

## TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE.

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE &amp; NEWS.

PLEDGE.—We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use intoxicating Liquors as a Beverage, nor Traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.

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## Sowing the Wind.

To whatever point we trace the civilisation of mankind, and in whatever age, one necessary condition of its existence ever appears—the labours of the husbandman. Whether the idea of sowing and reaping the cereal and other products of the field, originated with man, or came by a superhuman invention, the fact of the spade and the plough in the hands of the civilised is as patent as the page of history. So that thus what was originally a part of the doom of evil ‘in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,’ became in part a sign and in part a cause of the elevation of men above the state of mere savagery. If the cultivation of the field is but a rude and unskilled device—the mere abrasion of the surface and the casting in of a few seeds; and then the stolid awaiting of a few suns and a few showers—the upward advance is but slow, meagre, and imperceptible in the path of civilization. But in proportion as the intelligent head and the diligent hand are applied to the education out of the soil, of the all-prolific beneficence of nature, so will it appear that society advances in the career of ordained amelioration. ‘The profit of the earth is for all; the king himself is served by the field.’

A process so obvious and so necessary to the well-being of our race as that of sowing and reaping, and especially as connected with its obvious ratio of labour and produce, of diligence and reward, and of kind for kind, could not escape the reflective meditation of the wise. Hence the analogical application of husbandry in urging or delineating the culture of the mind, in pointing to the issue of human conduct, in showing the fruits of evil or of good in the social activity of mankind. Ever as men sow they reap. Ever as they use their faculties, these become bright and burnished. Ever as they arise to diligence in the pursuit of the good, the true, and the holy, they advance in the pathway of virtue, intelligence, and goodness, just as surely as the seedtime and harvest greet the eye, and the ear, and the hand of husbandry.

But in a state so mixed as that in which humanity is at present developed, the analogy of agricultural labour does not hold, unfortunately, in respect merely of what is good. If there is a sowing to virtue, there is a sowing to vice. If there is a sowing to what is fitted to raise men above the sensual and the mean, there is a sowing also to what is fitted to sink men beneath the level of irrational natures. If intelligence grows and reigns, ignorance grows and reigns as well. If conscience commands, appetite commands; and if there are those that labour to lift up and purify human thought, feeling, and conduct, there are those who labour to debase, deteriorate, and destroy. If there are those that sow the seeds of immortal virtue and immortal well-being, there are those that sow the seeds of evil, and are preparing to reap the harvest of everlasting shame and everlasting contempt. These latter sow the wind, and in the end shall undoubtedly reap the whirlwind.

This last expression, in reference to those whose ways are evil, is peculiarly felicitous. As if the sower went forth to sow; and forth into his field he conducted his huge creaking wain. Thereon he has built up high in air a pile of bags immensely extended with inflating wind. And ever and anon as he apes the gait and swing of the laborious husbandman, he gathers the wind in his fists and scatters it over the field. From morn to night he sows the wind. He scatters forth with profuse prodigality the seemingly empty nothing. But as the palmy breezes grow, and multiply, and wax mightier in wind, the ultimate issue of his seemingly aerial husbandry is the wild and terrific career of the unbidded whirlwind. Every seed of air has taken root; every germinating breeze has grown and puffed itself into stormy dimensions; every young blast has swollen and hurst forth with tempestuous power. In sowing the wind, the laws of nature were not suspended. The seed did not die and pass away in the seeming nothingness of its origin. The law held good: ‘Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.’ He hath sown the wind, he shall reap the whirlwind.

The matter concerned, in respect of this puffed and reckless sower, may all be matter of mere fancy. His bags of air, his fields of air, his airy gait, and his tumultuously airy harvest, may all be of the mould and lineage of ‘long-winded verse.’ But he stands a symbol and sign of nature’s stern decrees. As he works, so are his wages; as he seeks, so does he find; as he lives, so he fashions his being. He is not permitted to weave the web, and be unwrapt in the consequent garment. He is not permitted to drug the feast, and pass away without a viand. He is not allowed to poison the well, and then not drink of the flowing fountain. As surely as thought gives issue to thought, or night follows the day, so surely does evil work issue in evil work, or the violation of the right, the true, and the good demand its penalty under the government and throne of the Supreme Virtue.

Perhaps, in no point of view, does the sowing of the wind meet the eye of the thoughtful observer more vividly and more alarmingly than it does in the existence of what is called *public-house property*. It is well known that the amount of property of the description named, found in the United Kingdom, is exceedingly great. In the city of Glasgow itself, nearly two thousand places of business are found, devoted to the sale of intoxicating liquors. The rental derived from such places cannot be less than from £50,000 to £100,000 a year—passing, of course, into the hands of reputable christian landlords. There cannot be less, in proportion to this, than from five to ten hundred thousand pounds turned over in these public-houses—passing, too, of course, into the hands of respectable christian vendors. We need not stay to avouch the gallons of weak or strong alcohol liquor indicated by all this in its progress towards the throats and down the œsophagus of all manner of drinkers. It is a stream, wide, deep, boiling, and fiery