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STATISTICAL DATA ON INTEMPERANCE, AND TOTAL ABSTINENCE FROM ALL THAT CAN INTOXICATE.

Respectfully submitted to the consideration of the Officers of the
Army and Navy of Great Britain.

BY A MEDICAL OFFICER.

Of the results under this head in the Army, the following extracts from "An Address to British Soldiers, on Temperance," by Asst. Surgeon Macdiarmid, 71st Highland Light Infantry, will give some idea.

"Commencing with the Household troops, these voluminous Statistical Reports laid before the House of Commons, exhibit the admissions and deaths under each head of disease, but I shall confine myself to the diseases of the brain, attributable in a greater or less degree to drunkenness—at the same time, you must be aware that there is no organ in the body exempt from the effects of drinking; but, if not, I would assure you of the fact, and that diseases of the heart, of the lungs, of the liver, of the spleen, and of the stomach and bowels, are, in hundreds and hundreds of instances, clearly attributable to the effects of drink. In confining myself, therefore, to diseases of the brain, you will bear in mind that I am only laying before you the effects of drunkenness on the nervous system. Speaking of the Dragoon Guards, and Dragoons, the official documents states, that the proportion of suicides is found to be greater in them than in any other description of force, probably because these corps contain more of that class who have, by dissipation or extravagance, reduced themselves from a higher sphere of life to the necessity of enlisting. Among the troops, at Gibraltar, between 1818 and 1836, there were 371 cases of disease of the brain—forty-four of these the 'brain fever of drunkards.' In the Ionian Islands, between 1817 and 1838, there were 15 cases of brain fever, 59 of head-ache, 33 of apoplexy, 66 of palsy, 34 fatuity, 71 madness, 226 epilepsy, and 192 the brain fever of drunkards. This class of disease is rather more prevalent and more fatal than at the other Mediterranean stations. The difference arises principally (the document states) from the admissions and deaths by delirium tremens. In the Bermudas, the ratio for the same period is considerably higher, fully one half of the cases being under the head of delirium tremens, 102 in number.

In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, this class of disease appears to be twice as prevalent, and twice as great a source of mortality, as among troops in the United Kingdom, principally owing to the general prevalence of delirium tremens, under which nearly half the cases, and a third of the deaths are reported."

The total number of diseases of the brain, between 1817 and 1836 amounted to 508. In the same period, in Canada, there were 832 cases of diseases of the brain, 296 of these were the brain fever of drunkards. On the western coast of Africa, this class of disease has proved considerably more fatal than in any of the other colonies, and with the exception of the Windward and Leeward command, has also been more prevalent. Many other deaths occurred from cerebral affections, induced or aggravated by intemperance, which were not specified on the returns, having been too rapid in their course to admit of the patient coming under hospital treatment, so that the mortality from this class must have greatly exceeded the usual average. At the Cape of Good Hope, between 1818 and 1836, 221 diseases of the brain were treated, and it is stated that a large proportion of the cases are said to have been directly or indirectly attributable to intemperance. At the Mauritius, during the same period, there were 1236 cases of brain disease, 393 of these were head-ache, and 514 the brain fever of drunkards. The 393 cases of head-ache are stated to

have been in most instances the result of intemperance, and 514 reported as delirium tremens were obviously the consequences of that vice.

The reports connected with the West Indies are not within my reach, and those of the East Indies are, as yet, I believe, incomplete; but from authentic sources, I have no hesitation in stating the result of drunkenness to be fearful in the West India Islands, and from my own observation, during a period of nearly nine years in the Eastern world, I can scarcely make a more favourable report of that portion of the British dominion."

Losses by Fire resulting from it.

The losses in this way are equally incalculable, as the daily observation of every one can attest, both at sea and on land, and it would be easy to collect thousands of facts in proof of it: the enumeration would not, however, I think establish the fact more certainly in the mind than it now is.

It may be, in passing, worthy of remark, that the great fire at New York on the 31st March last, was occasioned by a person throwing a glass of liquor into a stove, from which the fire communicated to a chimney, and finally destroyed a hundred houses, and left two thousand persons houseless.

Evils in the Army and Navy resulting from it.

Some extracts have already been presented to the reader, under the head of Diseases in the Army from its cause, and I think I should be supported by the medical department of both Army and Navy in asserting, that much more than three fourths of all the diseases of soldiers and sailors proceed either directly or indirectly from drinking. And of the crime in both services, much the same might be said with truth. But this is not all. Let each of us, wearing either her Majesty's Military or Naval uniform, look around us, and enumerate, within our own observation the number of lapses from sobriety, the instances of absolute intoxication, and the more lamentable cases of habitual and excessive indulgence in such things, in his brother officer, and I think we will have reason to lament that such things are. But more than this—for I grieve to say that in my own noble profession, a profession demanding an entire devotion to its pursuit, and such habits as fit us at any moment, day or night, to exercise our judgment in the most trying cases, cases depending in their results of life and death on the most prompt and energetic treatment at our hands, and cases consequently involving our character and reputation as medical men, as well as the life of the individual. I grieve to say, I repeat, that this vice is not unknown amongst us, in many instances to a lamentable extent. But enough on this fearful subject, suffice that during a residence of more than eight years in the East Indies, with some knowledge of the Isle of France, the Cape of Good Hope, and the West Coast of Africa, as well as of other home and foreign stations, I have much to lament in this way—evil in itself, evil to the unfortunate victims of it, and evil, most evil, in the example shewn to every inferior rank—much to lament, not only in the evil that was done, but in the good that was left undone. The sparkling glass at the mess table has to answer for the baneful influence it sheds on every rank downwards, even to the drum-boy. I say it in all Christian charity, and would that it were all untrue.

Several military gentlemen of high respectability and extensive observation, declared to the Committee of the House of Commons, that every crime committed in the Army was occasioned by drunkenness.

Soldiers in India, under the influence of intoxicating liquor, have been known to shoot at the natives for their own amusement, so perfectly reckless of human life were they rendered by drinking. "Since," said a learned judge on the Bench, "the institution of the Recorder's and the Supreme Courts at Madras, no less than thirty-four British soldiers have forfeited their lives for murders, and most of these were committed in their intoxicated moments." Colonel Stanhope stated, "that the stimulus of strong drink