

THE USE
OF
ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS

ECONOMICALLY, SOCIALLY, AND MORALLY WRONG:

A PAPER READ BEFORE

THE DUBLIN STATISTICAL SOCIETY:

BY JAMES HAUGHTON, ESQ.

DUBLIN :

PUBLISHED FOR THE SOCIETY BY HODGES AND SMITH.

1849.

DUBLIN STATISTICAL SOCIETY.

President:

HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

Vice-Presidents:

THE EARL OF ROSSE.
THE BISHOP OF CORK.
MOUNTIFORD LONGFIELD, Q.C.LL.D.

CAPTAIN THOMAS A. LARCOM, R. E.
REV. R. MAC DONNELL, D.D. F.T.C.D.
SIR ROBERT KANE.

Members of Council:

JOHN K. INGRAM, F.T.C.D.
PROFESSOR ALLMAN, M.D.
W. COOKE TAYLOR, LL.D.
ROBERT BALL, Esq.
JAMES HAUGHTON, Esq.
JONATHAN PIM, Esq.

W. T. MULVANY, Esq.
ROBERT VANCE, Esq.
JAMES W. MURLAND, Esq.
STEWART BLACKER, Esq.
HON. JOHN P. VEREKER.
GEORGE F. SHAW, F.T.C.D.

Treasurer:

CONWAY E. DOBBS, JUN. ESQ. Henrietta-street.

Secretaries:

JAMES A. LAWSON, LL.B., 41, Lower Baggot-street.
PROFESSOR HANCOCK, LL.D., 40, Trinity College.

Barrington Lecturers:

JAMES A. LAWSON, LL.B.,
THOMAS WM. MOFFETT, LL.B.

DENIS CAULFIELD HERON, A.B.
WILLIAM EDWARD HEARNE, A.B.

THIS society was established in November, 1847, for the purpose of promoting the study of Statistical and Economical Science. The meetings are held on the third Monday in each month, from November till June, inclusive, at 8, P. M. The business is transacted by members reading written communications on subjects of Statistical and Economical Science. No communication is read unless two members of the council certify that they consider it accordant with the rules and objects of the society. The reading of each paper, unless by express permission of the council previously obtained, is limited to half an hour.

Applications for leave to read papers should be made to the secretaries at least a *week* previous to the meeting.

Proposals of candidate members should be sent to the secretaries at least a *fortnight* previous to the meeting.

The subscription to the society is one pound entrance, and *ten shillings* per annum.

The Use of Alcoholic Liquors Economically, Socially, and Morally Wrong. By James Haughton, Esq.

GENTLEMEN,—In a former paper which I had the honour to read before this society, I showed the intimate connexion between intemperance and crime. I purpose, on the present occasion, to carry out the object I then had in view, and to occupy your attention by a brief examination of the evils which result to society, in an economic, a social, and a moral point of view, from the use of alcoholic liquors. The inquiry will include an investigation into the consequences resulting to mankind, in relation to their wealth, their health, and their happiness, from this cause.

I endeavoured to prove, in my former paper, from evidence which I trust appeared to you cogent and convincing, that a large proportion of the crime which defaces the social fabric, has its origin in the use of intoxicating drinks. It may be objected that it is not the use but the abuse of these drinks which causes the mischief; but when we consider the tendency which the use of them has to create their abuse, amongst all classes of society, in all climates, and under all circumstances, I think this objection must be held to have little weight, and that in fact, as well as in theory, these destroyers of human reason are so dangerous, that no safety to the social system can be secured until they are altogether got rid of.

Statistics have enabled us to ascertain, with sufficient exactness for all practical purposes, the value or probability of human life. Although the term of individual existence cannot be ascertained, yet we can calculate, with a considerable degree of approximation to the truth, how many individuals out of a thousand, or ten thousand, will die within a given number of years. On calculations of this kind life insurance companies regulate their charges.

If statistics were brought to bear on the drinking customs of society, I feel assured that deductions of equal certainty would be arrived at. We cannot tell how many moderate drinkers of alcoholic drinks, out of any given number, annually become drunkards, because no correct statistical tables on the subject have been compiled; I am, however, happy to be able to offer to the Society some interesting facts on this point, which, although not founded on a very extensive basis, are yet of a highly valuable

character, and afford striking evidence in proof of my position, that the use of alcohol is *economically* wrong, as it shortens human life, and, in so doing, deprives society of the advantages resulting from the labour of those whom it destroys. In this way it is also *socially* wrong, as it deprives families, in early life, of those upon whom their conduct and sustenance depend; and any custom which leads to these results must be *morally* wrong.

The facts I refer to are taken from the experience of the "Temperance and General Provident Institution," an insurance company enrolled under act of parliament in 1840. These facts, which I have obtained from Mr. Compton, the secretary of the society, are as follow:

"The general rate of mortality, including all ages from 15 to 70, is about two per cent., which is the same as at age 54. In our office there will probably be a larger proportion of young lives. Assuming 41 as a fair average age, (that being the average age of the *deaths*), the general rate of mortality among the population of

England and Wales, at that age, is	1.25
In the Life Offices it is	1.08
In the Temperance Office, at all ages, it has been ..	0.59

"At age 35—

England and Wales	1.10
Life Offices	1.06
Equitable	1.13
Friendly Societies	1.35
Temperance Office	0.59

"The '*Friends*' Provident Institution, in 8 years, had 40 deaths per 1000; we have had only 17.

"TRADES.

	Expected Deaths.		Actual Deaths.
Painters	2	--	1
Bakers	2	--	1
Shoemakers	3	--	2
Shopkeepers	9	--	6
Clerks	5	--	1
Tailors	3	--	0

"The rate of mortality among 3000 persons, of all ages and trades, in 8 years, has been no more than the rate at age 35 for rural labourers, viz. 0.59 per cent, or, say, 6 per 1,000."

Mr. Compton adds: "Our experience is a very remarkable confirmation of the teetotal theory, and it should be widely made known."

Some approximation to the truth in the statistics of drunkenness has been arrived at, and the result is, that out of the twenty-six or twenty-seven millions of inhabitants in Great Britain and Ireland, there are believed to be about 600,000 persons who are habitually *intemperate*, (in the ordinary sense of that word) every one of whom first commenced his career by forming habits of moderate

drinking ; that, of these, many thousands die annually ; and that their places are annually supplied out of the ranks of the moderate consumers of alcoholic drinks. This vast number includes a very large proportion of the offenders against the laws ; and, as the tendency to use alcoholic stimulants is a growing one, their number continues to increase to such a frightful extent, that the permanence of our social system may be said to depend, in a great measure, on the chances of success which attend the temperance reformation. If this reformation triumph, we may hope that the reign of good order will begin. If alcohol be victorious, our present social miseries must increase, and ultimately create great and wide-spread confusion.

If the experience of mankind gave us reason to hope that alcoholic drinks could be used without incurring the danger of such terrible results, the arguments of teetotallers would fall to the ground ; but, as the case now stands, I take it that our arguments are incontrovertible. We maintain that great evil, and no good at all, results to society from the use of strong drinks ; and we support our argument not by the crude theories of mere enthusiasts, but by the coolly-expressed opinions of those who are best fitted, by station and education, to testify in our favour.

We show, from the evidence of those whose official duties bring them into contact with criminals in our courts of justice and our jails, that intemperance is at the root of a large portion of the crime that exists amongst us. We show, on testimony equally unimpeachable, that a large portion of the poverty which afflicts society proceeds from the same source. On the evidence of hundreds of our physicians, we show that insanity is fearfully augmented from this cause—that many diseases have their origin in drunkenness—and that all of them are aggravated, where it exists in connexion with them. We show that the morals of society are deteriorated to a melancholy extent, in consequence of intemperance ; and we prove, beyond all question, that the food and the wealth of the community are wasted to gratify the cravings of intemperance.

All this we prove, and all men admit that our arguments and our proofs are unanswerable, when drunkenness is the object of our animadversion ; for all admit that drunkenness is the prolific parent of numberless evils in society. But we are constantly told that *temperance*, and not *total abstinence*, should be the object of our labours. If drunkenness were not the result of this reasoning, and the practice consequent upon it, our opponents would have some solid ground to rest on ; for we all acknowledge the usefulness of that struggle against the temptations of life, which brings out the manly character, and which, when successful, places man in a noble point of view before his fellow-men. This struggle we should encourage, in all cases where experience proves that man has strength of virtue to enable him to be victorious in the contest. And, on the other hand, we should discourage it in all cases

wherein experience indicates that the indulgence of the selfish and sensual passions is likely to be attended with injury to the nobler feelings of our nature. The use of alcoholic liquors is undeniably attended with this result.

I do not contend that all men who use alcoholic drinks are likely to become drunkards—I only maintain that all such men are in danger; that a very great many do fall, under their degrading influences; and that all are injured to some extent, and not benefited in any degree by their use.

I need not occupy your time with any further evidence than I have already afforded you in my first paper, in proof of the fact that crime is much increased by the use of alcoholic drinks. Let us inquire now what effect they have upon society in an economic point of view—how far they retard the increase of wealth in the community.

I will not enter into the question, whether what is termed luxury in a community has a tendency to create wealth or poverty; but I expect it will be admitted that all practices which tend to make men vicious and unhealthy, have a deteriorating effect on the temporal prosperity of the people; and, therefore, that all practices which have more of the germ of evil than of good in them should be discontinued.

I have shown that crime is rendered more common and more revolting by the use of strong drinks. Public safety renders it necessary that crime should be suppressed and punished. This object can only be attained by an expensive process, which absorbs a considerable amount of the capital of the country that would otherwise be productively employed. Large numbers are maintained in a state of idleness as the inmates of prisons. This can only be effected by the labour of others; so that the virtuous and industrious portion of the community are not only mulcted of a large portion of their earnings, but they are obliged to labour more continuously for the comforts they enjoy than would otherwise be necessary—as they have not only to support themselves, but those who are in prison, who do nothing there for the production of wealth, or for the public good in any way. It is, therefore, clear, that crime acts injuriously on our wealth-producing power; and to the full extent to which intemperance conduces to crime, it is economically destructive to our country.

All customs which tend to make men unhealthy, and thus to limit the amount of their productive powers, must retard the growth of wealth. The evidence that intoxicating drinks have the most deteriorating effects on the physical nature of man is abundant. In the first place, alcohol is classed by all writers among the poisons, and these are to be avoided by all men when they are in a state of health. When the body is diseased, alcohol, like other medicines, or other poisons, may perhaps be beneficially used, but not otherwise.

The late Doctor Sewell, of Washington, was so thoroughly persuaded of the baneful effects of alcohol on the human stomach, (I say the *human* stomach, for no other animal but man will voluntarily swallow alcohol) that he made it a subject of particular inquiry, which resulted in the publication of a series of drawings of that organ (a copy of which I have now the pleasure to exhibit), showing how injuriously it is affected by alcohol. Dr. Sewell also states, in relation to cholera, that in Park Hospital, New York, out of 204 cases only six were temperate persons, and that these had recovered; while 122 of the others, when he wrote, had died, and that the facts were similar in all the other hospitals. In the city of Albany 336 died, over 16 years of age, of whom

140 were intemperate persons,
 55 were free drinkers,
 131 were habitual moderate drinkers,
 5 were strictly temperate,
 2 were members of temperance societies,
 1 an idiot
 2 unknown

336

Dr. Beaumont, also of the United States, whose name is well known to the medical profession in Europe, published a series of most interesting experiments, which he made on a soldier named San Martin, who had an opening made into his stomach by a bullet, while engaged in trying to perform the same friendly office for his fellow-creatures. This man survived, and is, I believe, still living. The hole made in his stomach was never entirely closed, and an orifice remained, through which the natural operations of the organ could be observed. Dr. Beaumont found that all these were injuriously affected by the use of alcoholic drinks. I could readily adduce the separate evidence of very many eminent members of the faculty in favour of this side of the question, whilst I have only heard of one physician who has advocated the habitual moderate use of strong drinks. But I need not dwell on individual evidence; for I can present you with the united testimony of nearly two thousand medical men, who recommend their entire disuse; so that no man can, in future, seriously maintain that strong drinks are useful to men in health. This document comprises the names of the foremost members of the profession in the United Kingdom, and is a forcible testimony to the value of the principles enunciated and pressed upon the public mind by the temperance reformers. It is as follows:—

We, the undersigned, are of opinion,

I. That a very large portion of human misery, including poverty, disease, and crime, is induced by the use of alcoholic or fermented liquors as beverages.

II. That the most perfect health is compatible with total abstinence from all such intoxicating beverages, whether in the form of ardent spirits, or as wine, beer, ale, porter, cider, &c.

III. That persons accustomed to such drinks may, with perfect safety, discontinue them entirely, either at once or gradually.

IV. That total and universal abstinence from alcoholic liquors, and intoxicating beverages of all sorts, would greatly contribute to the health, the prosperity, the morality, and the happiness of the human race.

To the above document are attached the signatures of Adams, Aldridge, Carte, Carmichael, Curran, Hamilton, Harvey, Hill, Marsh, M'Donnell, M'Keown, Murray, Smyly, Wilde, and Wilmot, of Dublin—a few of the large number of physicians who have thus, in unmistakeable language, borne testimony to the deteriorating effects of alcohol on the health of man.

Gentlemen, could proof stronger than this be given in evidence of the folly of expecting to derive health and strength from the use of alcoholic drinks? That delusion is at an end for ever. People use them, because they like their stimulating effects; and as these effects are proved to be physically injurious, I have, in this instance also, shown that they are detrimental to the production of wealth, and, therefore, economically injurious to our country.

The quantity of barley converted into malt in the ten years ending 1847 was, according to an official return now before me, 476,347,910 bushels, being an annual average of 47,634,791 bushels. The entire quantity of corn annually consumed in brewing and distillation is believed to be over sixty millions of bushels, which, as the above official return is for barley alone, is, I have no doubt, under the mark.

Now if the enormous expenditure of human skill and labour which is given in the production of this immense quantity of grain, and all the additional skill and labour which are devoted to its manufacture into strong drinks, were conducive to any appreciable amount of human happiness and contentment, even though the labour were unwisely expended, some excuse might be offered for it; but, when it is all devoted to the generation of crime and ill health—to the calling into action the evil, instead of the benevolent feelings of our nature—one might reasonably imagine that an universal expression of public indignation would condemn so mad an appropriation of the physical and intellectual powers with which God has endowed us for benevolent purposes—so mad a destruction of the economic resources of the country.

Having shown to what an alarming extent the use of alcoholic liquors has injured the productive energies of our people, I will conclude my subject with a short reference to their effects on the social and moral habits of the population.

This is a fearful view of the question to enter upon; for so frightful is the havoc made in domestic life by intemperance, that nothing but its frequency, and the apparently hopeless nature of every remedy proposed for the evil, induces us to submit to it so patiently.

I cannot, within the limits of a paper such as this, attempt to enter fully into this branch of my subject; I shall but just occupy your attention with a few illustrations, and leave you to draw your conclusions from them, and from the cases which your own reading and conversation with others will, no doubt, abundantly supply.

To barbarous tribes, whose appetites and passions have been subject to little or no control, the destruction caused by the introduction of ardent spirits amongst them has been followed by the most terrible results. It has literally turned them into demons, and swept whole tribes off the face of the earth. Such has been the case with the North American Indians. And while these have been thus socially ruined, there has been an utter prostration of moral feeling among their destroyers, who remorselessly administered these firewaters to their victims from the basest and most sordid motives.

Among the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands these destroying elements have also, through the agency of that large class of European and American white men, whose only god is gold, wrought the most wide-spread misery. Missionary labours there, for the promotion of a higher civilisation, are continually marred, if not entirely frustrated, by the introduction of strong drinks among the simple people of these islands.

At home, in the British islands—by the aid of a somewhat higher degree of civilisation, which has served to mitigate, in some measure, our calamity—we have been saved from the utter desolation which has fallen upon the savage or less civilised man. But we have not much to boast of from the comparison. If each of us will call to mind the names of those he has himself known, who, however eminent from station, birth, or talent—however distinguished as legislators, philosophers, divines, poets, or literary men—have, nevertheless, been prostrated by this destroyer of human virtue and happiness—we shall have cause for deep humiliation, in the conviction that our highest mental powers are of little avail in preserving to man his superiority over the brute creation, if he allow himself to be taken in the meshes of those drinking customs. They weaken his control over his passions and appetites, and so gradually and imperceptibly assume the mastery over his powers of resistance, that, at the very time when these are most needed for his preservation, they are all within the grasp of his victorious enemy, Intemperance, who drags his victim through the horrible mire of drunkenness.

The sum of social and domestic sorrow created in the families of the wealthy and the refined in this land, through the means of these drinking customs, is beyond calculation. It can only be known to the mind of Omniscience, and will never be revealed, in all its harrowing details, to weak humanity; but we know enough to warn us, if we be wise, from a continuance in that course which

has blighted the fair prospects of many a noble intellect—which has blasted the happiness of many a family—which is producing, and will continue to produce these effects all around us, as long as we hug the destroyer to our bosoms.

Picture to yourselves the father of one respectable family slowly, from day to day, and from hour to hour, sinking into the drunkard's hapless condition—gradually losing all feelings of self-respect,—of love for his wife and children—clouding his intellect, and falling in the estimation of his friends, who forsake him one by one until all are gone; and all this owing to the ceaseless thirst for those poisons which most of us fear not to dally with. Picture to yourselves such a man, and many of you will have no difficulty in realizing the picture, for it is, alas! too often held up to our view; imagine the domestic misery here, and then multiply the same by thousands. This will give you some faint idea of the immorality of those drinking customs which create such wide spread desolation.

I have referred to the rich, who are plunged into sorrow by the use of alcoholic liquors, and I have asked you to reckon their number by thousands. Think of the poor,* and it is by tens of thousands you must heap up the cases of desolation.

In a work on "Juvenile Depravity," by the Rev. Henry Worsley, lately published, the evils produced on the young by strong drink are plainly exhibited—and Mr. Thomas Beggs, of London, in a similar essay, which has just issued from the press under the same title, also bears testimony to the social and moral devastation of drunkenness; so that it is a fearful reality, that the people of these lands are, through the means of alcoholic liquors, sinking into such a state of depravity, that if the plague be not arrested, national ruin must ultimately ensue.

Gentlemen, I have now, I hope, shown you that the use of alcohol is antagonistic to human happiness. I have proved that it causes many, and aggravates most, of our earthly miseries. Crime tracks its footsteps—poverty follows in its train—disease is its constant attendant—male and female pollution, in every shape and form, are caused by it—all the domestic joys flee away before its blighting influences; it is, in a word the deadly upas tree, beneath whose shade nothing appertaining to life or virtue can long flourish. What, then, should be our resolution under these circumstances? If fever or cholera visit our shores with their malign influences, what course does wisdom dictate? Does she tell us to deal gently with them?—to indulge our inclination for the practices which generate them?—to live in filthy dwellings?—to breathe impure air?—or follow any other course than that of promptly using every means within our power to get rid of them as quickly as possible? What would you think of the physician, who, for the purpose of gain, should impress man with the idea, that filth, foul air, and the absence of all sanitary regula-

tions, were conducive to health? seeing that men in all ages, have indulged in these luxuries! And what would you think of the men who should act on such advice? I need not furnish your reply. But wherein lies the difference between this imaginary case (and it is purely imaginary, for the profession harbours no such man,) and the real case furnished by the customs of society in the habitual use of alcoholic stimulants?

All around us we have distillers, brewers, and wine merchants manufacturing these liquors, and we have the unwise consumers of their manufactures encouraging their consumption. In what respect is this conduct more moral than that of the individuals who pander to the gamblers' propensities, because they make money by doing so? How is such conduct better than that of the depraved wretch who lures the weak and unwary, of both sexes, into a course of life which utterly ruins the one, and renders the other a destroyer where he should be a protector?

Would not a truly enlightened public sentiment condemn all practices that lead to human misery? The manufacture and the use of alcohol must be ranked foremost amongst these; and as the Dublin Statistical Society exists for the advancement of knowledge, and for the application of knowledge in the promotion of human happiness, I respectfully submit that I have made out a fair claim upon you all, to condemn, by precept and example, the use of strong drinks. The great law of progress demands at your hands the sustainment of the temperance reformation. That love of our fellow-men, which is the only sure bond of the social edifice, calls upon you to give your hearts to this good work, so that the economic, the social, and the moral laws may be no longer impeded in their operation by the counteracting influences of alcoholic drinks.