

CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE.

DEVOTED TO

Total Abstinence, Legal Prohibition, and Social Progress.

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The Intemperate Mother.

—“Bad enough for men
To sink themselves to brutes; but horrible,
Most horrible, for women thus to act!”

Many things are objectionable, unlovely, and painful in connexion with numbers sustaining the maternal character, but intemperance is *purely disgusting*. It is odious in the extreme. There is nothing which is more repelling, more debasing, more revolting. It not only mars everything, it *annihilates* it. It not only impairs every good quality, but *extinguishes* it. It not only defaces any beauties of character, but perfectly obscures, and even destroys them.

There may be education, accomplishments, many admirable and interesting developments: but this one vice *ruins all*; this one wretched and degrading habit prevents *any* being appreciated or admired.

Intemperance, when manifested by a *father*, is bad, very bad, injurious, most injurious; but when it is developed by a *mother*, and especially by a *young mother*, nothing in our judgment is so truly pitiable, degrading, and even revolting.

More than ten years have elapsed, since an intelligent and estimable man, with whom we were intimate, said to us, “I wish you could *reduce* my annual bill for *inebriating liquors*, and especially for *spirits*. Last year it was most serious. This year, I fear, it will be still worse, and unless something be done speedily, I shall be nearly beggared, and have nothing but misery.”

“But why make this appeal to me?” was the reply; “why not set about it yourself at once? You are the master of the house, and the head of your family. Do you see much company, that your spirit bill, particularly, is so serious?”

“Quite the reverse. I have scarcely any visitors, no *set parties*. If a friend call in, as you have called to see me, and to spend a quiet evening, nothing gives me greater pleasure.”

“How, then, is this annual expense for inebriating compounds occasioned?”

“I regret to state, solely by Mrs. B——’s wretched habit; and which habit, I perceive, is gathering strength continually.”

“What, does she drink to excess?”

“I will not positively affirm that she is ever palpably inebriated; for she has habituated herself to so much, that a very considerable quantity will affect her very slightly; but her propensity for drink is most marked, painful, and, indeed, appears to be almost incurable. Strangers know nothing of it, visitors are ignorant of it; but I, unhappily, know it too well, and lament it most bitterly. Last year my *spirit* bill alone, through her degrading and most injurious habit, amounted to *twelve pounds*; and I can plainly see that matters, unless a check

be received, will become much worse. I tell Mrs. B—— that I take no spirits myself, and that none shall be admitted to the house; and then she says, “You shall have no rest, for I will not be debarred from any thing which I need, or which I may consider desirable.”

“How much do you think she takes *daily*?” I enquired.

“Sometimes half a bottle of gin, besides strong beer, or porter. She is so fond of the best gin, that she now generally keeps a tea-pot in a private cupboard, of which she has the key, and it is supplied in the morning with gin, slightly diluted, and from which she drinks at intervals, during the day!”

“This is, indeed, deplorable, most deplorable. It crowns all. But have you remonstrated, strongly remonstrated with her? and more, have you intreated and solemnly conjured her to abandon, at once, and entirely, this most miserable habit?”

“I have indeed, again and again.”

“Have you interposed your authority, as a husband and father?”

“Unquestionably.”

“And what has been the result?”

“Promises of amendment; and, for a little time, a change for the better has been apparent; but there has been a speedy and decisive return to these abominable practices.

“I have, occasionally, been very stern, and almost desperate; but nothing, I fear, except actual separation, will relieve me from the sad calamity.”

“Mrs. B—— has many admirable qualities. She is naturally kind and affectionate. Her mind is cultivated. She is fond of reading. She is open hearted and generous. She is ready to aid the poor, and to regard the sick. She is the friend of education. She will support, most cheerfully, the house of God, and the minister of religion; but there is this bane of every thing that is good, there is this curse in the way, and it is a *withering curse* indeed—

The love of drink.

It poisons every thing. It turns every thing into gall. The health is ruined. The countenance is ailed. The nerves are affected. The temper is soured. The energies are impaired. The happiness of home is blasted!

“Well,” I remarked, “you have a duty to discharge not only for your own sake, but for that of *your children*, and it is this: you must endeavour to recover, to save your wife, and the mother of your offspring; and, therefore, you must be determined, whatever the result; you must be as firm as a rock. Let nothing move you.”

“In the first place, *Rigidly abstain yourself*. Take nothing of an inebriating nature, and let her know your