

Canada Temperance Advocate.

Devoted to Temperance, Agriculture, and Education.

No. 7.

MONTREAL, AUGUST 1, 1842.

Vol. VIII.

THE DRUNKEN SEA.

BY JAMES HENRY, M. D., FELLOW OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
DUBLIN.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the Drunken Sea from the beach of Soberland, where you take shipping, as far as Point Just-Enough. The clear and smooth water is scarcely so much as rippled by the light breeze which wafts from the shore the fragrance of a thousand flowers. No mist ever broods upon the water, no cloud overcasts the soft blue sky. The glorious image of the sun by day, the silvery face of the moon by night, are no where seen to so much advantage as in the mirror of Pleasant Bay, for this part of the Drunken Sea has been most appropriately named. The current being always towards Point Just-Enough, and the wind, if you can apply that name to the gentle breath which no more than fills your sails, always in the same direction, the passage is so smooth and easy that it not unfrequently happens that the voyager finds himself close upon the Point almost before he is aware that he has left Soberland.

The voyage is usually performed in boats made out of porter hogsheads, or wine pipes, or spirit punchcons. It is astonishing what excellent sailing boats these vessels make, when divided longitudinally, and furnished with sails and oars. Riches having the advantage every where, upon the Drunken Sea as well as upon land, the boats which are used by the rich are much more elegant, easy, and commodious, although perhaps not faster sailers than those which are used by the poor. Besides the fares there are certain tolls payable by all persons who sail upon the Drunken Sea. These tolls are so considerable as to form a principal part of the revenues of some of the imperial governments of Soberland. Notwithstanding the expense which is thus necessarily attendant upon sailing on the Drunken Sea, the number of persons, rich and poor, who sail upon it exceeds all calculation; the rich paying the expense out of their superfluities, the poor out of their necessities. Some, however, insist that in the end the poor bear the whole expense, and pay out of their necessities for the rich man's voyage as well as their own.

The voyage to Point Just-Enough becomes more and more agreeable the nearer you approach the Point. The air becomes still more soft and balmy, the blue of the sky and water still more delicious, and even the sombre objects of Soberland, now somewhat in the distance, seem to acquire a certain mellowness and splendour from the new medium through which they are seen. In the meantime a corresponding change takes place in the passengers themselves; they experience an agreeable sensation of warmth, commencing at the pit of the stomach, and gradually extending from thence over the whole body; their pulse beats quicker and stronger; their breath acquires an agreeable odour, not unlike that of the sea on which they sail; their eyes become brighter and softer, and sometimes even seem to sparkle; their cheeks flush a little; their hands are sensibly warmer to the touch; their looks and gestures become animated; they feel increased strength and courage and readiness for action; their ideas succeed each other with greater rapidity and vivacity, and are a little less obedient to the will; they become less careful and anxious,

Diffugiunt mordaces sollicitudines;

less precise and particular; regard themselves with more complacency, their neighbours with more charity; gentlemen become less solicitous about the seat of their cravats; ladies, of

their craps and collars: all become less serious; less disposed to deliberate; less inclined to prayer, or any other solemn religious duty; less scrupulous about right and wrong; less tight laced; not so very sober; more gay, good-humoured, frolicsome, frivolous; more inclined to singing, jesting, and ready to tell secrets, either of their own or their neighbours, more inclined to quarrel suddenly.

All voyagers to Point Just-Enough agree in the account which they give of their passage across Pleasant Bay, and of the agreeable sensations experienced on approaching the Point; but they disagree very much in their statements respecting the Point itself. Some say that it is further off, others that it is nearer; some that it lies more to the north, others, more to the east; many assert that it recedes as you approach it, while some maintain that it moves forward, and comes to meet you before you have more than half crossed Pleasant Bay. These conflicting statements may, perhaps, be reconciled on the supposition, which seems far from unreasonable, that Point Just-Enough is situated in a floating island, which, shifting its position from time to time sometimes nearer, sometimes more distant, sometimes a little more to the north, and at other times a little more to the east. However this may be, the visitors to Point Just-Enough all agree in stating that it is quite impossible either to come to anchor off it, or to effect a landing upon it, the water being so deep that no anchor will take the ground, and the current so rapid as to carry you past the Point before you can secure a boat to it by any grapples which have yet been invented. For these reasons all skilful sailors, the moment they arrive at Point Just-Enough, instead of vainly attempting to come to anchor, or to land, tack about and steer back again across Pleasant Bay for Soberland, thus avoiding the danger of being carried by the force of the current further on into the Drunken Sea, and perhaps thrown upon an island called Topsy Island, lying at no great distance to the leeward.

The great unwillingness with which all the visitors to Point Just-Enough, allow the sailors to tack about and steer backwards, has given rise to an opinion that if a landing upon the Point were practicable, every visitor would settle there permanently, and bid eternal farewell to Soberland.

The voyage homewards from Point Just-Enough is much less agreeable than the voyage outwards; the air gradually loses its balminess, and the landscape its brilliant colours; the current and wind, too, although gentle, yet being against you, make it necessary to tack, and thus render the passage tedious. There are few who do not experience as they return, some diuretic effect, as well as a slight degree of thirst, the latter of which continues after landing, and even until bed-time, unless removed by tea or coffee. The night's sleep is less soft and refreshing, but at the same time heavier than if no visit had been paid to the Point in the day; and on awaking next morning, a degree of languor is experienced, and sometimes even a little throbbing at the temples, which symptoms, however, disappear either during the making of the toilette or soon after breakfast, and are succeeded by a strong desire for another voyage to Point Just-Enough. This desire being gratified with as little delay as possible, the same sensations are experienced, and the same consequences ensue, and thus a habit is formed which increases in strength, until at last a daily visit to Point Just-Enough comes to be considered almost as a necessary of life.

Pleasant Bay is therefore covered from early morning until a late hour at night, with boats conveying passengers of all ranks and descriptions to Point Just-Enough and back again. The intercourse is however by far the greatest from dinner hour until tea time, the evening being generally considered