

by Walter Findlay, Esq., on "The Diffusion of Knowledge," from which we can extract only the two concluding paragraphs:—

"The cause of ignorance, then, is the utter depravity of our hearts, and the degenerate condition of our nature,—our propensities in clinging to that which is debasing and hurtful—the want of foresight in knowing when to check the impending evil—the gross indulgence in all our passions and inclinations—and the fearful amount of dissipation by contracted habits. But above all, *Intemperance and Intoxication* among all classes in the community—that grim monster, which brings with it a blasting train of desolation—mars the happiness of the domestic circle—ruffles all the feelings and affections—causes jealousy and dread—moistens and deepens the seeds of discontent—and brings down even the vengeance of heaven; the originator of crime, pestilence and death—the nurse of evil passions—the source of poverty, wretchedness and want—the cause of the widow's lamentation and the forsaken home—the destitution of her youthful and helpless offspring—and the pillager of the public treasures which have to atone for the shame of its sweeping misery.

"That the long looked for epoch of the general spread of universal knowledge and refinement is fast hastening on, is apparent from the mighty convulsions which are now shaking the nations, causing the fetters of oppression to fall—unclouding the minds of millions of our race—and accelerating the progress in every department of science. The countless publications on every subject continually flowing from the press—the accumulation of Theological, Literary and scientific Journals, with their patronage and encouragement—the Lectures on experimental and natural philosophy, political economy, chemistry and astronomy, and general science, which are delivered in our cities and villages,—the new methods and improved plans of public instruction—the erection of Colleges and other Seminaries of education throughout the civilized world—the extensive circulation of books in the community—the establishments of Missionaries abroad—the increase of Philosophical and Mechanics' Institutions—the formation of Libraries, Reading and Debating Societies,—and the establishment of our purifying and RENOVATING TEMPERANCE INSTITUTIONS,—the foundation of domestic felicity,—and moreover, from the spirit of civil and religious liberty which is bursting forth, rending the veil of ignorance, and arresting the cruel hand of despotic power.

"These, my friends, are the precursors of the dawn of a happier era upon the world; and let us, in this thriving Town of Belleville, and who, especially, belong to the *enlightened and moral Institution* of the 'SOVS OF TEMPERANCE,' the object of which is set up as part of the healing of the nations—let us, one and all, reflect and consider our responsibility and the high trust committed to our care, and walk in the united bonds of love, reason, and intelligence, and exert our unremitting efforts and co-operate in the labors of our fellow-men, in furthering these great and philanthropic undertakings,—when intellectual and moral light shall extend their blissful rays to every region under heaven, and when the great Temple of Peace shall extend its imperial sway over the world."

THE DRUNKARD'S WIFE.

"Oh child! the human heart can suffer. It can hold more tears than the ocean holds waters. We never know how deep—how wide it is, till misery begins to unbind her clouds and fill it with rushing blackness."

The above passage, quoted from *Shirley*, a new novel most powerfully written, comes from the mouth of a woman who had known the depths of misery in being married to a drunkard. The approach of the great Christian holiday, when none are too old or too young, too rich or too poor, not to wish for others, not to desire for themselves, a merry

Christmas, has reminded us of that great body of sufferers—the wives of the drunken, to whom there is no joyful day.

Passing by for one moment the degradation of the drunkard, the talents wasted, the wealth squandered, and the hopes blasted, and turning to this one feature alone,—the suffering of woman under this curse, there is food for reflection that ought to sadden the gayest, arouse to action the most indolent, and cause an excitement throughout the civilized world that should sweep out as by the hand of the Almighty, the whole traffic in intoxicating drinks, and all the fashions and customs, that countenance it.

Contrast the early wedded life, the brightest, dearest page in man's history from the cradle to the grave, with the drunkard's home,—the one made dear both by present happiness and joyful anticipations of the future, the other bitter by present misery, hopes disappointed, and a future on whose front despair is written in characters of fire! Summon before yourself, good reader, the families of the thirty thousand drunkards of this country; watch the countenances of these women, these wives, these mothers, these daughters, these sisters; see how misery has been woven into their faces, how their cheeks seem channeled with the tears that have rolled over them, how the burthen of life bears them down as they travel on their way, joyless and hopeless! what loss can compare with their loss, what misfortune be like to theirs! Job, in the midst of his afflictions, might have smiled and congratulated himself had he reflected that he was saved from this bitterest of human trials.

The mother by the bedside, of the dying child has the consolation and the hope of meeting its pure spirit, disenthralled, in another world; the wife, parted from the husband who dies full of years and honors, can look back and recall the many hours that have been filled with pleasure; the daughter who loses a father, upright and honorable, has a sorrow, chastened by reflection of a father's love and wisdom; but the drunkard's wife,—what has she to lighten her misery? To look back, is to remind her how much she has lost: to ponder on the present, is to find herself neglected and abused by one who has sworn a solemn oath to love and cherish her; to look forward is to picture to herself a depth of misery bottomless and boundless!

Can it be that professing Christians who, in this nineteenth century, are shocked and horror-struck by the burning of the Hindoo widow on the funeral pile of her husband, who mourn over the servile position of the wives of the New Zealand chief, or the imprisonment within the walls of the harem of the daughters of Georgia and Circassia,—can it be, we ask, that these Christians will allow this custom of drinking, this habit of intemperance to exist,—a vice which combines all the miseries above depicted, which burns up the souls of women by years of misery and despair, which chains a suffering female to a body of death in the shape of a drunken husband?

Let us ponder, then, on this coming Christmas, upon our duties in this respect. Let us ask ourselves, if we cannot do something which shall make a merry Christmas, in truth and indeed for these families of the drunkards.—*N. E. Washingtonian.*

EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF ABSENCE OF MIND.

Some years ago, there lived near the foot of the Knock Hill, in this county, an individual of the name of James B——, who carried on a kind of trade as a carter, which was very much impeded by his drunken habits. Indeed, he seldom returned home sober on any evening, a course of life which, doubtless, in the course of time, very much impaired his mental faculties, as the following will show:—It happened that one night James got tipsy, and had fallen asleep in his cart. The horse, however, was a somewhat sagacious animal, and had often been observed to get safe home,