

Liquor Traffic—Ontario.

12512a. Do you think it would be well to treat the traffic in alcohol as the traffic in other goods is treated?—No, I think not, because a man who is fairly observant of himself is a far better judge of what suits his constitution than any physician can possibly be.

12513a. You think then that each person is to determine the quantity and the character of the stimulant used?—Undoubtedly, because like Anstie I do not place alcohol in the same category with theine or opium, or hashis or any similar drug.

12514a. We are scarcely to regard you as a scientist who believes in the indiscriminate use of alcohol?—Oh, no. No doctor or chemist or sane man would believe in the indiscriminate use. But what does the word mean?

12515a. It suggests the question again, who is to determine the quantity used by each individual? Is each person to be a law to himself?—Very largely he must. If we believe at all in religion or the future state, we believe that a man must be judged on his own merits.

12516a. From your observation do you believe the ordinary man is able to determine and does determine judiciously?—Practically he is, and I will give you an illustration of the reason that leads me to speak so positively. Take the use of lager and the use of whisky. Lager is drunk very generally through the summer time. Any brewer will tell you that his sales of lager fall off enormously during the winter, and there is a corresponding increase in the use of whisky. What is the reason of that? It is simply this, that in the summer time lager acts as a stimulant to the kidneys, relieving the liver, which is overworked. In the winter time the reverse is the case; the kidneys are overworked, and the liver not as much, then the lager would be injurious, while the whisky is beneficial. Although most men are unaware of this scientific fact, the practical fact is that they do discriminate.

12517a. The use of alcohol does do some harm you say?—Yes, just the same as the use of tea.

12518a. To a large number, do you think?—Yes, a very large number.

12519a. Is that because they are not able to judge of the quantity to be used?—Not so much as because of the continued habit of treating, as I have said.

12520a. That is why you would have the facilities for treating removed?—Perpendicular treating, where there are as many drinks as there are individuals. I should prefer to have them sit down at a table instead of standing before a bar. I distinguish between that style of drinking and the absurd custom of treating around all hands.

12521a. You said there has been a great change in the drinking customs within your own recollection?—In my own recollection it has been marked.

12522a. Has that change been for the good?—Undoubtedly.

12523a. What has brought it about?—The facilities for healthier amusements. I think that one thing the teetotal societies deserve credit for is that throughout the country villages they have instituted intellectual amusements. Then there has been an increase of education and a change in the sentiment of the people. They have also been able to get better liquors and liquors of less alcoholic strength than they formerly could. All these influences, combined with the cheapness of tea and coffee and other beverages, have helped to bring about the result.

12524a. You think the temperance agitation has contributed somewhat to it?—I could not believe for one moment that any movement is wholly devoid of good.

12525a. Do you think the laws that have been enacted embodying the increased restrictions that have been thrown about the trade have had any effect?—In so far as it has tended to prevent the trade being left in the hands of every Tom, Dick and Harry around the country. Undoubtedly past legislation has been effective, but only in so far as it has met with the general sympathies of the people.

12526a. Do you think that this change has been attended also by a change in the status of the traffic?—That I would not like to give an opinion on, because being only a young man I could not say positively whether there has been a change in the personnel of the trade. If I am to take history for it, English history especially, "mine host" of the public inn was a very respectable personage at one time; but while we have undoubted evidence of respectability in the trade, there were undoubtedly great evils and great degradation and great immorality amongst the lower classes of the trade, as exemplified in Hogarth's pictures of "Beer Lane" and "Gin Lane."