

## THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF STRONG DRINK.

Here indeed the "sin reigns unto death." The Committee to which I have already referred, in its report to the House of Commons, says: "Intoxicating drinks produce disease in every form, stunted growth in the young, premature decay and death, apoplexy, paralysis, idiocy, madness, suicide and violent death, by which more lives are wasted in a single year than by all the great battles of the last century."

Liquor dealers tell us that strong drink imparts strength and power of endurance, but their testimony, I beg to say, is not that of skilful, nor yet of disinterested witnesses. As opposed to them, I will call before you a cloud of witnesses whose testimony cannot be gainsayed. We will hear what the most noted physicians and chemists in the world have to say on this matter. Their education and experience pre-eminently qualify them to give a sound judgment; and their testimony is not merely *disinterested*, but *contrary to their own pecuniary interests*: for, with perhaps the exception of lawyers, no class would lose so much pecuniarily by the suppression of the Liquor Traffic as physicians. All honour then to those men who, rising above low and selfish considerations, have united almost as with one voice in testifying against strong drink and in favour of total abstinence. Let us look at *medical testimony against alcoholic drinks*.

A large body of physicians, composed of several hundreds of the most eminent of the profession from England, Scotland and Ireland, gave testimony before a Committee of the British Parliament, and unitedly declared that—

"Intoxicating drinks are *never* necessary to men in health, but, on the contrary, are *always* hurtful; that they are in fact poisonous, like opium, arsenic, nux vomica, prussic acid, and other substances which God has given to be used in small quantities for medical purposes, and which, if so used, may be productive of wholesome results, but which it would be preposterous to think of using as a beverage."

Nearly two thousand physicians and surgeons of Great Britain, including the physicians to the Queen, the heads of the Army and Navy Medical Departments, and many of the most distinguished medical authorities and writers of the day, have united in the following declaration:—