

formed, but had very little effect on my own courses. About seven years since I received a letter from a relative, announcing her death, which, I am most happy to say, was full of aspirations, the most pious, to her God, for her surviving family, and I have every reason to hope she is now enjoying her portion with the blessed.

It was in the early part of the year 1842 that I was led to see the error of my ways, and induced, as the first step towards reformation, to join the Temperance Society not 200 miles from Montreal; this, I thought, would be a great help in forwarding the object I had in view, namely:—the salvation of my soul, for I had previously received some very serious impressions, and was led to see my lost condition, if I continued in my former evil courses. I continued for nearly four months a consistent member of the Temperance Society, during which time I was a regular attendant on the word of God. But alas! how vain are all human efforts when unaccompanied by Divine grace. I was led away by the delusion that my health was impaired by total abstinence, and was recommended to use a little beer occasionally; this I considered I could easily do without again having recourse to other liquors; I, therefore, repaired to the person who tendered the pledge, and told him that I found it necessary for my health to abandon the total abstinence pledge, that, previous to so doing, I thought it was but just to deliver up my diploma, and have my name erased from the list, which was done, though not without great persuasion to the contrary, on the part of the worthy man, who for the sake of temperance, I believe, had given up a lucrative business. I commenced drinking beer occasionally, and determined, in my own mind, strictly to adhere, and never taste any spirituous liquors. For some time I continued firm to this resolution; but by drinking beer I very soon increased the thirst for something else, and fell into all my former excesses, without, however, its being observed by my officers, as I very seldom took much till the duties of the day were over, or had leave to absent myself from some of the minor parades of the day, so that I could indulge myself without being brought under the cognizance of my officers: but alas! what were the consequences of my fatal delusion? I not only gave up the pledge, but what was of more paramount importance, discontinued my attendance on the means of grace, and all the good impressions I had received were endeavoured to be obliterated by me, and for what? Alcohol. Many times have I, to stifle remorse of conscience, had recourse to liquors, which only aggravated the disease; and words cannot pourtray the anguish my mind has endured through my indiscretion. In a word, I have been, since abandoning the pledge, the most wretched being in existence, and more than once contemplated self-destruction. Dreadful thought! to have formed the idea of rushing into the presence of an offended God, with all my imperfections. But blessed be God, who has in his manifold mercy spared me, and restored me to the paths of temperance. With bitterness of soul I repent my fall, and once more find delight in attendance on the word of God, and mingling with his people, and sincerely trust, that in his own good time I shall be restored to his favour.

Drunkness in the British Army.

[ORIGINAL.]

The frightful state of drunkenness in the British Army is beyond belief. I have been upwards of thirty years in the service, in almost all parts of the world, and I do declare it my opinion that drunkenness is on the increase—crime always follows—and I fearlessly say that much of the sin, the shame, and the sorrow of this evil lies at the door of the Government of Great Britain, which licenses Canteens for the sale of ardent spirits in every Barrack. Yes the rum and whiskey shop is ever open at the soldiers elbow,

with little to oppose the strong temptation. There the soldiers crowd, when off duty and parade, like bees into a hive; whiskey is bad and cheap, and they drink it (unmixed) out of tumblers—the fire soon excites the stomach, promotes a false courage, thirst increases, a liberal feeling arises in the breast, and they go on treating and encouraging their comrades to commit the same excess. Punishment is sure to follow, every crime of drunkenness is punished according to the nature and degree of the offence, from three days confined to barracks, to six months imprisonment with hard labour, and forfeiture of pay. Now I maintain that this growing evil might in a great measure be prevented, by prohibiting the sale of spirits of any kind in canteens. Canteens are useful appendages to barracks, I will allow, but only for the sale of groceries, vegetables, or anything for the soldiers accommodation, excepting always, Alcohol; but this could not produce the enormous revenue to the government, if the sale of intoxicating drinks were excluded. By a rough calculation the British Government, collect a revenue from canteens to the amount of £25,000 annually, all squeezed out of the unfortunate soldiers pocket, and for contributing which he is severely punished. I never could discover how this large whiskey income is disposed of by Government. I know this, that repeated applications have been made to provide a Ball or Racket Court, or a Skittle Alley, or some such place of amusement or recreation for the soldier, to pass some of his many idle hours, and give him a chance to escape from the canteen, but no, all such applications so far have been rejected—and away he goes again to the tap, to wile away his tedious day. Libraries have been established, and they are a great source of amusement and study; but hundreds of men cannot read, nor have they any taste for reading—what are those men to do? It may be said, per contra, that if canteens were not permitted in barracks men would get drunk in the towns, and I admit that this would sometimes be the case; but I have spoken to these men privately on the subject, and they say, “We could not be at the trouble of dressing ourselves at all hours, and walking to the town to get a glass; here, however, we have it at command in our drawing room, and as often as we like.” It is the constant tipping without being drunk, that oftener undermines the constitution. I have seen a man’s stomach, taken out by the surgeon after death, in a state of gangrene, actually burned almost through, from the constant use of ardent spirits, this was a fine young handsome fellow, bore an excellent character, and was never considered a drunkard! He died suddenly.

The officers and non-commissioned officers have the greatest abhorrence at this great and increasing evil of drunkenness amongst their men, they do all in their limited power to check the malady, but it is of no avail,—some converts there have been, no doubt, and they are the best men in the Regiment, but the whole matter must be taken up warmly and with sincerity by the British Government, or they will soon have to boast an army of drunkards.

[Our hearts bleed for the poor soldier. Generally speaking, he is not peculiarly qualified for resisting temptations, and yet, temptations are multiplied and aggravated around him, till it would require a moral Hercules to contend with them. Indeed, what with idleness, bad company, Government canteens, and the example of, oftentimes, drunken and dissolute officers, it is truly wonderful that there should be so many sober and respectable men in the Army, and proves how much the character of the service might be improved, were Government to devote as much attention to promote moral reformation, as it now does to promote drunkenness in the Army. We therefore implora the attention of military authorities to the foregoing article.—Ed.]