

THE RELATIVE LONGEVITY OF TOTAL ABSTAINERS.

BY DAWSON BURNS, D. D.

(FROM "THE GOOD TEMPLARS' WATCHWORD," JANUARY 28, 1889.)

	Temp. Section.		General Section.	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
	Deaths.	Deaths.	Deaths.	Deaths.
1866-70	549	411	1008	944
1871-75	723	511	1 68	1350
1876-80	933	651	1485	1480
1881-85	1179	835	1670	1530
1886-87	553	390	713	700
	3937	2798	6144	5984

In regard to the statements purporting to give the results of inquiries made by some British Medical Society as to the relative longevity of total abstainers and four classes of drinkers, I beg to supply the following information:—

1. The British Medical Association appointed a committee, with Dr. Owen as secretary, to collect reports from medical men as to the effect of drinking upon health and life. Out of 13,000 members of the Association, only 178 sent the reports desired, their total number of cases amounting to 4,234. It is clear, to begin with, that these cases form far too small a collection from which to make any reliable deduction as to the influence of strong drink upon the average duration of life among the classes referred to.

2. Had the inquiry been as to the relative longevity of total abstainers and non-abstainers it would have been requisite, in order to any fair comparison, that the number should have been equal; whereas, out of the actual cases supplied—4,234,—it will surprise the reader to learn that only 122, or 2.8 per cent., were those of total abstainers. Such a fact at once utterly destroys any authority which the returns might be supposed to possess, in relation to the question at issue. The cases of moderate drinkers returned were 1,529, or 36.1 per cent.

3. As to the ages of the three classes of intemperate persons at death, the tables have no value in the region of vital statistics, as they give no idea as to the length of time during which the degrees of intemperance were continued until death. It is very possible, for example, that a number of the worst cases of intemperance were those of persons who had been intemperate for a short time only, and who may have previously lived very sober lives, and perhaps were even abstainers up to a few years before their death, this being brought about by their intemperance. It is absurd to treat these cases as if the subjects had been intemperate all their lives. Very careful inquiries made some years ago by Mr. Nelson, a distinguished actuary, shewed that the rate of mortality among intemperate beer-drinkers gave an excess of 4½ per cent.; among intemperate spirit drinkers, of 6 per cent.; and among intemperate drinkers of mixed beer and spirits, of 6½ per cent. He also showed that, according to the period of life at which intemperate drinking began the rate of mortality was greater or less.

4. In order to institute any proper comparison between the effects of total abstinence and the moderate use of intoxicating liquors, the only satisfactory method is to consult the records of life insurance offices and benefit societies. Now there are two large benefit societies in England, the members of which are Total Abstainers:—viz., the Rechabites, and the Sons of Temperance. Both these societies shew a much less average duration of sickness and a less average mortality than do other benefit societies, composed very largely of those who drink liquors containing alcohol. But the very best test is that furnished by life insurance offices, for the persons insured are carefully selected, so as to exclude not only the sick, but also persons given to any degree of immoderate drinking. The United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Institution was formed at the end of 1840 to insure the lives of abstainers only, but in 1847 non-abstainers were admitted into what is known as the General Section, the abstainers being collected in what is known as the Temperance section. Since 1866 the actuary has given, in regard to both sections, a yearly statement as to number expected to die (based on the tables of mortality used by insurance offices), and the number who actually died. It is thus clear that if the most moderate drinking were more favourable to longevity than total abstinence, fewer moderate drinkers ought to have died according to expectancy than total abstainers; but what are the actual facts? I will give them for four periods of five years each, and one period of two

years. Reducing these figures to percentages, it appears that during this period of 22 years, out of every 100 expected to die in the Temperance Section only 71 did die, while in the General Section the proportion was 97.4 per cent, giving an advantage of over 26 per cent. to the Total Abstinence Section. I may add that the bonuses paid in each section were confined to the members of each, and that in consequence of the lesser mortality in the Temperance Section the bonuses or profits have been far larger in that section than in the General Section, at each quinquennial division. Here, then, we have hard facts scientifically tabulated, and entirely untainted by sentiment or prejudice, and the result is a triumphant vindication of the physiological superiority of total abstinence, not only over intemperance, but over the most moderate drinking. The numbers insured in this institution are about 33,000, the non-abstainers being in the majority, which is a decided advantage in cases of life insurance. There are several other offices where total abstainers are insured in a separate section, and in every such case the results correspond with those above stated.

5. If what is already written is not sufficient to expose the delusion sought to be palmed off upon the unwary by the figures of the British Medical Association, I may further add that Dr. Owen, the secretary of the Institution Committee, has repeatedly declared that he had no intention of suggesting that the lives of abstainers were shortened on account of their abstinence; and the *Lancet*, one of our leading medical journals has treated the whole matter as one deserving of contempt. We have had what is called a number of "mares' nests" in the attempts made to mislead the people on the subject of total abstinence and deficient vitality; but perhaps this last is the most ridiculous of any that has ever been put forth. Even the poor drunkard must laugh at the deception sought to be played off upon him in asking him to believe that his life is better than that of a total abstainer. It is well that the fallacy should have been put in so concentrated and self-convicting a form; and as some poisons are the more readily ejected when taken in a stronger state, we may hope that the transparent absurdity of the pretence that drunkenness is less injurious than total abstinence, will lead all sensible people to suspect the error and escape the snare.

A LETTER FROM BRO. LEWIS.

TO THE EDITOR,—The friends in Vermont said "write"—"write for the TEMPERANCE JOURNAL"—I found quite a number of copies of your paper taken in Vermont, particularly around Greensboro Bend—in fact it seemed to be about the only medium of communication in that line. I thought that at some time I might write an article on the ministers I met in Vermont. If I did so, while it might please some and amuse others, I rather think it would cause some ears to tingle. Ah! the cold shoulder to a temperance toiler, from a so-called Christian minister, and as likely as not from an advocate of entiresanctification, is enough to make devils dance. A penetrating suspicious look as if to say "who are you?" Show letters, and receive the remark, "any one can show letters," and in the next breath be chided because you have not something to show. All wrapped up in self. "All seek their own," the interests of their own church or society. As if the great temperance organizations had not taught the church a lot in regard to plucking dram drinking brands from the burning. One Methodist minister, a dear Bro., declared that "Methodism was eviscerated, and the cavity filled with the echo of holiness, meaning thereby that the pretensions of many were an empty fraud, and I think of this saying of my dear, whole-hearted friend, as I look at the postal of one of these divines, whom I heard preach on "Heaven," and who subsequently wrote our Grand Scribe at Bellows Falls, to tell me to save the expense and the trouble of coming

to that point, viz.: his town. Others however, cheered me, and testified for me, and did much to help me, so that my mission was somewhat successful. Will your readers please look up the word "eviscerated." One person remarked that "ministers were among the great obstacles in the way of temperance reform." I do not say I coincided with the remark, but there is some ground for it. I had a pretty hard time in some ways in Vermont. Dear Bro. John D. Spring the G. W. P. did all he could for me, and Bro. Lewis, the G. Scribe, was faithful and kind, but Greensboro Bend was an oasis—a bright spot. Our Division there is a credit to the jurisdiction—Yes, a credit to the Order. Down the years those dear brethren and sisters have held on amid changeful circumstances and to-day are a goodly band. Ah! the *cussedness*, so-called, of pretentious humanity and would-be respectable society that turns up its nose and gives the cold shoulder to organized temperance effort.

The curse of Jehovah rests upon the opponents of the temperance cause, and the worst of it is they don't appear to know it. Standing by with their jeers and their "why don't you divisioners do this?" and "why don't you divisioners do that?" and if a fellow gets drunk and makes a row on the street, as was the case the very night I entered the village, they sarcastically say "why don't you start another Division." One could almost imagine that the millstone Christ spoke of would be about their necks in due time, and that the penalties of the "inasmuch as ye did it not," which he uttered, would be theirs, so utterly void are they of effort in cheering and countenancing those who are striving to take the prey from the mighty.

I can never forget the day I reached the place. We were delayed; a locomotive met with an accident and blocked the track. Seven hours in the cars made me feel hungry and I ate some cakes that a lady had given me in Shelbourne County, Nova Scotia, last September. They say everything comes in play one time or another. On reaching Greensboro Bend, our excellent deputy, C. O. Davison, was on hand to meet me, but as I was peering after my valise among the high trunks of a travelling agent, he—thinking me to be the agent himself—left me to my fate, but a friend finding out who I was, brought him to, and soon I was at good Brother Alstons, and shortly after greeted by Sister Davison, and placed in possession of a good tea, and made ever so happy at that kind home for a week. And then that trip to Sheffield with Bro. McDowell to spy out the land. High hopes and small realization. The hospitalities of my good friend, the Rev. J. C. Nelson, and his superior wife, who, by the way, was a Canadian by birth and did honor to the land of her nativity; and that ride home in the sleigh; the wood road; the awful pitch holes; the passing of teams in the narrow way; the blustering storm coming on; the night as well; the man telling us we had more courage than he had to try to cross that mountain that night; the overturn; the tumbling out; the two cripples in the snow; the helplessness of Bro. McDowell who was driving, for he had broken his leg a few weeks before and was on a crutch; my pursuit, or rather effort at pursuit after that horse; my floundering and falling, and sweating in the snow; the appearance of the woman, who with womanly heart mourned or deplored our disaster, and wailingly said there was not a man in the neighborhood, yes she quickly perceived that the two fellows turned out of that sleigh were but poor apologies for the word man, a thousand of them would only make an invalid corps. Yes, truly it was "disaster at Leipsic" as saith the historian; but a kind friend a mile away stopped the animal, who never seemingly missed the hand that had guided it, and back it safely came, and my two knapsacks, which had remained in, were safe under the seat and we got home and thanked the Lord.

Yes! I shall remember Greensboro Bend, and the Lectures, and the Sunday efforts, and the great attention, and the fact that one of my auditors of Sunday, expired on Monday morning, like the snuffing out of a candle; the silent manner too in which I was treated by the reporter of items from the neighborhood to the St. Johnsbury press, said reporter being a S. of T.; the

drive in the snow storm to Greensboro Village—proper—the visit to the kind, comfortable home of Bro. Leavitt; and the mailing of my letter with money in it for Yarmouth, and the fact that it never got there, having doubtless been burned at the railway accident beyond Bangor, next morning, for I mailed it on Friday and the calamity took place on Saturday, and three men lost their lives; and then the oyster social, and the recitations, and the seeming absence of appreciation of my panegyric on the great Andrew Jackson, although I fairly sacrificed my emotions of national loyalty in giving it; and then the bidding adieu and ride to the train with the thermometer at 20° below and all the rest.

Yours Truly,
T. M. LEWIS,
Hants Co., Nova Scotia, Mar. 18th.

TEMPERANCE SOCIAL.

The Annual Social of Northumberland Division No. 37, Sons of Temperance, was held in their Hall Friday evening, 22nd inst.

Members were present from Newcastle, Caledonia, Nelson and Silver Stream Divisions, Holdfast and Chatham Lodges, I. O. G. T. and the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Chatham. The chair was occupied by Mr. G. Stothart, D G W P of Northumberland Division.

The following programme was successfully carried out.

Opening Chorus—by the Choir.
Address of Welcome—by James Edgar

Recitation—Miss A. W. Perley.
Solo—Mrs. H. H. Pallen.

Instrumental music—Messrs. McEachern and Stapledon.

Tableau—Twilight.
Address—W. S. Brown, W. P. of Newcastle Division.

Chorus—Choir.
Address—James Falconer, W. P. of Caledonia Division.

Solo—J. Y. Mersereau.
Instrumental music—Mrs. A. W. Purdy and Messrs. McEachern and Stapledon.

Address—W R Robinson of Holdfast Lodge.

Tableau—Rock of Ages.
Refreshments.

Addresses by Wm. Johnston of Chatham Lodge; Forrest and Johnston of Silver Stream Division; Mrs. Leighman, President of Women's Christian Temperance Union, Chatham; C S Ramsay of Newcastle Division; D P MacLachlan of Northumberland Division.

Tableau—The Proposal.
God Save the Queen.

During the evening the following resolution was moved by D P MacLachlan, seconded by James Edgar, and carried unanimously by a standing vote.

Resolved, That while, as Temperance workers, we work and strive for total prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of all intoxicating liquor, we accept the Canada Temperance Act, as being the best legislation of the temperance question at present available, and pledge ourselves to maintain and promote the enforcement of the Act in this county;

And Whereas, By act of the Provincial Legislature the responsibility of enforcement of the Scott Act devolves largely on the councils of those municipalities in which it is in force, and it is therefore highly desirable and necessary that such Municipal Councils should be composed of men of integrity and sobriety and desirous of securing the observance of the said Act;

Therefore Resolved, That we individually pledge ourselves to support only, and use our influence on behalf of, candidates for the Municipal Council who are men of known principles, and in favor of maintaining and enforcing existing temperance legislation in this country till such time as a total prohibition enactment has been secured.

"The League of the Cross" is a society just organized in New York. Its members pledge themselves not to treat or accept a treat to anything to drink. It is believed that the League will be a powerful temperance factor, besides saving its members a good deal of money. The treating custom is responsible for much of the intemperance in this country.

The Perjury Argument.

Bear in mind, the Scott Act is a law that can be enforced. The fact is, it can be more readily enforced, than any other law on the statute-books. Any person who attends county courts can easily see that many cases fail there on account of the inadequate provision of laws, but if the same person attends the police courts he will see the Scott Act can only be defeated by perjury. That is the only way. And because this is the case a great cry is made against the Scott Act by the same perjurers and their friends. They say the Scott Act has caused perjury, and we differ with them right on that point. Our idea is that people had become so steeped with drink under the license act, and had acquired such a taste for it that they will perjure themselves—would almost die—to get it now. Thus this false swearing is really the fault of ever having allowed intoxicants to be sold in the country—and a prohibitory law only shows how debauched the people are. It is a mighty good law against liquor when men cannot get it without swearing lies. These lies were sworn to for the purpose of defeating the Scott Act, and to secure liquor, and many men who try to make believe they are mortal men, have stood around approvingly and listened to poor wretches swear the most damnable lies to defeat this Act. They knew nothing else would do it.

It is all very well to talk for fun, and to say things that will not stand the test; but if one wishes to talk what he can believe, and what others can believe, he must say this Scott Act has done a wonderful work so far, and will very soon stifle intoxicants in this county. It was only Wednesday last we noticed the keepers of every old barracks of a tavern in town going to Brooklyn to hold a meeting to defeat the Act. These men want licenses to sell liquor, and each of them looks forward to keeping an open dive if the Act is defeated. This should open the eyes of all men to the fact that the present campaign is simply one of Whisky or No Whisky. That is the question.—*Whitby Chronicle*.

A Noteable Opinion.

We cordially commend to our readers the following sensible paragraph, clipped from a recent issue of the *Christian Guardian*:—

All impartial observers testify that wherever the Scott Act got fair play, that it has done good work. The Scott Act is a valuable instrument, if it be only rightly used. The disparagement of the Act by the liquor interest, and the desire of most for total Prohibition led to an unjust estimate of the Act. Other countries envied us the possession of such an excellent law. There is good reason to believe that some of the counties which have lost the Scott Act through the half-heartedness of professed friends will have reason to bitterly regret their indifference. However desirable complete Prohibition may be, we are much more likely to get it by enforcing and maintaining the Scott Act than by rescinding it.

Dr. H. Crattan Guinness of London, in an address delivered before the Congregational ministers of Chicago recently, said that the friends of Africa even dread the building of the proposed Congo railroad because of the greater facilities it will provide for transporting the awful curse of rum into that country.



Section of Railway between Annapolis and Digby.
TENDER FOR THE WORKS OF CONSTRUCTION.

SEALED TENDERS addressed to the undersigned and endorsed "Tender for Section of Railway between Annapolis and Digby," will be received at this Office up to noon on Monday, the 8th day of April, 1889, for certain works of construction.

Plans and profiles will be open for inspection at the Office of the Chief Engineer of Government Railways at Ottawa, on and after the 28th day of March, 1889, when the general specification and form of tender may be obtained upon application.

No tender will be entertained unless on one of the printed forms and all the conditions are complied with.

By order,
A. P. BRADLEY,
Secretary.
Department of Railways and Canals,
Ottawa, 9th March, 1889.