

THE HEALTH OF BUSINESS MEN.

BY THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, HOME-WOOD RETREAT.

Is it not increasingly true that the business men of Canada, or a large proportion of them, suffer from ill-health? Let any one watch the crowds that throng the streets of our cities and observe closely the proportion of prematurely gray, bald-headed, toothless or dyspeptic men. We see them hurrying to and from place to place, or working at high pressure, in the office and at home, trying to keep pace with the keen competition surrounding them. How many of these would come under the description of healthy business men?

Do they not eat hurriedly and at irregular hours, work when they should be comfortably in bed asleep, and is not the small modicum of so-called sleep that they do secure, of a broken and unrefreshing character? They resemble in this respect the seedy coat of the tramp who, when asked by his pal, "Hallo! chum, what's the matter with your coat?" replied, "I guess it must be *insomnia*, for it has'n't had a nap for ten years."

This great strain upon the brain and nervous system, anxiety, mental worry, too much work, too little rest and recreation, irregular and hurried meals, are undisputed factors in the premature production of those evidences of declining vigor already mentioned. Fortunate would it be for us, and still more fortunate for our posterity, if the evil was confined to a gray beard, bald pate, decaying teeth, dim vision, and a refractory stomach. The chemist, the wigmaker, the dentist and the physician can easily furnish substitutes or make up for these defects. But under the present circumstances of continued over-pressure, with perhaps, in certain cases, a limited amount of reconstructive power, that most delicate of all organisms in the human body, the nervous system, is sure, sooner or later, to give way. *Insomnia* cannot exist for any long period without its natural sequence, physical and mental degeneration, which often becomes more noticeable in the offspring than in the parent. Our remote ancestors, who were less restless, and content to take business more quietly, were not only themselves free from some of the modern diseases of the nervous system, but transmitted to our grandfathers and fathers more rugged frames, and a better store of nerve power than the present generation of business men can hope to bequeath to their posterity. The fagot lights, tallow dips, and "one-candle power" of the effete past, had the advantage of saving those who used them from mental study during at least eight hours out of the twenty-four. In those days such diseases as paresis, sclerosis, and a host of other nervous maladies now met with, were not only unknown, but did not exist.

What is the effect of this modern hurried and high-pressure existence, even to the successful business man, who has amassed a competency upon which to retire? He has nothing worth retiring to; ill health makes life miserable, and as an able writer

has well put it: "Literature, science, domestic ties, public and philanthropic interests, Nature itself, have all been neglected and lost sight of during the mad rush and struggle of the last thirty years. These are treasures the key to which soon grows rusty, and friends once slighted cannot be whistled back at will."

The money thus gained cannot therefore be enjoyed: it is lavishly given away, not always well. May be it is left to the tender mercy of a son, who knows neither its worth nor at what a terrible sacrifice it has been obtained, who never earned a dollar in his life, and who says "there is plenty more where this came from." The easy-going son spends it on those who are, he thinks, his friends, but who would be the last to give him a helping hand when ill-fate overtakes him. A large proportion of it goes for strong drink, which soon takes a firm hold on the already unstable nervous organization; and hence we see so many persons confirmed inebriates ere they have reached their thirtieth year.

Now that Christmas is upon us, let the business man cry "Begone dull Care!" let him join in the rich variety of pleasure to be had at this festive season. Let him enter with spirit into the joys and sports of the family circle and once more be a child amongst children.

When he returns to business after the holidays he will not only feel better but he will actually be better, both physically and mentally, and let him, with the New Year, lay down and keep strictly the following rules:

Arrange regular hours for business and work in a business-like way, during these hours.

Appoint regular times for meals and eat at these times.

Have regular hours for sleep and sleep during these hours.

When business hours are past for the day, let the mind be entirely diverted from business affairs.

Above all, I say to every business man: Endeavor so to arrange your work that you can look forward to a six weeks' holiday annually, during whatever season you can best be spared from the conduct of your establishment. These are "the spice and the salt" that will prevent the business man from falling into premature decay.

S. LETT.

Guelph, 20th Dec.

—We are here to determine how best we can draw together, in the bonds of peace, friendship and commercial prosperity, the three great branches of the British family. In the presence of this great theme all petty interests should stand rebuked. We are not dealing with the concerns of a city, a Province or a State, but with the future of our race in all time to come. Some reference has been made to "elevators" in your discussions. What we want is an elevator to lift our souls to the height of this argument. Why should not these three great branches of the family flourish, under different systems of government, it may be, but forming one grand whole, proud of a common origin and of their advanced civilization?—*Joseph Howe; Reciprocity Convention at Detroit.*

ILLUSIONS AND DELUSIONS.

This is Christmas time, and ghost stories, amongst other things, will be in order. We are not going to talk about either ghosts or spirits, or the knockings and rattlings by which ghosts and spirits are said to communicate with mortals. We will leave illusions and delusions of that sort to the magazines and illustrated papers. Those we speak of are of a more tangible and practical character, and the close of a year is not a bad time to take a steady look at them.

One of the most persistent delusions of men in the affairs of business life is, that THE GOVERNMENT is omniscient as well as omnipotent. We hope our readers appreciate these learned words. Government can do anything, it is said, but turn a man into a woman. And truly we give our government, even on this liberty-loving continent, plenty of power; but we take care to watch them carefully: we are constantly finding fault with what the government does: in fact, according to the belief of nearly one-half of the people at all times, the government is always doing wrong; blundering, it may be, into doing right, without intending it. Yet, in spite of this, numbers of people fancy that if the "government" would only undertake to look after certain lines of business, they would be sure to be managed well. The very men that are ready to abuse the government for what it actually is doing: do not see that it is an illusion and delusion to imagine that the government could look after—let us say—the dry goods trade or the saw mill business, or the affairs of a chartered bank.

Here a happy thought occurs to us and we hasten to make our readers a present of it. There have been some large failures in the dry goods trade lately and it is said by some that this trade generally is not in a healthy condition. Then let us put it under government management! Let a Government Inspector, with a considerable staff of sub-inspectors be appointed for each of the cities where dealing in dry goods is carried on. He need know nothing of the dry goods trade himself:—That goes without saying. The fact that he is a government officer is enough. He shall have power to say in every instance, amongst other things, what goods shall be bought; how much shall be kept in stock; what accounts shall be opened with customers; how much every man shall be trusted; and how much shall be drawn out by the partners. If his advice be not taken, he shall have power to shut up the warehouse and stop the business. By the adoption of such a course as this the trade could be kept in a healthy and proper condition. English houses would never lose money by reckless selling to Canadians on credit. Canadian banks, (a name which simply means about twenty thousand persons of all sorts and conditions who have saved money,) would be saved from many of the losses that embarrass them. The experiment would be sure to work well, for does not the government, and all its officers too, know everything; and has not the government capacity for everything? Certainly. It knows and has capacity because it is the government.