

Will you sustain a system which is daily breaking hearts, opening graves, and ruining souls? Will you throw in all your influence and example against the cause of humanity, of progress, of God? If there be anything solemn in principle, in influence, in responsibility, in destiny, we entreat your consideration of these things. Again we say—pause and ponder—seek the guidance of Heaven—weigh consequences, and henceforth the language of each, we have no doubt, will be, 'I will abstain.'—*Abstainer's Journal*.

Physiological Reasons for a Prohibitory Law.

It has been stated, that alcoholic stimulants operate upon the system in two very different modes—viz., first, by impressions made upon the nerves of the stomach, which, by reflex action, being conveyed to the brain and other nervous centres, causes increased nervous power to be sent out through the whole system, producing a feeling of exalted action in every part, and of course imparting the sensation of buoyant, high health, and restoring again to the middle-aged—and even to the old, the sprightliness and hilarity of youth. Now, if its effects upon the system were to stop here, we could offer no argument against its use, drawn from its influence upon the health of the body, though it would still be highly objectionable in a moral point of view; for while it brings back the sprightliness of youth, it also revives its folly and its rashness; and, when pushed to intoxication, dethrones intellect, making the individual an infant in reason and discretion, but with the passions and appetites of the untamed tiger, or the stupidity and filthiness of the swine which grunts in the gutter. But, if not carried to the point of intoxication, we grant that the immediate effects of strong drink are pleasurable.

The question then naturally arises, why does any body carry it thus far? Surely, no one really enjoys a state of intoxication. We will not endeavor to explain the reason why. We stated that when alcohol, in any form, is taken at stated intervals, that it becomes incorporated with the circulating fluid, and traverses the whole system. This is no mere supposition; for its presence has been actually detected, both in the blood and in some of the secretions, especially in the serum found in the sinuses of the brain. Now, without stopping to trace its direct effects upon the stomach, liver, kidneys, &c., we will follow it to the brain, spinal marrow, and other nervous centres.

What is the precise nature of the change which it brings about in these delicate organs, we will not now stop to enquire, but will make that the subject of a future chapter. But that it does produce a change, there can be no doubt; this fact is well established by the effects which follow, viz., as we stated in our last, instead of the healthful, vital influence, which was wont to be sent throughout every part of the system, giving the feeling of health, well-being, or enjoyment of life; there is sent out a morbid, or unnatural influence, giving the sense of ill-being, dullness, numbness, aching or pain, and always attended with an instinctive longing after stimulation, which finally becomes insupportable and uncontrollable.

The use of alcoholic stimulants is not peculiar in producing these effects; all other narcotic stimulants will do the same; opium presents a familiar example. Every medical practitioner, of experience and observa-

tion, can call to mind instances in which persons, from some cause or other, adopted the habitual use of opium in some of its forms. The effect, for a time, was perhaps delightful, giving ease from all suffering, and producing delicious rest; but, after awhile, the nervous centres becoming morbidly impressed, the unfortunate sufferer became the victim of almost a countless variety of horrid sensations, which nothing would allay but stimulating the nervous extremities by an increased amount of the drug; which, in its turn, increased the cause of the suffering, making a still larger increase necessary; until, finally, no amount could satisfy the demand, and the poor victim expired amidst the most horrid tortures.

The very same thing may be seen in thousands of instances, from the use of tobacco, though in a less degree. This narcotic stimulant has much less effect upon the brain than either opium or alcohol, and therefore does not impair the moral powers, or destroy the will to the same extent—it seems to spend its force principally upon the nerves of organic life; hence, the tobacco inebriate looks pale and cadaverous, thin, or bloated; has no energy, only as he plies his nerves with fresh doses of the stimulant—he can't digest, he can't sleep, he can't work, he can't think without tobacco; and yet don't dream, and if he did, would hardly believe the ghost of his father, if he were to appear and tell him, that all these bad feelings have been brought on by the use of his beloved weed. And even if he should, by any means, become convinced of the cause of his sufferings, yet, although the mind is still but little impaired, the cry of give, give, from his deranged nerves, is so importunate that he will hardly resist, though death's head is staring him in the face.

These things are perfectly unfeeling to the uninitiated. The individual who has never used tobacco, is perfectly astonished at the weakness of his neighbor, who has acknowledged to him that he thinks its use is undermining his health, and yet persists in it; and the slave to tobacco, will be equally astonished at a third neighbor, who persists in using opium, after his physician has plainly told him that it would inevitably procure him a premature and miserable death. In the very same way, the man who does not use strong drink, or who only takes it occasionally, and therefore only experiences its first, or direct stimulating effect, is at a loss for words to express his astonishment at his friend, whom he knows cannot fail to be conscious that he is destroying his health, wasting his property, blighting his reputation, degrading his family, and jeopardizing his soul, by the use of strong drink, and who perhaps shudders at the ruin he is working, and weeps over his weakness; yet still drinks on. But this poor man could once "drink, or let it alone," as he pleased; and had his time of wondering at the infatuation of the drunkard.

How often have we heard men say, that if they should arrive at a stage when they could not govern themselves, they would quit entirely; and afterwards have seen these same men weep like a whipped child over their failing, and still drink on.

But there is yet a graver aspect in which to view this subject. When God made man, he gave him the power of begetting children in his own likeness and image; and when Adam had transgressed and become a fallen being, he begat a son, who instead of taking after his