

that there are none in this room who are not aware of the misery, degradation and death consequent upon the abuse, and I believe that all will hold up both hands in favour of any feasible scheme to abate the evil, assuming that it is the greatest one of the age, and that it calls loudly for remedial measures. What form those measures shall take, is a question that has seriously exercised the minds of statesmen, philanthropists, and the public, some claiming that coercive and restrictive measures will accomplish the end in view, while others declare that such measures will aggravate the evil. Both wishing to arrive at the same goal, in their enthusiasm, deliriously denounce those who differ from them. Denunciation is not argument, injuring as it does a good cause. The subject is of such vast moment that it should be discussed soberly, calmly, and with judgment, from a sanitary and moral standpoint. Statistics prove to us that the evil has become very much less than it was centuries ago, and our observation teaches us the truth of Herbert Spencer's remarks that for a long time past among the upper classes the drinking, which was once creditable, has been thought a disgrace." This is a large step in the right direction, but much remains to be accomplished.

Restrictive and coercive measures have been enacted from the first century—when the Roman Emperor, Domitian, issued an edict prohibiting vineyards in England—up to the present date; yet the results of intemperance are lamentable.

To apply a remedy the cause should be understood. It has been claimed, and I think justly, that the abuse of alcoholics originates in the beneficent instinct which prompts man to seek pleasure and to avoid pain. They will be used so long as they continue to be the best agents known to man to heighten his joys and to make him forget his woes, if only for the time; they will be abused until men have become convinced that they cause in the end more pain than pleasure; and who can educate them upon that point so well as the members of our profession?

There are four remedial measures that present themselves, namely, education, sanitation, local-option and prohibition. Let us appeal to man's brain and to his fears. Teach him the fact that the use of alcoholic drinks cannot when in health benefit him in any way; that the improper use of them is too often followed by the abuse; that they should never be taken without food; that should a craving for them exist, his only safety lies in total abstinence. Impress upon him that the highest attribute of a well-regulated mind is the power of self-control, and that the act of self-government is noble when exercised in the face of temptation—nothing without it—and he who