

An old Orkney whaler narrated to the present writer a tragical illustration of the depressing effect of alcoholic liquors on the bodily powers. The crews of two ice-locked vessels were forced to abandon their ships, and to travel many miles on the ice in order to take refuge in that to which he belonged. The one had only their usual rations of fat pork and biscuit. The other had, in addition, a supply of brandy. The whole of the first crew arrived safely. The whole of the second perished from cold and exposure.

The Hudson's Bay Company for many years have excluded spirits from the north-west fur country, and the hardy Canadian *voyageurs*, or *coureurs de bois* in these desolate wilds, as well as the Indians and half-breeds, will endure the intensest cold on their generous rations of pemmican, and the bears' meat or beavers' tails they may obtain on the route.

In a despatch of the late Lord Elgin, then Governor-General of Canada, to the Colonial Secretary, he says: "It is a most interesting fact, both in a moral and hygienic view, that for some years past intoxicating liquors have been rigorously excluded from almost all the shanties of the lumber-men; and that notwithstanding the exposure of the men to cold in the winter, and to wet in the spring, the result of the experiment has been entirely satisfactory."

The setting in of a Canadian winter, or any "cold snap" of unusual severity, is generally attended with several instances of death from exposure of poor wretches enfeebled and almost devitalized by habits of inebriation.

Baron Larrey, the great French surgeon, says that "during Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, those soldiers who indulged in the use of intoxicating liquors sank under the effects of cold almost in battalions; but their fate was not shared by those of their comrades who abstained from those liquors." Marshal Grouchy says that "he was kept alive for days on coffee, while others, who took spirits, slept never more to rise." At the present time the Russian soldiers, on a winter march, have rations of *oil* served out instead of spirits, experience having shown its superiority as a generator of heat. The Esquimaux, who live largely on blubber, are able to endure with impunity the intensest cold.