

The Canada Lancet

VOL. XXXVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1904

No. 3

EDITORIAL

THE TREATMENT OF INEBRIATES.

A short time ago there was held a very influential and representative meeting in the Lieutenant-Governor's residence, Toronto, to consider the important question of the treatment of the inebriate. Hon. G. W. Ross presided. Among those who were present may be mentioned Lieut.-Governor Clark and Mr. Clark, Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, Conn., Dr. A. M. Roseburgh, Secretary of the Association.

A number of resolutions were passed organizing the meeting into an association to study the best methods of dealing with inebriates. The general trend of opinion was that inebriety is a disease and should be treated along rational lines. It was held that the custom of committing drunkards to jail, as a means of correcting the evil of intemperance, was a complete failure.

Dr. A. M. Roseburgh gave a very full and lucid account of what is being done for inebriates in some parts of Britain and the United States. It is well known that Dr. Roseburgh has given this subject much thought, and, consequently, what he has to say carries much weight.

Dr. Crothers, of Hartford, Conn., gave a very able address upon the treatment of the inebriate. He took very strong ground that inebriety is a disease, and that success can only come by treating it as such. He discussed very fully and successfully too the objection to restraining inebriates because it was interfering with personal liberty. All the best authorities are now agreed that the true inebriate is the victim of disease, regardless of the fact that he may be responsible for his morbid condition through bad habits.

In the midst of the more scientific discussion of any question, it is sometimes well to listen to what people think. The following quotation is taken from the *Pioneer* and is from the pen of a well-known and well-informed working man :

"If this habit, or mania, is a disease, as these great men say it is, then I defy all the doctors and all the statesmen in Christendom to tell us of one other disease the cause of which is so clearly indicated as that