

to the presence of many unknowns. The search for a panacea or a specific, therefore, is, in the majority of cases, but a hunt for a Chimæra, or is like looking for one of its heads in order to slay the Hydra.

I do not, therefore, look upon dietary as the sole cause of the drink crave, neither do I consider that any definite cut-and-dried dietary will cure this disease. We find that alcohol is consumed and drunkenness is to be found under the most varied conditions of food. Races that live largely on flesh, and races that hardly know the taste of flesh can be found having this one thing in common, that alcohol claims its slaves from among them and that the curse of drink blights the land.

I do not look upon the consumption of flesh as the sole and sufficient answer to the problem of the drink crave, and I do not look upon the disuse of this food as the panacea for its cure.

Let me lay down some of the lines, however, in respect of which I consider that dietary plays an important part in the problem before us.

The chief causes of the drink crave, in so far as it is affected by dietary, fall under the following heads:—1. Insufficient food. 2. Innutritious food. 3. Stimulative foods. 4. Chemically admixed foods. 5. Pre-natal foods.

INSUFFICIENT FOOD.—It is to that portion of the community that are habitually under fed that the gas of the gin-palace and the pseudo-warmth of the liquor itself appeal with a force that the full-fed and well-nourished can never know.

We may talk as we will of the dangers and diseases of over-feeding, but I am firmly convinced that if only we could do away with that slow starvation, that daily lack of quite enough food, that daily sapping at the citadel of health, which is affecting a large percentage of our people, during the winter especially, we should get rid of one of the great causes of the drink crave from our midst.

It is when the tissues have been starved day after day, so that all the natural stores of the body have been exhausted, and when some of the very tissues themselves are being called upon to play the part of food for the others, that the longing for stimulants becomes a veritable crave.

Alcohol, so far as *sensations* are concerned, replaces food; and it is the insufficiency of food which affects a considerable percentage of the community that is responsible for much of the drink crave to-day.

INNUTRITIOUS FOOD.—There is a second great cause and one of equal importance. There are plenty of people who get plenty to eat, so far as *quantity* is concerned, but who are lamentably underfed, because their food is wanting in one or more of the elements of nutrition necessary for the perfect support of the whole system.

Every hospital and dispensary in the land will provide examples without number of diseases caused by mal-nutrition. The mother who brings the rickety child will be indignant beyond measure if you tell her that she is not giving the child enough to eat. She will assure you in perfect truth that the little one is fed whenever it cries, and that it has plenty and to spare; but the pap made of white bread soaked in boiling water with a dash of milk thrown over it may be plentiful in quantity and in bulk, but the element for bone formation being absent from it, how can the child build up its frame even though it be fed upon it to superfluity?

It is not therefore sufficient to supply *bulk* enough of food, it is necessary to see that the food contains all the elements necessary for the complete nutrition of the body—nerves as well as muscles, bones as well as soft tissues.

Living upon white bread and butter, with washed out vegetables, and but little fruit, people may eat to their fill of beef and mutton and yet go about with nerves all unstrung and impotent to perform their normal functions, because of the absence from their food of those delicate yet important compounds of phosphorus which the nervous organism is craving for.

STIMULATIVE FOODS.—One stimulant leads to another. The weaker one not only loses its power after a while, but it sets up "an itching appetite," which demands constant tickling. Every cell in the body does its own little clamour and cries its own little unsatisfied cry for a perpetual stimulation, and the more it is stimulated the more weakened and perverted does its action become, until it may be rightly considered that every cell is abnormal, and that at this stage *moral* forces have as much power to heal the drink disease as they have to cure scarlet fever or rheumatism.

He who takes mild curries habitually soon finds that hotter and still hotter ones please him better, and he who takes stimulants of food or drink in quantities greater than his organs can completely deal with and dispose of, begins to crave for a more frequent or

a stronger supply. Flesh eating is often the precursor of alcohol drinking, and if every butcher's shop in the land were closed a large number of public-houses would soon have to follow suit. Among women, too, whose nervous organisms are so readily affected, we cannot wonder that the constant stimulus of tea has its effect, sooner or later, either in the present or the following generation, upon the nerve cells of the body, causing them to cry out for a further fillip and a more frequent stimulant.

CHEMICALLY ADMIXED FOODS.—There are many chemical substances which have a great affinity for water. Salt is one of the commonest examples. When such chemicals are taken in large quantities they abstract water from the tissues, and thirst rapidly follows. Other chemicals irritate sensitive tissues and set up a slight inflammation which calls for some cooling application. This is an age of chemically prepared and chemically preserved foods, we have alum in our bread, boric acid in our milk, soda, sulphur, copper, and lime, and a host of other chemicals in some of the things we frequently use, little wonder then that constitutional injuries result, which often lead to that first great demand in sickness—something to drink.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE.—Of this I will say little but to lay down the warning that the mother and father owe a responsibility to their child. Heredity is a force which at present is a mystery, but a mystery which is none the less to be reckoned with. The father drinks of the wine to the lees, and the appetite of the children runs to the same. The mother has a still closer and more powerful influence upon the child, and when she is told to drink beer and porter to keep up her strength, she little reckons that she is bringing an influence of alcohol to bear upon the child, of which fruit may be borne in after years, to her sorrow.

I should like to see every expectant mother well nourished upon a plentiful supply of the rich ripe fruits and grains of the orchard and the harvest field,—soothing, comforting, supporting, and strengthening,—and I should like to see her eschewing all the stimulants of flesh-food and alcohol alike, and then, I believe, we should get a hardier, healthier, and less neurotic race born to us to carry on the battle of life.

Eating and drinking go hand in hand, and those who want to teach people to *drink* aright must learn how to teach them to *eat* aright first.