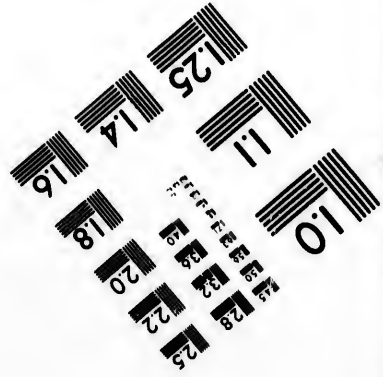
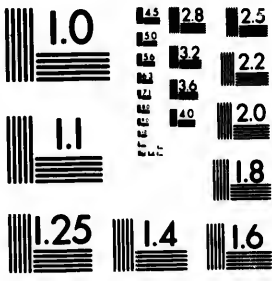


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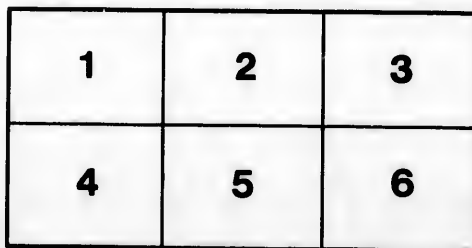
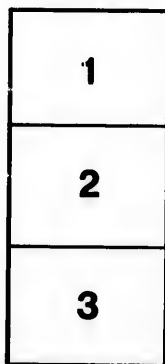
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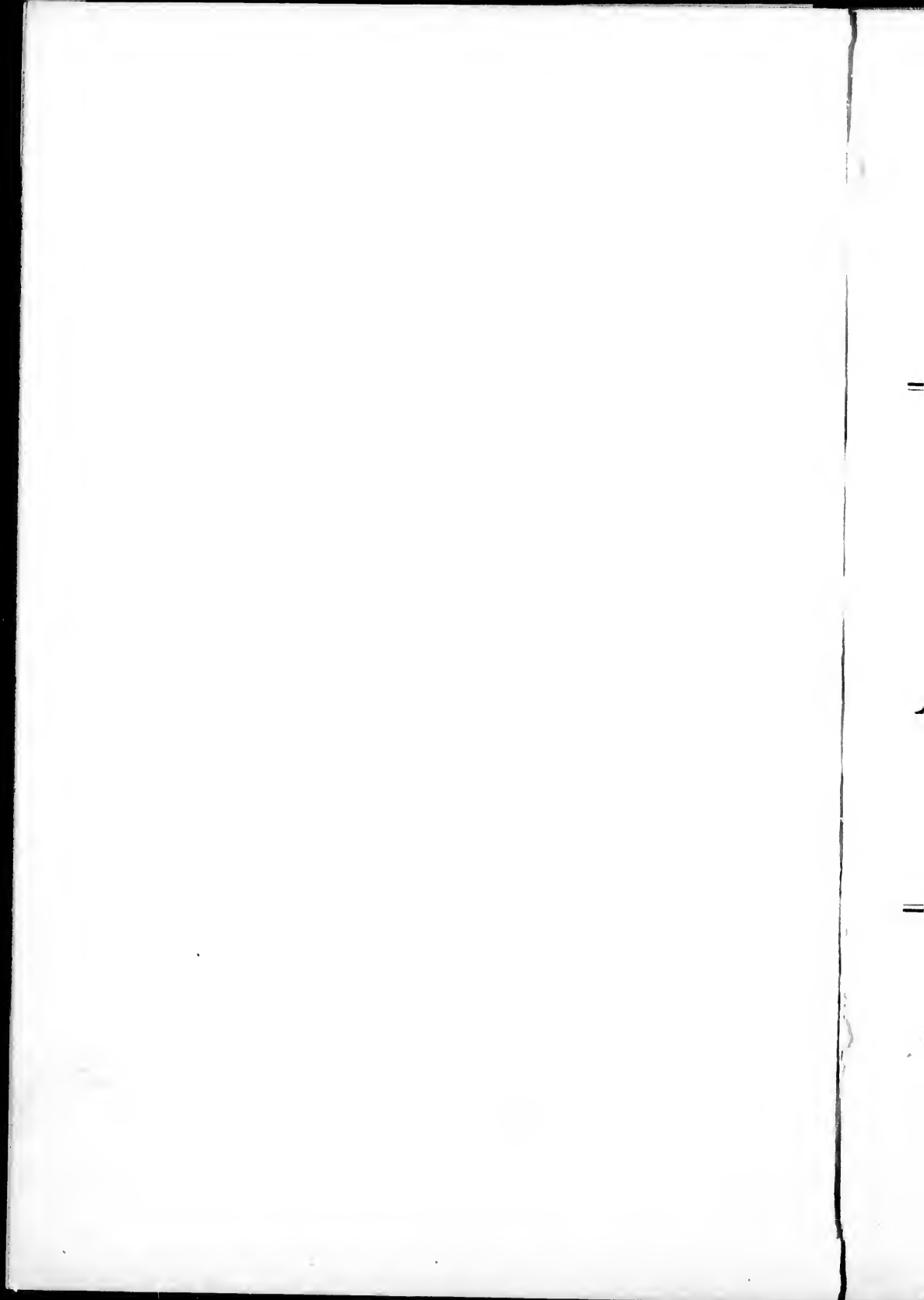
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James Hume Pamphlets

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**AN ADDRESS**  
UPON THE  
**USE AND ABUSE**  
OF  
**ALCOHOLIC DRINKS.**

BY  
**WILLIAM BAYARD, M. D., ETC., EDIN :**  
*President of the New Brunswick Medical Society.*

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1882

(39)

St. JOHN, N. B., July 7th, 1881.

DEAR DR. BAYARD:—

I have to inform you that the members of the Medical Society in this City, believing that a correct knowledge of the subject "Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Drinks," upon which you addressed the Society last month, is of vital importance to the community, passed on the 6th instant a unanimous resolution to secure the publication of it in two or more newspapers in this City.

T. W. MUSGROVE, M. D.,  
*Sec. Medical Society.*

DR. W. BAYARD, St. John, N. B.

# AN ADDRESS

Upon the Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Drinks.

---

BY WILLIAM BAYARD, M. D.

*President of the New Brunswick Medical Society.*

---

GENTLEMEN :—

I know of no subject in the present day of such paramount importance to the well-being of mankind as an accurate knowledge of the "*Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Drinks*," embracing as it does, its medical, its moral, its political, and its social aspects. Our professional education and experience teaches us the physiological action of alcoholic liquors upon the human frame—when they should be abstained from, and when they can be taken with advantage; and our professional experience too often teaches us the baneful effects, morally and physically, upon the individual who indulges in the use of them to excess. While the Justice is daily and hourly brought face to face with the "moral evil," the Physician is as often called upon to combat the inroads upon the constitution produced by the abuse of them. That the evil is the greatest one of the age, and that it calls loudly for a remedy, cannot for a moment be denied.

Laudable efforts have been made, and are being daily renewed, by philanthropists, to stay the progress of intemperance, with its attendant consequences—disease, insanity, crime, and poverty. Societies have been formed, laws enacted, and persuasive and coercive measures adopted. Yet, reliable statistics prove that the evil continues to increase with the increase of population. The Statesman requires the aid of all enlightened minds to assist him in framing such laws as will meet the difficulty. And the people at large require to be taught that the abuse, and often-times the continued use of alcoholic liquors, leads to results dreadful to contemplate. They must be made to



believe that they are swallowing a poison, which, if taken at improper times and in improper quantities, will sooner or later inevitably create disease of body and mind. And who can educate them so well upon these points as the Physician? and, gentlemen, let me add, I think it is our duty, as custodians of the public health, and as well-wishers of our race, by precept and example, to exercise that influence which each and every one of us can command towards this end.

With the confirmed inebriate we can do little; argument is useless where the entreaties and tears of fond wife, parents, brothers and sisters, are of no avail; the finer qualities of his nature are destroyed, the terrible craving for stimulants has taken the place of his will, and he pursues his course to degradation and death, regardless of consequences. Restraint is the only remedy for him, and when that restraint is enforced for a suitable period, it is often surprising to witness the recovery of body and mind under it. The difficulties surrounding the general application of it are such as have puzzled the minds of the most astute statesmen and philanthropists; yet it is to be hoped that some means may be devised for carrying it out. But *we* can and should exercise an influence over the minds of the "masses" who believe that alcoholic stimulus, in some of its forms, is generally beneficial to the human system, and a necessary aid in promoting health and vigor of body and mind, and in resisting the extremes of cold and heat, and other depressing agencies. They should be taught that these ideas are fallacious,—that the human system can alone be supported in health by food,—that alcohol is not a food, in the ordinary acceptation of the term,—that no tissue of the body can be built up by it,—that, unlike other articles of diet, a dangerous craving is created by the continued and unseasonable use of it,—that while, in moderate quantities, it produces an exhilarating effect upon the mind, this exhilaration is certainly followed by a corresponding depression,—that while it imparts a temporary strength to the muscular power, that power cannot be sustained under its continued use,—that the primary effect of it upon the circulation is to produce a glow of

warmth upon the skin, which is of short duration, and leaves the body colder,—that it does not support the system under the enervating influence of extreme heat,—that he who will indulge in the use of it, should *never* do so in health upon an empty stomach, and that every organ of the body suffers more or less from the excessive use of it.

It may be asked, What is the effect of alcohol, the base of all intoxicating liquors, upon the tissues of the stomach? We may answer, That in a concentrated form, a chemical action takes place. That, in consequence of its strong affinity for water, it seizes that fluid contained in the tissue, producing a coagulation, and rendering it hard and dense, and destroying for a time the absorbing power of that organ, which will only be renewed when the alcohol becomes sufficiently diluted with the water in the tissue. It may be observed that pure brandy, which usually contains equal parts of alcohol and water, is sufficiently strong to produce this coagulation, therefore it must combine with some of the water of the tissue before it can be carried into the circulation. That when *diluted*, it is absorbed into the circulation with marvelous rapidity, as proved by the experiments of Dr. Perey, who found that when death took place in two minutes after it was injected into the stomach of the animal, that organ was found almost void of it, while it was found in the blood, and in considerable quantity in the substance of the brain. It appears to seek out and fasten itself upon the nervous matter, affecting in the first stage of intoxication the intellectual faculties through the *cerebrum*. In the second stage, a disturbed function of the *sensory ganglia*, as indicated by a want of that control over the muscular movements which are guided by sensation. And in the third stage, when the functions of the *cerebrum* and *sensory ganglia* are suspended, those of the *medulla oblongata* and *spinal cord* now begin to be affected, as shown by the difficulty of respiration, strabismus, dilated pupils, and tetanic spasms. Richardson tells us that the action of alcohol upon the red globules of the blood is to extract the water from them, thereby reducing their size, and altering their shape. He further says, "I found

“by experiment, that in presence of alcohol in the blood, the “process of absorption of oxygen was directly checked, and that “even so minute a quantity as one part of alcohol in five hundred of blood proved an obstacle to the perfect reception of “oxygen in the blood.” Hence we may expect the blood to assume a venous character under its influence. The poisonous effect of alcohol upon the blood and nervous matter is antagonized by the efforts made by the system to get rid of it. Recent observations go to show that it is partly eliminated by the lungs, skin, bowels and kidneys. But the amount thus eliminated is so small that it does not account for all that disappears. Carpenter thinks that a combustive process takes place in the blood, at the expense of the oxygen it contains, converting it into carbonic acid and water; while the experiments of E. Smith and others go to show that there is no increase of carbonic acid produced. And Anstie and Thudicum contend that it is consumed in some way in the economy, though how, they do not say. Acknowledging that alcohol is consumed in the system, it cannot be classed as a tissue producing food. It does not supply those substances which go to build up the various parts of the body. But the evidence before us is, I think, conclusive, that when taken in proper quantities and under proper circumstances, it diminishes or arrests the waste of the tissues, and probably in some way supplies the place of deficient aliment.

It is urged by Beale, Bing, etc., that alcohol possesses the property of restraining the rapid growth of young cells, and, like quinine, of checking the multiplication of the white corpuscles of the blood. The muscular system, performing the movements of the body, obeys the will through the nervous system. For the due maintenance of their respective powers, both systems require *materials of growth and regeneration*, which can only be obtained from blood charged with oxygen and purified in the course of its circulation through the body, and this blood can alone be obtained from food, alcohol containing none of the constituents necessary for its production. It is quite true that the *stimulating* effect of alcohol upon the nervous system increases the

nervo-muscular power, which may be forced for a time beyond its natural limit, but cannot be sustained without rest and a renewed supply of blood, which, as already stated, cannot be produced by alcohol. Its action upon the muscular power of the heart is such as to increase the beats of that organ in proportion to the quantity taken. According to Richardson, the man who swallows eight ounces of alcohol in twenty-four hours, increases the number of beats of his heart from 100,000 to 124,046 during that period. Hence we can readily understand the exhaustion consequent upon such increased action. The brain, being the instrument by which all mental power is exercised, requires for the proper performance of its functions the healthy nutrition of the nervous system and a due supply of oxygenated and de-purated blood, neither of which can be afforded by alcohol. Yet it must be conceded that the first effect of alcoholic stimulus is to produce a *temporary* excitation of mental activity. The individual under the influence of it feels an exhilaration of spirits, a sense of gayety, is pleased with himself and others, his ideas flow rapidly, and he pours forth his thoughts with force of expression and richness of conception. But, as the candle burning brilliantly in an atmosphere of oxygen soon burns itself out, so the over-stimulated brain becomes exhausted, and demands rest, upon the well-known principle that undue mental excitement, from any cause, is invariably followed by depression and languor. The general warmth experienced for a time when a glass of spirits is taken on a cold day, is the cause of the prevalent belief that alcoholic liquors possess the property of enabling the body to resist the depressing influence of extreme cold. Animal heat is maintained by the combination of the carbon and hydrogen contained in certain materials in the blood, with the oxygen taken in by the lungs. Fats and sugars in the blood yield the carbon and hydrogen, and while alcohol furnishes the same elements for combustion, it is not certain that it plays the same part in the body, and cannot be correctly ranked as fuel-food, as has been amply proved by experiment and by the observation of Arctic travellers. The first effects of alcohol being to increase the force

and rapidity of the circulation to the extent named, we may naturally conclude that the capillary vessels become gorged, and the blood thus driven to the surface is cooled more rapidly by the outer air, so its secondary effect takes place, and the temperature is lowered.

It is now universally acknowledged by those who are called upon to sustain continued bodily exertion under a high temperature, that the work can be better accomplished without alcoholic stimulants than with them, and our physiological knowledge corroborates this experience.

The remark is often made that the world would be better without alcoholic drinks than with them; that the evil counterbalances any good that may be derived from them. The answer to this is, that every nation has its stimulant of some kind; that kind Providence has permitted the *use* of them, and if they are *abused*, evil consequences follow. It is quite true that a fascination surrounds the use of them that does not follow the use of other substances equally dangerous.

A certain amount of self-control is implanted in the mind of every individual; he knows that danger attends many of his daily acts; he commits the act, and avoids the danger. So with the use of alcoholic drinks,—the danger lies *not in the use* of them, but in the *improper* use of them. His daily experience teaches him that many, very many, become victims to the *abuse*. He thinks he possesses sufficient self-control to avoid the danger, and so he does, up to a certain period; but let him continue to indulge at *improper times* and in *improper quantities*, that self-control is lost, and cannot be regained but by *continued total abstinence*. He cannot say that he will reduce his allowance; one glass will rekindle the appetite, when the fire will continue to burn until disease and death follow. If an individual is so weak-minded, and so much the creature of impulse and selfish desire, that—having experienced the pleasurable effects of intoxicating drinks—he will voluntarily surrender that power of will given to him by Providence for his safety, and throw aside the reins of self-government, and let passion run away with him, he

is to be pitied, can claim no respect, and is a fit subject for restrictive laws and punishment. He should know that the highest attribute of a well-regulated mind is the power of self-control, and that the act of self-government is *noble* when exercised in the face of "temptation," nothing without it, and he who will not restrain an injurious appetite degrades himself to the level with the brute creation.

We will be asked, Whether alcoholic drinks are necessary ingredients for the sustenance, well-being, and comfort of man? If used, at what times, and under what circumstances, should they be taken, and in what quantity? And, gentlemen, let me say to you, that upon the advice we give depends in a great measure the good we can accomplish. With regard to the first question, we may answer, that he who eats well and sleeps well does not require alcoholic drinks; that the great majority of persons are better without them; that most of the alcohol consumed is worse than useless, the evils consequent upon its abuse certainly preponderating over the benefits derived from them. But, as I said before, alcoholic drinks have been given to man, and *he will continue to use them*. As well might we attempt to prevent the tide from rising as to prevent the production and consumption of them. Therefore the efforts of the philanthropist should be directed towards the *possible*, not the *impossible*. The fact that alcohol when taken into the circulation, augments the force and rapidity of the heart's action, increases the excitability of the nervous system, and supplies one of the means of keeping up animal heat, commends it to the physician when other means for obtaining those effects are defective; and our practical experience teaches us that when administered with caution and discrimination, it is a most valuable remedy in various forms of disease, and one for which no proper substitute has yet been found. As to its mode of action in the cure of disease, we cannot speak with certainty. Dr. Burdon Sanderson's theory seems to be accepted, that in certain diseases the tissues waste, first the fat, then the muscles, and that alcohol prevents their waste at a time when the patient's stomach is too weak to receive nutritious food. He

says, that "the cause of the waste of the tissues is that they are "used or burnt in the process of respiration ; alcohol takes their "place, and supports respiration when the stomach is too weak "to prepare and assimilate any other food for that purpose."

Alcoholic stimulants improve the appetite, assist digestion, and in fevers and other wasting diseases, are indispensable. The practical application of them must be left to the judgment of the physician, no two cases being exactly alike, each differing in constitution, temperament and intensity. But he should always so regulate his dose that mischief may not accrue from over-stimulation. *And he should be particularly careful to avoid bringing the system into a habit of dependence upon the stimulus*, for it cannot be doubted that over-indulgence has commenced with the therapeutic use of it. Hence, he should be ever on his guard. The exhilarating effect of alcoholic beverage is so universally felt, that the use of them has become a "second habit," and one so engrafted upon the human mind that no amount of persuasion or coercion can eradicate it. It must be acknowledged that the social use of them very often leads to abuse. But if we are unable to combat the *use*, let us attack the *abuse* ; let us teach those who use them how to do so with comparative safety, and how to avoid the danger.

Those who value good health, and wish to enjoy the effects of alcoholic drinks socially, will naturally ask, At what time, and in what quantity, can they be used with impunity? We may answer, that, except in sickness, alcohol in any of its forms should *never be taken without food*, and preferably at dinner. I wish to impress this precept, as strongly as words can express, upon the minds of all who hear me, believing, as I do, that food is the great antidote to its injurious effects, and that if this rule were adopted, we would not see one inebriate for every hundred we see under the present pernicious custom of drinking at all hours of the day, and upon an empty stomach. A man meets a friend, to whom he wishes to "do the civil." He asks him to go and have a drink ; the friend is not thirsty, but he wants to be "civil," he goes, they have their glass ; they meet other friends

at the shop, who also want to be "civil;" the result is, that many glasses are taken upon an empty stomach that cannot at the time bear with impunity one glass. This is not the *use*, it is *abuse*; and he who so indulges will, sooner or later, pay the penalty. As to the quantity, it is difficult to lay down any rule; that which would be enough for one, would be too much for another. The quantity usually taken at a dinner party, if habitually taken, would prove injurious. From one to three glasses of claret, sherry, or port, should be the limit. Light wines are preferable; the stronger liquors should never be taken, except in small quantities, and then largely diluted.

The pernicious effects of the excessive use of alcoholic liquors upon the human system, are so familiar to us all, that it is needless for me to recapitulate them. It is sufficient to say, that almost every organ of the body participates in the injury, and that the evil is not confined to the "inebriate," but extends to his offspring. There is abundant evidence to prove that it is the most potent cause of insanity. Dr. Howe, in his report to the Legislature of Massachusetts, says, that out of 300 idiots, 145 were children of drunkards, and we have corroborative evidence of this fact handed down to us from antiquity. Thus Plutarch says, "One drunkard begets another;" and Aristotle remarks, that "Drunken women bring forth children like unto themselves." A stronger argument in favor of temperance cannot be produced; for he who indulges, not only brings misery to himself and those around him, but entails it upon those who follow him.

The consequences of intemperance are such as to have commanded the attention of Legislative bodies in various parts of the world. In England, committees of the House of Lords have been repeatedly appointed to investigate the subject. From the report of the last committee, made in March 1879, we gather a vast amount of information. We learn that "there appears to be a direct relation between the rate of increase of population and the rate of drunkenness, so that on the whole, where the population is increasing most rapidly, there is the greatest drunkenness, the more northern districts being more drunken



“than the southern, and that intemperance has increased among women. That, as a rule, intemperance is less among the higher class of citizens, and greater among the lowest grades of the community.” But this increase of intemperance may in a great measure be attributed to the rapid rise in wages, and to the increased amount of leisure enjoyed by the manufacturing and mining classes. That the cost of the consumption of alcoholic beverages has increased from £2 18 6½ per head of population in 1860, to £4 9 0½ in 1876 ; though this increase of expenditure cannot be taken as a positive proof that drunkenness has increased in the same ratio, for statistics show that the use of tea, sugar, tobacco, and wine has increased more rapidly than the use of spirits and beer. “This may be partly accounted for by the abolition and reduction of the duties on sugar and on tea and on light wines.”

The next question for consideration is, What has legislation done to abate intemperance? and what can it accomplish? Laws upon the Statute Book are useless unless carried out; and to accomplish this object, the laws require to have the approval of a large majority of the community, who must feel that he who evades them degrades himself. Now, it is idle to expect that laws prohibiting the *use* of alcoholic beverages will be carried out, while the *importation, manufacture, and possession of them is allowed*, unless the “masses” are brought to the belief that the social use of them is degrading and injurious to health. This belief does not exist, owing to the fact that a very large majority of those who purchase and consume liquor, use it in moderation, are never intoxicated, and do not feel that they are injured by it. Legislators, knowing this belief, have directed their minds to the *abuse*, leaving the *use* to be controlled by the proper education and judgment of mankind upon the risks of over-indulgence. The select committee of the House of Lords, before referred to, having considered various schemes for the alteration of the licensing laws, recommended before all others, the Gothenburgh system, or a modification of it by Mr. Chamberlain.

The Gothenburgh system directs that no individual, either as proprietor or manager, shall derive any private gain by the sale of spirits. That the whole public-house traffic be transferred to a limited liability company, consisting of the most respectable members of the community, who shall undertake by their charter to conduct the business solely in the interests of temperance and morality, and to pay to the town treasury the whole profit beyond the ordinary rate of interest on the paid up capital. The capital required for this purpose was £10,000, of which however only £7,500 have been paid up, and the annual profits amount to £40,000. The population of Gothenburgh in 1876 was estimated at about 65,000. The number of licences issued by the new company was reduced from 119 to 56. Of these, 13 were transferred to wine merchants, for sale off the premises, of wines and spirits of the higher class,—not “Brånvin,” which is the ordinary drink of the working classes; 10 were transferred to hotels, clubs, restaurants and cafès; 26 to public houses, and 7 to shops for sale off the premises. The local authorities having the power to fix the hours of closing, have prohibited all “Bar” business from 6 P. M. on Saturday to 8 A. M. on Monday. This experiment appears to have worked well, from the fact that every town but one in Sweden having a population of 5,000 adopted it. It is in force in 27 towns having 5,000 inhabitants and upwards, and in 19 towns of smaller population.

Founded upon the Gothenburgh system, a scheme was brought before Parliament in 1877 by Mr. Chamberlain, under which he proposes to work by municipalities, not by the “Bolag,” or company. This scheme would empower Town Councils to acquire, by agreement, or failing agreement, by compulsion, the freehold of licenced premises within their respective districts, and on purchase by agreement the existing interest of present licence holders in leases, good-will and fixtures. It enables them, if they see fit, to carry on the trade for the convenience and on behalf of the inhabitants, but so that no individual shall have any pecuniary interest in, or derive any profit from the sale of intoxicating liquors. It gives power to Town Councils to borrow for

this purpose, on the security of the rates, and to carry all profit, after providing for interest and sinking fund, to the credit of the education rate and the poor rate in equal proportions. In the words of the committee :—

“The advantages expected from the two foregoing schemes are nearly identical.

“The control of the local authority over the issue of licences.

“A great diminution in the number of public houses, and an improvement in their convenience, healthiness, and management.

“By the provisions that no individual shall derive any profit from the sale of intoxicating drinks, and that the managers should keep a supply of tea, coffee, and other refreshments, it is hoped that the present drinking-houses might gradually assume the character of eating-houses, and workmen’s club-places of harmless resort.

“That sound seasoned spirits and light wholesome beer would be substituted for the deleterious and heavy unwholesome beer, strongly charged with alcohol, such as are now often supplied.”

As the net results of the change, a diminution in intemperance, a reduction in crime and disorder, and a considerable balance to be devoted to the relief of local rates.

Objections urged against both schemes by extreme advocates of temperance are :—

“That Town Councils should not conduct a traffic demoralizing and wrong in itself.”

“That the temptation of profit might induce the Town Council to multiply the number of attractions of the drinking places.”

“That the preliminary expense attendant upon the acquisition of such a property would be enormous.”

“And that Town Councils are unfit to conduct so vast a business with economy and care.”

I cannot do better than give you the words of the committee upon these points :—

“We do not wish to undervalue the force of these objections; but if the risks are considerable, so are the expected advantages. And when great communities, deeply sensible of the miseries caused by intemperance, witnesses of the crime and pauperism which directly spring from it, conscious of the contamination to which their younger citizens are exposed, watching with grave anxiety the growth of female intemperance on a scale so vast, and at a rate of progression so rapid as to constitute a new reproach and danger; believing that not only the morality of their citizens, but their commercial prosperity

is dependent upon the diminution of these evils; seeing, also, that all that general legislation has been hitherto able to effect, has been some improvement in public order, while it has been powerless to produce any perceptible decrease of intemperance,—it would seem somewhat hard, when such communities are willing, at their own cost and hazard, to grapple with the difficulty and undertake their own purification, that the Legislature should refuse to create for them the necessary machinery, or to intrust them with the requisite powers.

“The Committee, therefore, are of opinion that legislative facilities should be afforded for the adoption of these schemes, or some modification of them.”

In support of this recommendation, it may be urged that the present licencing system is defective in every particular, inasmuch as the number of drinking-places far exceed the demand, creating such competition that the “publican” cannot afford to refuse credit, and must please his customer by giving him liquor at all hours. That the hours of opening and closing public houses appear to have been adopted to supply the cravings of the “inebriate,” rather than the wants of the temperate consumer. For I hold, that *under no possible circumstance is it necessary or beneficial for a healthy person to drink before his dinner hour; on the contrary, when the appetite craves the stimulus in the morning, the subject is on the road to ruin.* Should he be ill; let him obtain it, like other medicine, from an apothecary. If restrictive laws are necessary to abate the evil—and who can or will deny it?—the laws should be framed so as to meet the object aimed at, instead, as at present, of holding out an inducement and a temptation to the unfortunate victim to indulge his appetite. At the risk of being considered “Utopian,” I do not hesitate to urge that *no liquor should be sold for consumption on the premises at an earlier hour than two o'clock in the day, and then preferably with food.* And, indeed, I might go further, and urge that it be not sold for consumption on the premises *at any time without food.* It may be urged that the purchaser would pay for the food, but not eat it. True; but the expense of the performance would have its influence upon the amount of liquor consumed by him. Stand-up drinking-bars are the curses of the community; and intoxicating drinks should not be sold at grocers' shops.

Medical treatment has little effect upon the drunkard while he has the ability to indulge his appetite. But how the law should deal with him, is a question of great difficulty. The liberty of the subject must be guarded, and the community justly claim protection from the violence of his acts. There are two classes of "inebriates,"—those who voluntarily get drunk, possessing the power to resist, and those who are so far lost that their voluntary power is destroyed. The first should be treated as misdemeanants, the last as maniacs. The voluntary drunkard should be severely punished,—not by fine, which too often deprives his unfortunate family of food, but by imprisonment with hard labor, the product of such labor, deducting his board, should go to his family. The involuntary drunkard, if I may so term him, should be kept *in restraint for a period sufficiently long to cure his malady*; how long that should be, must depend upon the judgment of those in charge of him. While he may be classed as a lunatic, he is not, strictly speaking, insane. The man who drinks, gets sober when the drink is eliminated. The insane man does not recover by such a process. But by continued abstinence the drunkard very often regains the power of self-control, which he cannot accomplish if left without restraint. Hence the imperative necessity for legislative action giving power to confine such persons. Did such power exist, it would have a restraining influence, and give the unfortunate victim a chance of permanent reformation. Voluntary drunkenness is easily defined; but the difficulty of the subject lies in the ability to define what constitutes involuntary drunkenness. There are many shades of drunkenness. At what point is the will so destroyed as to justify restraint? This can only be learned by the history and surroundings of each individual case. And I hold that no individual should be incarcerated without a careful examination and report upon his case by at least three disinterested jurors, which report should be on file as a guard against improper restrictions.

While I do not pretend to have exhausted this subject, I must close my paper, already I fear too long, with an appeal to all

who hear me, and may I say to my professional brethren who do not hear me, in favor of *temperance in the use of alcoholic drinks*. And if anything I have said has the effect of enlisting your interest in the cause, I shall feel that I have done some good.

And now, gentlemen, the time has arrived when I should surrender this seat into your hands, in order that you may bestow it upon another. The seat is one that every member should aspire to hold, for it is a guarantee that the occupant possesses the confidence and good will of his confreres, without which, success in our noble calling cannot be obtained. And when vacating this chair, let me, in all sincerity, thank you for the kindness and urbanity that has been universally extended towards me; and what is more pleasing to observe, may I say, towards each other, for I cannot call to mind that upon any one occasion has an unkind or offensive expression fallen from the lips of any one member towards another, proving, as it clearly does, that associations of this kind, educate not only the mind, but the heart, and produce a brotherly love among its members.

ST. JOHN, July, 1881.



## THE USE AND ABUSE OF ALCOHOLIC DRINKS.

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*To the Editor of the Canada Medical and Surgical Journal:*

SIR,—In the Canada Medical Record for December, I find a paper on the “*Use of Alcohol in Health*,” by Professor Casey A. Wood, of Bishop’s College, Montreal, in which he criticises at length an address given by me to the Medical Society in this city, on the *Use and Abuse of Alcoholic Drinks*, and subsequently published in the *Canada Medical and Surgical Journal*.

All must acknowledge the ability and ingenuity exhibited in Dr. Wood’s paper; from his “standpoint” he has left little to be added. While I feel flattered and pleased at the notice taken of my address, for discussion often exposes the weak points on both sides of the question, Dr. Wood must pardon me if I feel that he has been hypercritical. I will not say that his arguments are “absurd,” the word so often used by him,—not being an elegant one,—should be expunged from discussions of this kind, though I fail to see the application of it. And making due allowance for the exuberant zeal so often displayed by speakers and writers upon this subject, I fear Dr. Wood perused my paper with a prejudiced eye when he classed me as an *advocate* of the use of alcoholic drinks.

Every well-wisher of his race should hold up both hands in favour of any means that would lessen the shocking evil of intemperance, and I have no doubt Dr. Wood is one of them, consequently we are in accord upon that point, both wishing to arrive at the same goal. The issue between us lies in the fact that he takes one road, I another,—mine, I freely grant, possessing many obstructions, his—as acknowledged by himself—being impassable.

Knowing that restrictive and prohibitory laws have effected little or nothing towards lessening the gigantic evil of intemper-



ance, I was induced to write an address urging upon my professional brethren the propriety of exercising the influence each and every one of them possess towards educating the "masses" upon the "*use and abuse of alcoholic drinks.*" In it I portrayed, in as strong language as I could command, the disastrous consequences of the "*abuse*" of them; that the great majority of persons are better without them; that they are not necessary aids in promoting health and vigor of body and mind; that unlike other articles of diet, a dangerous craving is created by the continued and unseasonable use of them; and that the evils consequent upon the "*abuse*" preponderate over the benefits derived from them.

I also cautioned my professional brethren, when prescribing them medicinally, to be particularly careful and avoid bringing the system into a habit of dependence upon the stimulus. I further stated that "the exhilarating effect of alcoholic beverages is so universally felt that the *use* of them has become a 'social habit,' and one so engrafted upon the human mind that no amount of persuasion or coercion can eradicate it." As well might we attempt to prevent the tide from rising as to prevent the production and consumption of them; therefore the efforts of the philanthropist should be directed towards the "*possible*," not the *impossible*. I also stated that the "social use" often leads to abuse. "But if we are unable to combat the *use*, let us attack the *abuse*; let us teach those who use them how to do so with comparative safety, and how to avoid the danger." This, in the eye of Dr. Wood, is the language of an *advocate* of moderate drinking. As well might I be accused of wishing a patient to die because I said that his symptoms were such as to make his case hopeless.

The mind must be weak indeed that believes the word "abstain" possesses such magic power as to induce the millions of human beings who till the thousands of acres in the cultivation of the grape in various parts of the world to abandon their occupation—or could this be accomplished, that alcoholic stimulants would not be produced from other substances in the vegetable kingdom—*so long as the appetite for the stimulus exists.* Dr.

Wood does not possess this belief, for he distinctly tells us (I quote his words) that "no amount of prohibition will prevent *in toto* the sale of liquor—that we are certain to have drunkards in spite of all coercive measures." Again he says, "I have no hope that our children's children will see drinking habits done away with, though all moderate drinkers were to join the ranks of teetotalism, nor even if the education and general amelioration of the condition of the masses (the real effective combatants of vice) were to be brought about; but drunkenness will always reign while the way is paved to it by the 'good intentions' of the so called *use* of alcohol as a drink." A grave responsibility placed upon the shoulders of the men with "good intentions" by Dr. Wood; but he forgets that should all moderate drinkers join the ranks of teetotalism there would be little need for his prohibitory laws. He also says, "Yet *agitation for prohibitory laws* is the necessary outcome of the truth that alcoholic drinking is an injurious nuisance." It may be the necessary outcome, but Dr. Wood has rightly told us that "we will have drunkards in spite of all coercive measures." Then why agitate for laws which, if passed, will not produce the desired effect, and which must leave a large minority disapproving of them, whose ingenuity will be stimulated to evade them by every possible means, thus engendering deception, disregard for the sanctity of an oath, and moral degradation? And it may be asked why not agitate for something more practical and capable of being accomplished? For while all praise is due to "abstainers," who, by practice and precept, have doubtless saved many an individual from the horrors of intemperance, still, it must be acknowledged that, notwithstanding their efforts, the drinking habit has increased with the increase of population, particularly in northern districts. If such is the case, and I think it will not be denied, then why find fault with a proposal to appeal to the understanding and the fears of the masses in favour of temperance? It is better to look facts in the face than to theorize about the abuse of over-eating, excessive bathing, swallowing too much camphor, &c. Every school boy should know that

if he takes too much pudding it may make him sick. An individual eats a moderate dinner, and feels well after it; he takes a glass of wine, and feels better, or thinks he does; but let him take too much of either, he pays the penalty. Hence the necessity for exercising that self-control which is implanted in every individual, and which should be fostered and encouraged by all means, ennobling as it does the man who brings it to bear upon his acts, and degrading him who declines to be governed by it.

Dr. Wood has taken exception to my remark that "every nation has its stimulant of some kind, that kind Providence has permitted the use of them, and that if they are abused evil consequences follow," and he enters into a lengthy argument to prove that the Mahomedans did not make use of a stimulant that will compare with alcohol. I did not say that all nations did, yet the Doctor acknowledges that the Mahomedans got drunk sometimes "on the forbidden juice of the grape." He concludes with the remark that "if it be stated that Providence "really does approve of and sanction the employment of alcohol "in health, I should neither agree nor disagree with the statement, for I do not know anything about it; but if He does "approve of its use, there can be no shadow of a doubt that He "sanctions (on Dr. Bayard's own showing) the employment of a "very bad thing, and that the sooner He puts His veto on it, "the sooner will he deserve the adjective with which Dr. Bayard "qualifies His name." This argument is as pointless as it is blasphemous. I did not say that the Almighty *approved* of or *sanctioned* the use of alcohol. I said that He *permitted* its use. He permits sin. Possibly Dr. Wood may construe His permission to mean approval and sanction.

Dr. Wood endeavored to prove upon hygienic and physiological grounds that the taking of "one drop" of alcohol is an *abuse*. So it would be, if it could be proved that the drop produced intoxication and was injurious to health. He says that alcohol having no "*locus standi*" in the human economy, it is no excuse whatever for drinking a daily glass of beer or wine,

to say that a dozen glasses of gin per diem will probably sooner or later produce cirrhosis of the liver. What does this mean? Who said that it did afford an excuse? Dr. Wood further says that "if it be illegal to explode fire-crackers within the city limits, surely the illegality begins with the explosion of the first cracker, not after the firing of the third." Certainly the illegality commences with the first act contrary to law. But is Dr. Wood credulous enough to believe that a law could be enacted to prohibit the use of "one drop" of alcohol, or that such a law could be enforced? I shall next expect him to urge that lucifer matches should not be used, because by improper use of them they might set fire to a house.

Dr. Wood charges me with admitting that a goodly number of moderate drinkers must of necessity be kept on the tenter-hooks of eternal watchfulness. I acknowledge the correctness of the charge, believing that in spite of all coercive and prohibitory laws that can, or ever will be enacted or enforced, there must and will be a "goodly number of moderate drinkers." I accept the inevitable rather than follow the shadow, and would have every individual kept on the "tenter-hooks of eternal watchfulness." As they would pray for forgiveness of sin, so let them guard themselves, and exercise all the self-control they can command against the fascination of over-indulgence in the use of alcoholic liquors. And to aid in this precept I would teach all who *will* make use of them how to do so with comparative safety, and how to avoid the danger. And I would have my professional brethren aid in this work. Dr. Wood acknowledges that education is one of the effective combatants against vice, and so it is. The drinking habit is a vice, therefore let us educate upon it; let us instil into the minds of the "masses" the injurious consequences following the use of stimulants at *improper times, in improper quantities, and without food.*

In conclusion, let me say to Dr. Wood that, while all praise is due to him and his co-workers in a good cause, still, if he exercised the ability he evidently possesses towards educating the "masses" upon this point, and towards urging upon philanthropists the value and necessity for comfortable and cheerful homes for the destitute, he would accomplish more good for his cause than by denouncing those who differ from him as encouraging drunkenness.

W. BAYARD, M. D.

St. John, N. B., Jan. 26, 1882.

