

THE VERDICT OF EXPERTS.

TESTIMONY OF LIFE ASSURANCE.

Many years ago good life assurance societies were rather doubtful of insuring abstainers; now, recognising facts, they take them gladly, and some at a 10 per cent. reduced premium. One well-known society has already given discounts amounting to £135,000. These are hard business facts, which no amount of argument can gainsay.

TESTIMONY OF PHYSICIANS.

Sir Andrew Clark, President of the Royal College of Physicians, said: "I tell you that going the rounds of my hospital wards to-day seven out of every ten there owed their ill-health to alcohol. I do not know that one of them was what you call a drunkard."

Sir Henry Thompson, the eminent London surgeon, wrote: "I have no hesitation in attributing a very large proportion of some of the most painful and dangerous maladies which come under my notice to the ordinary and daily use of fermented drink, taken in the quantity which is conventionally deemed moderate."

It has been known to medical men that drunkards were much more liable than sober people to be attacked by infectious diseases. But speaking of the influence of moderate doses of alcohol, Dr. Buchner, Professor of Medicine in Munich University, said: "Alcohol kills the largest number of victims by ambush, as it were, in that it undermines the powers of resistance to sickness, so that the apparently quite temperate drinker succumbs to a lung inflammation or an infectious disease which the sound, normal body easily overcomes."

Metchnikoff, of the Pasteur Institution in Paris, where they make antidote serums for hydrophobia, diphtheria, and certain other diseases, has been able to prove that alcohol prevents the curative action of these serums.

At the time of the great cholera epidemic, in 1849, in Glasgow, Dr. Adams, Professor of Medicine in Anderson's College, in his report said: "I have found the use of alcoholic drinks to be a great predisposing cause of malignant cholera. So strong is my opinion on this point, that were I one of the authorities and had the power, I would placard every spirit shop in town with these words, 'Cholera sold here.'" In this con-

nection it may be added that the late Dr. John Burns, of Bridgeton, told the present writer that in that epidemic he treated 371 cases of cholera, carried many of them to the hospital on his back, was much out of bed at night, and greatly fatigued, yet never tasted alcohol, and was not a day laid aside from duty, and did not take the disease.

Sir Fred. Treves, in his "System of Surgery," when discussing the high mortality of operations on regular users of alcohol, says: "Many individuals who state that they do not drink, and who, although perhaps never drunk, are yet always taking a little stimulant in the form of 'nips' and an 'occasional glass,' are often as bad subjects for surgical treatment as are the acknowledged drunkards."

Dr. Norman Kerr, Chairman of the Inebriates' Legislation Committee of the British Medical Association, said: "I have no hesitation in making the liberate statement that more persons have their lives cut short prematurely by latent chronic alcoholic poisoning produced by regular alcohol taking in so-called 'moderation,' long persisted in, than by unmistakable drunkenness."

MODERATE DRINKING.

The truth as to the connection between alcohol and disease is this. In the case of a healthy person in good surroundings, an occasional fit of drunkenness, with complete abstinence between times, seems to do little harm, unless the individual suffers accidental injury while intoxicated. The natural defensive powers of the body have had time to throw off the evil effects. If an individual also in good circumstances, takes in any shape a small quantity daily, and restricts himself to this, it may be many years before the ill-effects are obvious to himself or his friends, but his health and mental activity are surely, if slowly, becoming impaired and his life shortened. In the case of a person infirm in health and in circumstances of strain, the evil results are accelerated. In a few individuals great resistive power is shown, and they live to old age before the symptoms of chronic alcoholic poisoning become manifest. But much more frequently the moderate dose is augmented, and the decline in health and usefulness soon becomes evident, and is rapid in proportion to the amount of alcohol consumed. This is not the place in

which to describe the pathological changes induced; suffice it to say they are chiefly due to degeneration of nerve cells and of the connective tissues of the body, leading to such diseases as neuritis and cirrhosis of the liver.—Dr. W. U. Reid (Lond).—From 'Grit.'

BOUND FOR THE CONTINENT OF IMMORTALITY.

We have cast anchor just for a little while beside this island of a world, but we are bound for the continent of Immortality, and since the ship must so soon lift its anchor, since its gleaming sails beckon us now, even as a friend's hand, toward yonder fair and mystical horizon, let us take on board a cargo that shall be worth something in the country where we are to spend the longest time.

Then fix your eyes upon the fadeless vision of immortality, for whoever has that hope or expectation in his soul cannot be baulked or daunted. He fixes his hopes firmly on the heavens; he lets the earth roll under him. Upon the conflicts and the turmoils of the world he looks with calmness, and with the strength that God supplies through His eternal Son he can

"The crumbling universe defy
To quench his immortality,
Or shake his trust in God."

—Frances E. Willard.

THE ZEST OF LIFE.

Let me but live from year to year,
With forward face and unreluctant soul.
Not hastening to, nor turning from the goal;
Not mourning for the things that disappear
In the dim past, nor holding back in fear
From what the future veils; but with a whole
And happy heart, that pays its toll
To youth and age, and travels on with cheer.

So let the way wind up the hill or down,
Though rough or smooth, the journey will be joy;
Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,
New friendship, high adventure, and a crown.
I shall grow old, but never lose life's zest,
Because the road's last turn will be the best.

—Henry Van Dyke.