

which he can not get on a ship and which are not supplied to him by the existing sailors' homes, excellent as they are.

In conclusion I would say that in our Navy, after a trial of prohibition for over forty years, we still have a personnel which very generally uses stimulants. In spite of the persistent efforts of sincere workers the number of total abstainers is comparatively small, the general sentiment in favor of temperance is very lukewarm, and the feeling toward intemperance is indulgent. And judging from the medical reports alcoholism is much more prevalent in our Navy where prohibition is the law than it is in foreign services where the milder stimulants are permitted.

### THE ARMY CANTEEN AS A MEANS OF REDUCING INTEMPERANCE.\*

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Nearly everything which has been published on the subject of the army canteen has been written by strong opponents or advocates. The inevitable consequence of such partisan discussion is that people who have little knowledge of the matter and less interest in it have not had access to any judicial summing up of the good and evil, so that their judgment has been biased by the tenor of the particular literature which has fallen into their hands. What is far worse, the subject has become a political one, so that it is now practically impossible to discuss it without being suspected of partisanship, bias or worse.

Having been an advocate of the canteen for twenty years, I, therefore, must necessarily condemn my own paper in advance, for I can not ignore my long experience, and must remain a partisan. I can nevertheless bespeak a respectful hearing from opponents by stating that there is a common ground on which we all can stand—and that is the one undoubted fact that the beer feature of the canteen is an evil thing. No army officer desires to be a beer seller, and yet he must be if he managed the old canteen. It is doubly repugnant to all of us to see the government engaged in this traffic.

In addition to this, we all know that drunkenness is an evil which has affected mankind for many ages, and its harm, though yearly diminishing, is yet so stupendous that every sensible person wishes it entirely eliminated. Army officers are human, after all, possessed of the ordinary attributes of human beings, and are as vitally interested in the elimination of drunkenness as every other class of good citizens. A few opponents of the canteen have very unwisely accused army officers of desiring to increase drunkenness—an inhuman charge which is difficult to explain. On this common ground we stand unfortunately, back to back, looking in different directions. If we could only induce ourselves to turn around and look at the scene on which the other side had riveted its eyes perhaps we might come to a fair agreement. Every shield has two sides, as the fabled knights found to their sorrow.

In the first place, there is one popular misconception which stands greatly in the way of mutual understanding, and that is the prevalent idea that a soldier is necessarily an immoderate drinker—a being different from the

usual run of humanity and requiring extraordinary restraints and safeguards. This idea is an inheritance from the time when every man, in or out of the Army, drank to excess—a time when even the clergy considered it improper for a gentleman to go to bed sober. The civilian population has been so engrossed with the remarkable change in its own drinking habits that it has failed to note that the Army, being yearly recruited from civilians, has undergone the same change. It is no doubt true that a large proportion of civilian young men still drink alcoholic beverages, yet the proportion of abstainers is gradually increasing decade to decade as the result of the necessities of civilization. There are now many kinds of labor which can not be performed except by abstainers with clear heads never befuddled with liquor. By the ordinary laws of natural selection the drinkers are being weeded out, and in time the race must be very largely temperate or perhaps abstainers. Otherwise our complex civilization could not continue. Lives are in jeopardy many times every day, and should an engineer, pilot or motorman be drunk or even slightly influenced by liquor, we might be destroyed. Consequently populations are becoming more sober every generation. One has only to read the accounts of the drinking of past ages and even of a century ago to be convinced of the remarkable advance we have made. I have scant sympathy for those "muck-rakers" who see only the remaining drunkenness and can not realize the present rapid evolution toward universal temperance, with its marked number of abstainers.

Now these laws are operative in the Army too. Perhaps as large a number of soldiers drink alcoholic liquors moderately as among the same class in civil life, though I sometimes doubt even that. The number of abstainers is surely as high, and the number who never do get drunk is very gratifying. Soldiers are normal average men in perfect health, few being neurotics, and there is then no nervous basis for drunkenness. It can safely be asserted that inebriety is a result of some peculiar condition of the nervous system. It is a symptom of a disease and not a mere habit. It shows itself before 30 years of age and generally before 20. Drunkards always present other evidences of nervous defects or even disease. It stands to reason, then, that there should be less tendency in the Army that out of it—and that is a fact. I defy any one present to show me a mixed body of 1,000 laboring men and mechanics in any part of this country who show less drunkenness than in 1,000 soldiers of our Army. All statements to the effect that soldiers are more drunken than civilians are products of an uninformed imagination.

In the next place soldiering is quickly joining the ranks of those professions which demand sobriety. There are a host of reasons why the Japanese defeated the Russians. Among them is one which has not escaped serious attention from the civilized world—and that one is the drunkenness of the Russian and the sobriety of the Jap. For a long time now we have adopted the plan of getting rid of the young soldier who shows a tendency toward excessive drinking. He generally eliminates himself, to be sure, by court-martial, for offences growing out of drinking, but the officers now show a gratifying desire to eliminate the drunkard whether he commits himself in other ways or not. As a pure matter of selection, then, the Army is more sober than the civilian population from which it is drawn. It is high time that we resent the accusations so recklessly made by those who do not know the facts. They forget that one

\* Read in the Section on Hygiene and Sanitary Science at the Fifty-seventh Annual Session of the American Medical Association, Boston, 1906.

drunken soldier in uniform creates more comment than ten civilians guzzling in a near-by saloon, and it is very human to believe that every one in uniform acts the same. As for the officers, it has long been the will of the people that an officer found drunk on duty shall be dismissed as too dangerous to be trusted with great responsibility. But we have gone a step further, for we have recognized that an officer is really on duty at all times, in that he is liable to be called on in an emergency at any hour of the day or night. It would be dreadful if any of a defending party in a fort were drunk at the critical time. Consequently, officers who occasionally get drunk are not as fit for the services as the abstainers. The heavy drinkers may occasionally be men of tremendous ability, and, no matter how much we may have depended on them fifty years ago, we are learning that in the long run sobriety counts.

Finally, we are finding that many years of drinking bring on the inevitable dementia in which the victim acts like a mere automaton who can not be depended on, because his brain cells have atrophied. The policy now growing up is the fruit of a very bitter experience with these degenerates. They ruin discipline, destroy regiments and create anarchy when the strongest government is needed. Their moral sense has been destroyed, of course, so that they are unable to see the gravity of the misconduct of others. Grave crimes are not only excused, but honorable effort to improve matters are bitterly resented to the point of preferring false charges, denying facts and abusing their authority. Such regiments have a low moral tone which sometimes sticks to them for many years, causes the best men to avoid service with it, and leads its officers to do things which show they have been morally injured. Drunkards thus set a low standard, so that it can be accepted as a fact that in regiments long under the command of inebriates the decent element is suppressed and the very worst cluster around the drunken colonel. The better people of the surrounding civil community withdraw from intercourse, and the young officer, fresh from home, finds himself thrust into a lower social layer to his own injury. In addition, the example of the authorities over him not only teaches him deplorable habits, but gives him the impression that dishonorable and degrading conduct is expected of an officer and gentleman. Young officers trained in such an environment can not avoid some injury, and a few of them become too dangerous to be trusted with future responsibilities requiring a high standard of morality and honor.

As a matter of public necessity and military efficiency, then, the drunkards must be eliminated. They are dead wood, often retained because of past services of inestimable value to the nation, but, as a rule, they are quietly shelved as in civil life, on account of their lost moral sense. The nation is waking up to the fact that when it employs men to do brain work they must possess the brains to work with, and that when the brain atrophies the officer is demented. In one case of this kind I have seen the medical officer's diagnosis impudently denied by some ignorant laymen who wished the dement to be retained in service for their own selfish ends, but the general policy is to rid the Army of all the victims of alcohol and also eject the men who think that drunkards are desirable in command of Army posts.

These are the facts which show that the best officers are vitally interested in the reduction or total elimination of alcoholism. It is strange that any one in his senses should accuse them of the inhuman desire to in-

crease drunkenness, and yet men, otherwise possessed of sense, do make the assertion. We will later discuss the great problem as to whether moderate drinking is harmless. Doctors, scientists, clergymen and laymen are all divided in opinion and each side has much data on which to base a good conclusion. We must first give attention to a topic on which all agree, and that is the one great fact that drunkenness must be eliminated from civilization in the quickest and easiest way.

In the solution of this great problem there is an unhappy division of opinion as to the means to be employed, and it is much to be feared that the views now held can not be reconciled. The workers for temperance divide naturally into two great classes—the idealists, who wish to accomplish the reform at once and who will not compromise with vice, and the practical reformers, who think that the desired end can be obtained by slow degrees only and that we must be content with small gains each generation in the manner which Nature devises in all her great works. Both sets of temperance workers are necessary, the one fixes an ideal toward which the others must direct their energies. The practical men point out the respective steps leading to the ideal. Each school is necessary to the other. The unaided idealists always fail, for their measures are impractical, and the others fail unless they have behind them the firm public opinion aroused by the idealists. Temperance workers outside of the Army are mostly interested in the ideal and have no concern with the practical affairs of police duties. Those in the Army have a sacred trust confided to them by the people—the welfare of the soldier individually and collectively. Whether we like it or not, we are forced by our daily work to join the ranks of those who are trying to minimize that which can not be eliminated for many generations. We would like to put an end to drunkenness among soldiers at once, but we can not; we have hit on a plan of diminishing it, and our opinions at least deserve a hearing. It is not a theory, but a very real condition which confronts us in the Army, and a sad one at that. Men are not perfect and never will be. The ideal in armies can never be obtained, but we must strive after it. I am wholly convinced that the Army owes all its advance to the crusade of the great temperance idealists, but it would have accomplished nothing without practical measures, so let us not stand back to back, but hand in hand and look at the following facts and work together:

Immediately outside of Army posts are collections of small houses and shanties used as saloons and worse. The proprietors lure young soldiers into these dens and exert all their arts to sell whisky. It is a money-making business, no matter what damage is done. It was such a blot on our civilization that many years ago steps were taken to provide means of weaning the soldiers from their tempters. It is found as a matter of experience that reading and amusement rooms do not attract them. At one post I have in mind there is the finest kind of a gymnasium and yet scarcely 5 per cent. of the soldiers enter it voluntarily. They all dislike reading as much as laborers everywhere. They do like to sit at a table with a little beer and growl over their hardships. I do not know what man would do if he did not have opportunities to complain now and then of his hard luck.

In view of the difference of opinion as to the harmfulness of this matter our opponents should be generous enough to concede the point, but I will meet them more than half way and say that it is harmful to place beer where young men can get it easily. What we contend is

this, the canteen system drove out a far greater evil—the low dives around Army posts. It made a remarkable reduction in drunkenness after 1890, when the system became established, as shown in the table of admissions to sick report for alcoholism. The statistics are backed up by reports from every source, certifying to the great reduction of cases of alcoholism admitted to sick report.<sup>1</sup> Add to this the consequent reduction of the number of courts-martial, of cases of venereal disease and the general increase of morality, we have proved conclusively that the beer feature of the canteen was an instrument for the reduction of drunkenness.

Now, what is the objection which overwhelmed this practical temperance reform and caused us to revert to the old conditions? Under the persuasion of the W. C. T. U., Congress was induced to forbid the sale of beer and wine in the canteen, the old rum shops sprang up like mushrooms, drunkenness immediately increased and there is no way we can combat the present evil. It is useless to supply reading rooms to men who won't read—we have tried it. We have tried amusement rooms and gymnasia, too. The saloon is an attraction we can not overcome.

The chief objection was, of course, the ethical one, that beer should not be sold on government reservations, but is that a sufficient reason for increasing the drunkenness outside the gate?

Principles are all right to live up to, but must be modified as soon as we find that they do evil. In no way we look at the matter is it justifiable to continue the old objection—laudable though it may seem to a superficial view.

The beer feature of the canteen might be described as fighting the devil with fire—a good doctrine, by the way, in the minds of many, if not most, devout Christians. Nevertheless, it can be denied that it is fighting with fire, for, though we acknowledge that it was a minor evil replacing a greater one, there are many honest men who do not see evil in it at all except as below mentioned.

When the canteens were in full blast we were frequently regaled in the daily press, with accounts of debauchery. It should not be necessary to deny this. After pay-day, it is a pretty noisy place, but young men are not happy unless they are making a noise. Occasionally a man will take too much—a matter which we try to prevent. It would be wrong to conceal this fact, for this is an honest effort to present the evil as well as the good.

Now let us ask ourselves, if there is any danger in the small amounts of beer and wine usually consumed by the average man. Literature is crowded with descriptions of experiments in which large quantities of alcohol are used. The evidence, of course, is all on one side. Yet there is astonishingly little as to the effects of minute quantities and opinions as before stated are at wide variance. There is, indeed, a growing mass of evidence, that all carbohydrates are first oxidized into alcohol before any cell—animal or vegetable—can utilize them as foods for energy. That is, the main energy food of the living world is alcohol manufactured by the enzymes produced by the cells themselves. The long discussion as to whether or not alcohol is a food is settled, though it will not be acknowledged as settled for another fifty years. Of course, we must allow nature to produce alcohol in our bodies in her own way. So we stand on very firm ground in the opinion that the alcohol introduced into the stomach is an unnatural way of taking it into the

cells, and can safely be omitted. That is far different from saying that it is a harmful way in moderation. Indeed, the use of a small amount may actually relieve the tissues of the work of preparing it and may tend to survival. This is the manner in which we became dependent on starch in the place of cellulose. Likewise we once used raw starch, but the weaklings who used cooked starch had the advantage and survived in greater numbers, so that we are dependent on it now. Likewise we are undergoing a still further evolution. Starches are manufactured into sugar in our bodies, so that if we eat a little sugar we save the organism that much trouble. There is a natural selection of types able to do this, and the natural result is that mankind is already partly dependent on sugar manufactured outside our bodies. Human evolution is going on all the time—it is not ended, as a few men assert. A tremendous selection is now going on in many directions. It is quite possible that future man may be dependent on both sugar and alcohol in moderation. This, too, is far from saying that we are dependent on them now or ever will need large amounts to the total exclusion of cooked starch.

The use of beer in the canteen can not then be attacked on the scientific plea that it is harmful or useless. We must attack it on ethical grounds. It is acknowledged that it is bad ethics to allow a young person to use alcohol. At present we must keep it from them until full maturity if we can. Young soldiers are the very ones we would like to guard if we could, and if we can not do so absolutely, we must be allowed to do the best we can. We must protect them from the grog shops around Army posts and the canteen has proved itself able to do this with a minimum of harm. It is, therefore, good ethics.

In addition to all this, the profits from the sale of beer belong to the soldier himself, instead of the saloon-keeper. They are used to improve his table fare. It is currently believed that the ration is sufficient, and so it is in a sense, but it is very plain, simple and unvaried. The soldier, like every other human being, needs an occasional change, a little feast now and then. He hungers for it, and spends a great deal of his pay for extra food in every army in the world. Restaurants or sutler's stores are a necessary adjunct to armies and follow them even into battle. They sell some harmful things, and it is our desire to reduce this harm by increasing the attractiveness of the table. There is a growing opinion that the company should have a few cents daily per man for this one purpose of buying extras whenever possible, depending on the commissary for the staples. We could do this fairly well when we had large canteen profits and big gardens, but now we can not. We keenly feel the deprivation. The breaking-up of the canteen has actually interfered with feeding the soldier, and has caused him unnecessary expense. For those who are not acquainted with this matter, I may explain that the canteen is a co-operative store, whose profits are divided up among the companies and spent for the soldiers' food and amusement. It is always managed by an officer in their interests.

The sooner it is restored the better, and it is hoped that our opponents who are engaged like ourselves in the crusade for temperance, will join us in re-establishing this practical instrument for good. It is a step toward temperance. I do not quote authorities or reports because they are practically all of one tenor, that the abolition of the beer feature of the canteen was a disaster. The opponents are the rare exceptions. Surely the pub-

1. Dr. Geo. W. Kober, *American Medicine*, Dec. 5, 1903, and reports of the Surgeon General and Secretary of War.

lic should credit these experts with unbiased knowledge of the facts at first hand. It is a notorious fact that the establishment of the canteen was violently opposed by very many officers, but as soon as it proved its usefulness, the opposition disappeared. Surely such men should not be accused of ignorance of the matter, and least of all, of viciousness. I am quite sure that every one who investigates the matter impartially will advocate the old system which proved to be so efficient and which is now desired by practically all officers, by both the abstainers and those who use alcohol themselves.

### MEDICAL CARE OF INEBRIATES.\*

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Inebriates rarely ever appeal to physicians for help, unless intoxicated, or in the remorseful period, when recovering from the toxic effects. The moderate drinker never considers the need of medical help. The periodic drinker may seek advice on the eve of an outbreak, but never after, until the storm is over, and he is suffering from the effects of the excess.

The friends of patients frequently ask physicians about these conditions, and sometimes bring the patient with them, who is always skeptical of the need of help. As a rule, physicians look on inebriety as a moral condition of half vice, with mental indolence and feeble will.

The first impression is to alarm the patient and to try to impress on him a fear and horror of his condition, and in this way to rouse up an antagonism to the drink impulse, or the quack method may be tried, of drugging the liquor, causing it to produce nausea and mental disgust for its taste and effects.

The quack depends on chemical restraint and the unpleasant effects from the use of spirits either by being drugged or by medicines taken immediately before or after its use, sustaining the statements that spirits are poisonous and dangerous.

There is a form of suggestion by which new thought is impressed on the mind so powerfully as to overcome the morbid impulse for drink in the future. While this is possible in a certain number of cases, it depends on so many complex conditions that its reality is very uncertain.

The patient who is impressed with the statement that alcohol is poisonous and can not be taken in the future without most revulsive effects discovers that this is a delusion, and his skepticism of relief increases, hence the last state is worse than the first.

One fact should always be considered, that the drink craze or symptom dies out from some unknown constitutional change in the organism, but when this will occur is unknown. A great many instances of reported cures from drugs or mental and moral means are simply constitutional changes, and in no way connected with the use of these means.

The treatment given in institutions or in private practice should have this one object prominent, namely, to remove the exciting causes and restore the nutrition and integrity of the organism, and in this way to promote a tendency toward a constitutional change in which the drink craze disappears.

As an office patient the inebriate should be given very

exact instructions concerning the use of drugs and his conduct and surroundings. If the case is a periodic, great attention should be paid to the premonitory symptoms, and apomorphia should be given with circumspection and exactness as to time and place. Where the nutrition is greatly disturbed, phosphate of sodium combined with daily baths has a particularly valuable effect.

States of poisoning and starvation should always be recognized and considered in the treatment. Poisons introduced from without and poisons formed within are present in all cases. Low resisting pain-centers with defective nutrition, causing starvation and feeble organic activities, are also present universally. The heart is defective in action and the circulation of the blood is impaired in rhythm and uniformity. As a result there are almost innumerable signs of functional disturbances and vasomotor palsies, defective co-ordination, with faulty judgment and lowered conceptions of right and wrong.

Evidently, from this, moral treatment can have little or no effect. Each case presents a problem for itself. A certain proportion of all inebriates, particularly in the early stages, can be treated at home successfully, but each one should be made the subject of frequent visits, study and examination. Psychic treatment is of equal value with the physical. Exact duties and obligations should be put on the patient every day, and the mind should never be allowed to consider these measures of small interest. The more chronic cases should go under hospital care, where the surroundings with enforced brain and nerve rest could be made exact and continuous for a time.

The inebriate does not need diversion or change like the neurasthenic; he requires nerve rest, removal of all exciting causes and eliminative measures to correct the waste of the body. The subsidence of the drink craze is not the cure, but only a small beginning.

Most radical changes in the nutrition of conditions provoking brain strain and tension are essential. The removal of the exciting causes followed by nerve rest will enable the system to restore exhausted nerve centers and improve the metabolism of digestion. It is from steady, persistent effort to give brain and cell rest that the exhaustive conditions and psychic pain which calls for relief and finds it in alcohol and drugs can be removed. The alcoholic impulse is a sign of central nerve exhaustion and derangement and irritability of the pain centers and an unconscious call for help.

There is no doubt, in all persons who have used alcohol, a nerve tension and degree of irritation which can only be concealed or covered up by spirits and drugs. It would be apparent from this that the means of treatment must embrace a very wide range of measures that will restore the lost balance of the organism. Very interesting questions occur in every case as to the best means of giving relief and neutralizing the toxic states. The psychic treatment alone covers a very wide field, including climate, occupation, excitement, nerve rest and exhaustion.

In the physical treatment, a still wider range of means and measures suggest themselves, particularly of means to remove the exciting causes and to determine how far the brain has become deranged and the organism perverted below the health limits.

Removal of the poisons is another therapeutic measure that requires a great variety of appliances, particularly baths and measures to stimulate the elimination. Perhaps no remedies have a wider application in the treatment of inebriety than baths, vibration and massage.

\* Read in the Section on Hygiene and Sanitary Science at the Fifty-seventh Annual Session of the American Medical Association, Boston, 1906.