

known medical writer says, 'that from it is obtained power to sustain the exhausting influence of perspiration.' Indeed we have seen it tried with great satisfaction, and we commend it to the attention of our hard-working friends in the harvest-field." Shade of Dr. Johnson! what think you now of your despicable food of men in Scotland.

It is a fact patent to the most casual observer that habitual drinkers, who are obliged to earn their livelihood by hard labor, are early broken down and left in the possession of shattered constitutions, which is followed by premature old age.

With regard to the influence of alcohol in shortening human life, I may quote a remark made to me a day or two since by a manager of an Insurance company in Montreal. Speaking of writing against the use of alcohol among the people, he said: "write it down; do all you can to lessen the use of it among the community; you cannot do too much. I have had," said he, "many opportunities of witnessing its sad effects in shortening human life. Every Insurance manager knows what a curse it is." Indeed if I were to quote the statistics of life assurance companies, and benefit societies, it would be found that their experience has shewn the *value of life* among abstainers to be *one-third* better than that of even moderate drinkers; and the *health of teetotalers* to be *one-half* better than either.

It will now be necessary to speak of its physiological actions upon the system, and this I will endeavour to reduce within the space of a few comprehensive propositions.

1st. Alcohol and its preparations, by their primary or exciting action upon the nerves, call forth an increased nervous activity, and enable the drinker to increase his power temporarily at the expense of his body. He consumes both interest and capital; hence the flush of strength commonly felt after the use of alcohol is delusory, and is not new strength added to the system, as has been erroneously supposed, but is manifested by arousing into action the latent nervous energy pre-existing. The depression which follows corresponds in degree to the extra demand thus suddenly made upon the vital powers.

2nd. Alcohol, when taken into the system, may be attended or followed by three distinct kinds of action:—In small doses, and primarily in larger doses, it is a stimulant to the nervous system. In larger doses, and secondarily in smaller ones, it is an intoxicant, anaesthetic, and sedative. If taken in still larger quantity, or in smaller doses often repeated, it ultimately becomes a narcotic; while in the smallest stimulating doses it is invariably followed by enervation and prostration.

3rd. There can be no doubt, as experience has determined, that the ultimate exhausting effects of alcohol, owing to its stimulant properties, produce an unnatural susceptibility to morbid action in all the organs, and this, with the plethora superinduced, becomes a fertile source of disease.

4th. Alcohol can give to the body no muscular strength, for chemistry and physiology unmistakably shew that it gives no substance to supply the waste which always results from muscular activity, even from the very pulsations of the heart. It therefore *excites but to exhaust*, and each step in its use is a step downward towards physical bankruptcy.

5th. Flowing from these experiences we have the law—that all unnatural excitement is surely followed by a corresponding depression, and this law absolutely demands a constant and uniform increase in the *quantity* used; such is the law of all narcotics. Drunkenness, delirium tremens, and death, are therefore the legitimate sequence of the unrestrained use of alcoholic beverages.

6th. The more alcohol is had recourse to, for the purpose of removing feelings of debility, the more frequently will it be required, and the larger will be the needed quantity; and by constant repetition a point is reached when disease steps in to complete the wreck and claim its self-slaughtered victim.

7th. Their use is invariably attended with debility or disease of some important organ; and thus, in the whole category of vital organs—brain, lungs, heart, liver, kidneys—not one of them have escaped the destructive and disease-producing influences of this substance when habitually used.