

sons require to be awakened from their mental apathy, by powerful stimulants—to be drawn out from their lurking-places by a force sufficiently strong to make them forget themselves. But it must be confessed, that the conversation which is prompted by such potent application, in subjects naturally so unproductive, is not likely to be *very* valuable. The gayest and sprightliest portion of society, whose innocence and gracefulness form one of its principal charms to all persons of accomplished minds and correct taste, need no such incentives to conversation or mirth. Health, rectitude of principle, freedom from the annoyances of care, and moderate attainments are, in so far as they are experienced in their case, a perpetual spring of pleasant fancies, buoyant feelings, and communicative delight. The very suspicion that they used intoxicating liquors would be a death-blow to their character, as the reality would undoubtedly be to the greatest and most exquisite part of their happiness. Now, if these persons need them not, it would be hard to say, why they should be needed by those who boast greater knowledge, greater vigour, greater powers of activity, and greater variety of pursuit.

Again, are ardent spirits necessary in the cultivation of talent or sentiment? It does not appear that they are? It is well known that no man can apply his mind to the study of any thing abstruse, of any thing that requires close thought, or accurate or persevering research, when under the influence of spirituous liquors. And as to sentiment, it is best acquired by silent converse with God: and, since this is the case, would it not be daring and impious mockery to attempt to draw from so high and pure a source, the spirit of benevolence and devotion, by means so absurdly irrational as indulgence in drinking ardent spirits. The mind drugged and heated by such stimulants cannot find its way into the presence of the Holy.

If, then, ardent spirits are not necessary for the continuance of health, for promoting social hilarity, or for the improvement of talent or sentiment; it may be asked, what are they good for? I answer, if they are beneficial as medicines, let them be so used, and, as I am not competent to decide any question of that kind, I would leave it entirely to medical men to determine the circumstances, the quantities, and the frequency.

I am aware that this may be considered as carrying matters too far. It may be said, if you would allow us nothing but what is necessary, you would strip life of its adornments, you would put out the light of science, and lay the power of the most ennobling of the arts for ever asleep. Now, far be such a wish from my bosom. Whatever decorates or dignifies the form or the enjoyments of man; whatever gives grace to his movements, or elegance to his appearance; whatever gives acuteness, activity, or comprehension to his mind;—if it bring not, by necessary, (I speak not of contingent, consequence, degradation and ruin in its train, let it flourish! It furnishes useful employment for the human faculties, it lends additional comfort, seemliness, and dignity to human beings, and therefore, in so far as is consistent with the paramount claims of truth and righteousness, it is worthy of all encouragement. But it is very different with that which we are stigmatizing. As a mere indulgence, in the present state of society, it can do nothing but evil, and therefore, as an indulgence, it merits nothing but condemnation and avoidance.

3. In the third place, abstinence is more eligible as a cure for intemperance, than moderation, because it keeps those who practise it more clear of the guilt of those who become intemperate around them. The man who is abstinent from *aroused* principle, raises a testimony against intemperance that cannot be misunderstood, and completely exonerates himself of having

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