

TEMPERANCE.

(Temperance Chronicle C. E. T. S.)

The Australian Drink Bills are astounding. In 1891 New South Wales, with a mean population of 1,143,580, spent £5,275,170 on intoxicants; that is to say, at the rate of £23 1s. 3d. for each family of five persons. In Victoria the rate per family was £28 12s. 1d. Making due allowance for lower prices in the United Kingdom, the "thirst" by which our antipodean brethren are afflicted is still phenomenal. The expenditure per head of the population is thus stated:

Victoria . . . . .	£5 14 5
New South Wales . . . . .	4 12 3
United Kingdom . . . . .	3 15 0
England . . . . .	4 1 6
Scotland . . . . .	3 5 0
Ireland . . . . .	2 2 4

Mr. Reginald G. Alexander, M.A., M.D., F.R.S., Consulting Physician Bradford Infirmary, etc., writing to *The Yorkshire Post*, says: I have read with much interest the discussion which is going on at the Anti-Alcohol Congress. In my capacity as a hospital physician and in private practice, I have carefully noted the effects of alcohol with a perfectly unbiased mind for twenty years, desiring only to learn the truth as to its effects. I believe that persons in perfect health, and living perfectly natural lives, do not require it, and can never be benefited by it; but, inasmuch as few persons enjoy perfect health, and live a life of worry and anxiety, a little stimulant taken with meals cheers them, and prevents the undue wear and tear of the body. The quantity should be very small, not exceeding one ounce, or an ounce and a half daily, of pure spirit taken as beer, wine, or spirits. I am quite sure that weakly, delicate women are better for a stimulant, and it improves both their appetite and digestion. The use of nips of spirit taken on an empty stomach cannot be too greatly deprecated. Those persons who have an hereditary tendency to drink should be absolute abstainers, and all children should be brought up without the knowledge or even the taste of alcohol of any form. I think most persons agree as to the necessity of alcohol in disease, and its usefulness during convalescence.

Temperance reformers have been exchanging views and comparing systems of reform at the International Temperance Congress at The Hague. We in England talk most about Temperance reform, but effect less than any other European country in the way of repression of excessive drinking by legislative reform. In Switzerland the Government has taken the liquor trade under its own care, and sees that the supply is regulated and is of good quality. In Norway and Denmark the ingenious Gothenburg system, which reduces the number of drink-

shops and prevents publicans from enriching themselves, has operated with success. In Holland, public-houses are limited according to the population; and a new law to regulate the traffic has been introduced into the German Parliament. Steps are being taken generally to stop alcoholic excesses.

*The Geographical Magazine* has an article in which is related the visit of Pytheas, the first of the great explorers, to the shores of Britain in the third century before Christ. The following sentences from the article show the discovery of beer, and the other drinks in use by Britons at that time: "In consequence of the rain and absence of sun, the former did not use threshing-floors, but threshed their corn in large barns. They stored the ears of corn in pits underground, and the part that had been longest in store was brought out daily and prepared for food. They made a fermented liquor from barley, which they used instead of wine; it was called *curni*. As Columbus was the discoverer of tobacco, so his great predecessor, Pytheas, discovered beer. Pytheas also says that the Britons made another drink from honey."

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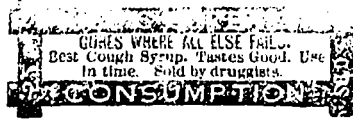
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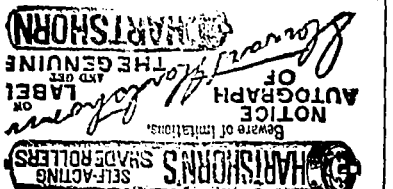
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