignored, obscured by side issues, or, thought to overcome by Acts of Parliament or oppressive enforcements of the licensing laws. Deep down in the heart of man we have got to recognise—whether we want to or not—the existence, as part of his nature and temperament, of a craving from time to time for some artificial stimulant capable of producing mental or physical effects that would not exist, or could not be secured, naturally. One might as well pass an Act of Parliament for the abolition of thirst as try to eradicate the feeling in question by legislative action. It may vary in form and intensity in different individuals, according to temperament, circumstances, and conditions; but every adult person is influenced by it, and yields to it at some time or other. One cannot assume that, because a man does not take alcoholic drinks, therefore he does not take any stimulants at all. Opium, cocaine, quinine, and various other drugs are extreme alternatives, but they are indulged in very largely, and, to a certain extent, answer the same purpose as alcohol. Tea, coffee, and tobacco, also act as stimulants, and so do some of the special brands of patent medicines, or even pickles, catsup and other table condiments; so that while temperance advocates may scrupulously avoid beer or wine, they may still