

ETHER DRINKING IN ERIN.

Frightful Spread of the Habit in the Northern Countries.

WORSE THAN ALL OTHER DRINKS.

The startling Testimony of Dr. Norman Kerr President of the Society for the Study of Inebriety.

A New York Herald correspondent had a long and interesting conversation the other day with Dr. Norman Kerr, president of the society for the study and cure of inebriety, on the remarkable spread of ether drinking in the north of Ireland.

As an indication of the extent to which this strange and pernicious habit has increased it is sufficient to state that in the single village of Cookstown not less than two tons of methylated spirit, which is practically pure ether, are consumed annually. How many tons of the drug are swallowed by the population of the counties of Derry, Tyrone and Armagh where the habit is spreading with alarming rapidity, it is impossible to say for want of accurate information. The amount, however, must be enormous.

A TERRIBLE PASSION.

"People in England," said Dr. Kerr, "have no conception of the terrible hold which this passion for ether drinking has taken upon the men and women in the north of Ireland. A person walking through the crowded and narrow streets of some of the villages there is almost overpowerd by the fumes of this drug, with which the houses and population seem to be saturated. The market places, the theatres, the railway carriages, even the churches, reek with its penetrating odor, and one goes away with the sad but true impression that the majority of the people have become victims to a habit as deadly in its effects as it is new in the history of human wickedness."

"But why do they drink this ether?" I inquired.

"Why?" answered the doctor. "Why do men and women all the world over get drunk and make brutes of themselves generally? Because they are suffering from a disease just as real as consumption or cancer, although not so recognized. I mean the disease of inebriety, of which the craving for ether in the north Ireland in one form, just like the cravings of alcohol, or morphine, or chloroform, or opium, or cocaine, which, by the way, is the latest thing in the way of hypodermic injections among the fashionable people of London."

THE REASONS.

"But surely there must be special reasons why this ether habit should be limited to such a comparatively small region."

"Undoubtedly there are, but I must admit that in spite of our best efforts we are yet unable to state with certainty what those special reasons are. It is almost impossible to obtain reliable statistics as to the amount of ether sold and the classes of society who indulge in it most largely. For evident reasons the situation is not painted nearly as black as it really is, and even the priests, who are fighting strenuously against the other habit, will not tell us what they know, inasmuch as a foolish idea has been put forward that Roman Catholics are the chief victims to ether intoxication.

QUICK ACTION.

The intoxicating effect of ether is much quicker in its action than that of alcohol, and can easily be sobered at noon, take a drink of ether, be blind drunk at quarter to one and sober again three-quarters of an hour later, so you see it is literally true that an ether drinker can get drunk and sober half a dozen times in a single day. I explained this curious phenomenon to a medical friend of mine, who, incredulous, determined to experiment with a dose of ether upon himself. I poured out for him about half a wineglassfull, which is sufficient to produce drunkenness in one accustomed to the drug. He swallowed it at a gulp, nearly burning out the roof of his mouth, and within half an hour he was dancing about the room like a wild man, and becoming so pugnacious as to drive his chair about through a pane of glass, thereby cutting his shirt severely. A little later he was perfectly sober, the effects having entirely worn away, and he would only be convinced that he had gone through the antics I described when I showed him the cuts upon his hand.

THE DOSE INCREASES.

"Is half a wineglassful enough to satisfy a confirmed ether taper?" "Oh, no, indeed. After a few weeks an ether drinker will require two or three times as much before his ideal of drunken bliss is realized, and those who have become slaves to the habit after months of indulgence will drink regularly from half a pint to a pint of ether a day. This is, of course, quite enough to kill an ordinary person. But, to those accustomed to it, its effects are much less serious than might be imagined. Indeed, the habit of drinking ether is such a recent development in the annals of intoxication that physicians have not yet been able to arrive at a complete knowledge of its physiological effects. One thing, however, is certain, and this may be a warning to those conceited if by any chance you should set fire to an ether derrick he or she would certainly burn up with rapidity great enough to make one believe in spontaneous combustion. You know ether is one of the most inflammable of substances,"

FATAL TERMINATION.

"Pete McCartney in Kansas City." Word comes from Columbus, Ohio, that Pete McCartney, king of counterfeiters, is dead. Back in the latter part of the '60's McCartney came to grief in Kansas City, where he was captured and hanged out along the river bank. Those were border days then and the trials of the arrests made like a chapter in a border drama, says the Kansas City Times. Detective Charlie Liggett noticed McCartney on the streets and was soon talking to him. Pete thought that here was a good chance to dispose of some of the "queer" and made such a proposition to Liggett.

"All right," assented the officer, and then he led the famous counterfeiter into a den not 100 yards from the police station. Once inside Pete found himself looking down into the one big eye of a six shooter.

"McCartney, your game was played once too often. You've struck the wrong man," said Liggett.

Pete was led groggily and after spending some little time in the county jail was taken to Jefferson City. When arrested he carried a little vase, which was found to contain \$23,000 in splendidly executed counterfeits.

In those days McCartney operated chiefly on Missouri and Mississippi river boats, passing in person the bogus goods of his own manufacture.

CONKLIN DECLINED.

Preparations are being made for the annual banquet of the chamber of commerce, which will be eaten at Delmonico's on the evening of the third Tuesday in November. The great banquets, which usually elaborate and costly as any public dinners given in New York, represent several months of hard work. Secretary George Wilson, who has probably organized more banquets than any other man in town, begins in the spring to plan for a banquet in the fall. After securing the desired date at Delmonico's, he sends out invitations to prominent men whom the dinner committee desires to secure for speakers. The task involves a great deal of correspondence and often good generalship, inasmuch as it is necessary to exercise care in not inviting two public men who do not speak as they pass by. A few years ago it happened that both Mr. Conklin and Mr. Blaine accepted invitations

to the same dinner in this city, and quite naturally each expected to make the speech of the evening. A day or two before the dinner Mr. Conklin ascertained that Mr. Blaine was to be present and he at once penned a note of regrets.

THE FIRST DRINK.

"It has been claimed that Father Mathew was the cause of the present state of things, inasmuch as he, by his pronouncements, persuaded the people in Derry, in the south of Derry, to renounce all form of alcoholic drink. This they did, having discovered accidentally that ether would answer their purpose quite as well as alcohol they substituted the former for the latter, and in spite of Father Mathew's eloquence and well meaning efforts, Derry continued in a chronic state of drunkenness, although of another kind. Although the people in these districts are consuming enormous quantities of ether every year the amount of alcoholic drinks sold there has not decreased."

BATHING AT TROUVILLE.

Some of the Beautiful and Eccentric Costumes to be Seen.

To give an idea of the care that is bestowed upon a bathing dress at Trouville, let me describe one among many I saw, says Julian Ralph in Harper's Weekly. The wearer came out of her bathing machine wrapped in a cloak of Turkey red silk. Her hat was of white straw, with Turkey red ribbons and flowers. Her sandals were white, laded with red tapes that crossed above her ankles, and were there tied in a bow. The silk cloak shone in the sun. It did not even partially reveal her figure; in fact, the wearer in these cloaks looks like a statue like Boudicca. As this lady's feet touched the water she raised her arms and spread them, and the grossman cloak fell into the hands of the bathing attendant. Then she stood revealed to the concourse of on-lookers, clad as for a spectacle on the stage. She wore a loose blouse of Turkey red flannel, short tight red breeches, and red stockings. Her blouse was opened in front by two great lapels, between which was a white shirt with red stripes across it. Behind it had a broad sailor collar, white, white and banded with red.

The extravagances and eccentricities of the costumes on that beach were wonderful, and altogether they helped to form as brilliant and gay a scene as one could well imagine. Some of the cloaks were striped, some were green, some yellow. Sometimes the suits worn by the bathers matched the cloaks, yet often they did not. But while the skirts were often short, the arms were often sleeveless, and I even saw two or three skirts that were somewhat decolleté; there were no costumes worn in the water that justified the pictures commonly seen in the Parisian illustrated papers. I doubt whether many of the costumes at Trouville would startle the bathers at Narragansett Pier, except that they were much more costly and artistic than the bath robes worn at the Casino in the Sunday school."

The consciousness of having a remedy at hand for croup, pneumonia, sore throat, and sudden colds, is very consoling to a parent. With a bottle of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral in the house, one feels, in such cases, a sense of security nothing else can give.

THE DANGERS OF RAILROADING.

"There is no branch of railroading that is safe," is a saying among men who make their living on the iron rails, and a man's long service and skillful knowledge does not throw absolute safeguards about him, says the Indianapolis News. Poor Martin Ryan, who had the science of railroading down to the finest notch, was killed by his own train after eighteen years of service. Hubert Graham, a yard man at Richmond, who worked for the Pennsylvania company for twenty-five years, was struck by a pony engine a few days ago. Samuel Morgan's body was brought home last night. Morgan was a native of Jeffersonville, Madison & Indianapolis for thirty years. Advancing age incapacitated him from running an engine, and he was given charge of a water station at Marshallfield, near Scottsburg. Night before last he was run down by a freight train and killed. "Did you notice that six out of ten railroad men die violent deaths if they continue in the business?" said a conductor last evening. "If they don't it's because they leave the railroad service."

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, Mo., Waters.

Sulpho-Saline is a mild laxative, and sparkling morning drink.

A GREAT ART DISCOVERY.

A discovery of great artistic importance has just been made at Milan, says Dunlap's Cable News Service. While some workmen were engaged in scraping the wall of one of the hospitals of the city they came upon evidences of a fresco and, reporting the matter to the workmen, they were ordered to proceed to a secret depository. They were rewarded with a copy of the famous "Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci, which was painted in oil on the wail of the vestry of the Dominican convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie. The interest of the discovery is that the newly found fresco seems to be an exact replica of the composition as it was originally painted by Da Vinci and contains details which have disappeared from the original, owing to maltreatment, and the partial restorations that have been made, notably in some of the partly legible names and inscriptions which are traced on the borders of the draperies.

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