

ON

THE CONNEXION

BETWEEN

INTEMPERANCE AND CRIME:

A PAPER READ BEFORE

THE DUBLIN STATISTICAL SOCIETY:

BY JAMES HAUGHTON.

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THIS society was established in November, 1847, for the purpose of promoting the study of Statistical and Economical Science. The meetings are held on the third Monday in each month, from November till June, inclusive, at 8, p. m. The business is transacted by members reading written communications on subjects of Statistical and Economical Science. No communication is read unless two members of the council certify that they consider it accordant with the rules and objects of the society. The reading of each paper, unless by express permission of the council previously obtained, is limited to half an hour.

Applications for leave to read papers should be made to the secretaries at least *a week* previous to the meeting.

Proposals of candidate members should be sent to the secretaries at least *a fortnight* previous to the meeting.

The subscription to the society is one pound entrance, and *ten shillings* per annum.

On the Connexion between Intemperance and Crime. By JAMES HAUGHTON.

I have for some time past felt desirous to bring before the society some statistics relative to Crime and Intemperance. On sitting down to this task, greater difficulties than I had anticipated presented themselves, arising in great measure from the multiplicity of documents which prove the intimate relation between these two evils, and from the absence of that clear proof of the facts stated, upon which the real value of statistical information depends.

My attention has never been much turned to the collection of facts, or to the demonstrative proof of facts. Like, perhaps, most other readers, I have contented myself with taking for granted the statements of writers; often, I fear, made without patient investigation, or upon data not subjected to sufficiently precise enquiry.

On turning my attention to the subject, the difficulties I have just referred to soon presented themselves. I have laboured to counteract them; to avoid exaggeration and amplification; and so to sift facts as to arrive at the exact truth, and I shall now endeavour to give you some correct idea of the connexion which exists between the crimes that deface the social fabric, and those drinking customs which so universally prevail; and so to perform this task, as to prove that I have not undertaken it with a view of sustaining any preconceived theory, at the expense of truth.

It will be readily admitted by the members of this society, that an investigation into the causes of crime is one not only of vast importance, but of deep interest. That a deplorable amount of crime exists in the community is a fact that admits of no doubt; nay more, its amount is so great as to create an apprehension with many, that if some mode of arresting its progress be not discovered, our entire social fabric is in danger of a violent dissolution. The causes therefore which make such a catastrophe even remotely probable, it is of the utmost importance to discover and to remedy. Poverty, intemperance, and ignorance being the most fruitful sources of crime, are of course the evils which all rational beings should be most anxious to remove altogether.

On an investigation into the amount of crime in Dublin, coming within the jurisdiction of legal punishment, I find, from "Sta-

tistical returns of the Dublin Metropolitan Police for 1847," that 38,354 persons of both sexes and various ages were taken into custody during that year. It should be remembered, however, that this amount includes all the re-committals, and as these were doubtless numerous, the actual number of delinquents is considerably less than the figures indicate. The committals (or rather persons taken into custody) are classified under six different heads, viz.

1. Offences against the person	3,753
2. Offences against property committed with violence	115
3. Offences against property committed without violence	6,792
4. Malicious offences against property	940
5. Forgery and offences against the currency	73
6. Other offences not included in the above	26,681

These are again subdivided into seventy different species of crime. Those against which the largest numbers appear, are :—

Common assaults	2,679
Larceny from the person by prostitutes	1,001
Unlawful possession of goods	2,043
Disorderly characters	6,939
Disorderly prostitutes	3,819
Drunkenness	10,926
Suspicious characters, vagrants, &c.	2,559
Tippling in unlicensed houses	1,312

These classes include almost the entire number of the victims of vice taken up in Dublin during the year 1847; all other crimes against the law are committed by a comparatively small number of offenders.

Of the number of persons taken into custody, 12,509 were discharged by the magistrates; 23,808 were summarily convicted or held to bail, and 2,037 were committed for trial.

Of those committed for trial, 1,211 were convicted, and sentenced to various punishments; 682 of them could neither read nor write; 505 could only read and write imperfectly; 22 could read and write well; and 2 had received a superior education: 129 of the cases were between 10 and 15 years of age; 366, between 15 and 20; 220 between 20 and 25; and the remainder were over those ages.

This analysis presents to the economist and the moralist matter for serious reflection. It may be assumed that a similar analysis of other cities and towns in the United Kingdom would give similar results; and that the facts I have stated may be fairly taken as the basis of our reasoning.

It is an obvious conclusion from these facts, that crime abounds to a considerable extent in this metropolis. Yet I am happy to say that, out of 2,037 committals, the number charged with heinous offences is small, and that whilst there was not one conviction for murder, 1103 convictions are under the head of "Offences against property committed without violence."

Ignorance is the great characteristic of our criminals, and the drinking customs of society may be set down as one great cause of ignorance ; inasmuch as they not only deprive the people of the means of providing education for themselves and their children, but they destroy all desire for the acquisition of knowledge.

It will be perceived that, out of the entire number taken into custody, nearly one-third were drunkards. Yet this fact does not convey any accurate idea of the real amount of crime which intemperance produces. We must analyse the cause, or the probable cause, of crimes placed under other heads in the police returns ; and I think it will be admitted that they nearly all originate in, or at least are aggravated by the use of strong drinks ; that they are committed when the passions are violently excited, and that this excitement is usually the result of the use of intoxicating drinks.

But my present object is rather to lay a statement of facts, in relation to crime and intemperance, before the society, in order to excite a spirit of enquiry, than to occupy your time with a detail of my own impressions. I shall proceed to add to the evidence already given, the testimony of individuals who are the most competent to form a correct opinion on the subject.

Colonel Browne, the Commissioner of the Dublin metropolitan Police, and Mr. Porter, one of our police magistrates, have both assured me that nine-tenths of our crimes result from intemperance. Mr. Purdon, who was for more than twenty years governor of Richmond Penitentiary, one of our largest prisons, has repeatedly in my own presence borne the same testimony. The inferior officers of that prison, and of Newgate, with whom I have also spoken on the subject, have invariably assured me that to the use of strong drinks may be fairly attributed the far larger amount of the crime which crowds our jails with prisoners. When I asked Mr. Porter his opinion as to what was the great promoter of crime, his reply was, "Ignorance and drunkenness are the sources from whence almost the whole of it springs." During a recent visit to Belfast I asked the intelligent officer who conducted me through the new prison, what were the causes of crime in that town. His unhesitating reply was, "Drunkenness, sir, is the cause of almost the whole of it."

I have not before me the recorded testimony of any of the Irish judges on this subject, but I can give you that of some of the English judges, which is also conclusive to the same effect. The following extracts are from an essay lately published in the 48th. number of the "British and Foreign Medical Review," by Doctor John Forbes :

"Judge Wightman stated in his address to the Grand Jury at Liverpool, in August, 1846, 'that he found from a perusal of the depositions, that one unfailing cause of four-fifths of these crimes

was, as it was in every other calendar, the besetting sin of drunkenness.'

"Judge Alderson, when addressing the Grand Jury in 1841, at the York assizes, said, 'another thing he would advert to was, that a great proportion of the crimes to be brought forward for their consideration arose from the vice of drunkenness alone; indeed, if they took away from the calendar all those cases with which drunkenness had any connexion, they would make the large calendar a very small one.'

"Judge Erskine declared at the Salisbury assizes, when sentencing a *gentleman* to six months' hard labour for a crime committed through strong drink, that ninety-nine cases out of every hundred were from the same cause.

"Judge Coleridge likewise stated, at the Oxford assizes, that he never knew a case brought before him that was not directly or indirectly connected with intoxicating liquors; and Judge Patterson, at the Norwich assizes, said to the Grand Jury, 'if it were not for this drinking, you and I would have nothing to do.'

"One of the judges stated some time ago, at the Circuit Court, at Glasgow, that 'more than eighty prisoners had been tried and sentenced to punishment; and that the *whole* of the crimes had been committed under the influence of intoxicating liquors. From the evidence that appeared before him as a judge, it seemed that every evil in Glasgow began and ended in whiskey."

Here is abundant evidence that crime and intemperance are ever found in intimate union. And if I did not fear it would fatigue you, I could readily occupy your time with many more facts and figures illustrative of this truth. Yet as our society is instituted for the special purpose of eliciting correct information on all questions connected with the physical and moral improvement of our race, I am induced to dwell with greater minuteness on this important subject; for if we are to be instrumental in discovering and applying remedies for existing evils, we must have full knowledge of the sources from whence these evils flow. So much of the well-being of society depends on the lessening of crime, that no pains should be spared for the promotion of this object. It will be a high honour to the Dublin Statistical Society, to be foremost amongst those bodies which are engaged in diffusing correct views of the economic laws upon which so large a portion of the well-being of society depends.

The Rev. George Scott, chaplain to one of the prisons in Glasgow, writes thus in a late report:—"Though a number of causes is specified, drunkenness is the most prolific source of most crimes in Glasgow. Of the many thousands annually imprisoned, I think it would be impossible to find one hundred sober criminals in any one year. Even the youngest learn this ruinous vice, and when they live by stealing, swallow astonishing quantities of whiskey."

The chaplain of Sterling prison states:—"so far as my experience has at present gone, I think that drunkenness is the main cause of crime."

"On the authority of Sheriff Alison of Glasgow, it is stated that in the year 1840 there were in that town, out of about 30,000 inhabited houses, 3,010 appropriated to the sale of intoxicating drinks; every tenth house being devoted to the sale of spirits. The same gentleman declares that he believes 30,000 persons go to bed drunk every saturday night in Glasgow. It happens from an inspection of the registers of the police station, that not fewer than 25,000 commitments are annually made on account of drunkenness and disorderly conduct in the streets. Sheriff Alison estimates the annual consumption of ardent spirits in Glasgow at six gallons per head; making an aggregate of nearly 1,800,000 gallons yearly. The value of this, at the retail price of fifteen shillings per gallon, is £1,350,000.

The foregoing extracts are sufficient to show that, if we succeed in banishing crime or materially lessening its amount, it must be by overturning those drinking customs which lead to crime as surely as effect follows cause.

A large amount of the crime noticed in the Dublin police report for 1847, is placed to the account of prostitution. As my object in the present paper is to afford statistical information, I shall not dwell on the terrible results which flow from this one source of demoralization and wretchedness. Nevertheless that intemperance and prostitution are closely allied, is clearly proved by the indefatigable William Logan, in his admirable little work entitled, "An Exposure, from personal observation, of Female Prostitution in London, Leeds, and Rochdale, and especially in the city of Glasgow, 1843. Speaking of London he says, "on Sabbath, August 1st, 1841, two of the London city missionaries visited five taverns in London, where Sunday concerts are held, and found in them persons of both sexes drinking, as follows:—The New Globe, about 3000; the Copenhagen, 700; the White Conduit, 1200; the Royal Standard, 1000; the Eagle, 5000. There are upwards of fifty such houses in Manchester, where crowds spend their sabbath evenings in drinking, under the pretence of hearing hymns sung, and sacred music performed on the organ. It is quite common in Leeds, for landlords of "jerry shops" to employ a low musician, and great numbers of boys and girls are allowed to get 'dancing free;' but they must drink; and if they have no money, the boys lodge their jackets, and the girls their handkerchiefs, and not unfrequently part of their under clothing." Referring to Dublin, he says, "when visiting Dublin, the superintendent of the City Mission could give no particular information as to the number of unfortunate females; but he showed me a back street, near the barracks, where there were 200 girls. I observed over a door, 'Old Hell' regularly painted as a direction." And again, in a

note, "I have just received a note from the Rev. Wm. Robertson, superintendent of the Dublin City Mission, and he states that there are about 1700 prostitutes in this city." Mr. Logan gives the following particulars of Leeds:—

"Number of houses of ill fame	175
Average number of prostitutes (four in each house) ..	700
Number of bullies or 'fancy men,'	350
Mistresses of said houses	175
Total living on prostitution...	1225
Number of visits of men to each house weekly	80
Making weekly visits over all	14,000
The girls receive on an average thirty shillings weekly, making the sum of	£1050
Robberies * (2s. 6d. from each visiter is a low average)	1750
Spent on drink (2s. by each visiter)	1400
Total for prostitution weekly	£4200
" " " annually	£218,400
Number of unfortunate females who die yearly	120"

A similar table for Glasgow gives the sum of £514,800 as the annual expenditure in that city on prostitution; and Mr. Logan states that the average life of prostitutes there is six years. He alludes to Glasgow, in reference to this vice, as being more debased and unnatural than in any other place of which he has any knowledge; "but so disgusting, that even amid the plain speaking of this publication it cannot be described." Taking these statements in connexion with Sheriff Alison's account of the consumption of intoxicating drinks in Glasgow, we see at once the connexion between cause and effect, and witness in that city that intemperance and crime take counsel together.

The limits of this paper prohibit me from giving further extracts. As a proof of the intimate connexion which Mr. Logan believes to exist between intemperance and prostitution, he recommends in his "Remedy for Prostitution" that the principle of abstinence from *all* intoxicating drinks should be propagated.

I refer to this painful, this indelicate portion of my subject with much regret; yet it would be unpardonable in me to omit allusion to it because it is painful and indelicate. It is not by shrouding

* The sum put down for robberies from visiters may seem large to many, but I believe it is under rather than overstated. A fact corroborative of this opinion came to my own knowledge, when acting as a grand juror. A captain of a vessel came before us to prove that he had been robbed of twenty sovereigns and his watch, in a house of the description above referred to at Kingstown. No doubt very many similar losses are sustained by individuals who visit these unhappy abodes, and who are there intoxicated and reduced to a state of insensibility.

this source of human misery and crime in a veil of affected modesty, that we shall succeed in awakening men's minds to the enormity of the evil; on the contrary, it is by exposing it, on all suitable occasions, to the manly scrutiny of virtuous minds, that we can hope for any measure of success in our labours for its overthrow.

In a paper presented by Mr. Thomas Beggs to the Temperance Convention held in London, in August, 1846, will be found much information illustrative of the connexion between intemperance and crime. But, like other writers on statistical questions, Mr. Beggs has discovered that the want of perfect exactness in procuring and recording facts is greatly to be deplored. This difficulty is not, however, pecuniary applicable to the subject now under review; and I again refer to it merely for the purpose of impressing on your minds that I have been most anxious to avoid leading you to any foregone conclusion of my own. My object has been, to adhere as closely as possible to a statement of known facts, in order that you may be enabled to draw your own conclusions.

As the object of this society is the collection of facts, with a view to apply them to the business of life; or, in other words the discovery of truth, and the making our knowledge conducive to the well being of the human family; it follows that we should fearlessly enquire into the causes of all the poverty and misery which surround us, and as fearlessly apply the knowledge we may obtain in uprooting them.

We shall not be discharging our duty by simply investigating the causes of existing evils, if we have hitherto indulged in any of them, unless we also try to eradicate them from our own hearts individually; and we should also endeavour to remove them from our social system.

If the statistics of crime and intemperance prove that from intemperance springs a large proportion of the crime that disgraces civilization in the present day, the conclusion is inevitable, that it is our business, as rational, intelligent, and accountable beings, to do our utmost to dry up the source whence the evil flows. It will not do to dam it up with expedients, and leave it open at the source, to send forth, in a perennial stream, its noisome and bitter waters.

It is my purpose on a future occasion, if it should meet your approval, to offer to your notice my views on the economical bearings of the subject of the present paper in relation to the prosperity, happiness, and morality of the community.