

# Canada Temperance Advocate.

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## A GLANCE,

AT SOME OF THE EFFECTS THAT HAVE RESULTED FROM THE  
TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT.

"As when the shadows fly from the field of spring; the blue stream is rolling in brightness, and the green bush bends over its course!"—*Ossian*.

"These (temperance societies) worked exceedingly well, especially at Parapara, the station occupied by our venerable and indefatigable brother, Mr. Davies. The beneficial results were so apparent to the natives themselves, that all the inhabitants of the district agreed that no ardent spirits should be introduced into their settlement; most of the people of the other districts, observing their prosperity, followed their example"—*Rev. John Williams*.

Our country has had a fair trial of Abstinence Societies, and it is now time that the results of their operations should manifest themselves. In the dissemination of their principles the seed has been scattered, and already our hopes have been, in part, realized in reaping, from many a field, the first-fruits of what the present aspect of affairs seems to promise an abundant harvest. In soliciting the attention of our readers to some of the beneficial results of our movement, our object is not to indulge a feeling of pride, but to suggest matters for encouragement amid the difficulties with which we have to contend, and to furnish motives for augmented zeal in our efforts of benevolence. It cannot be doubted that our principles have been instrumental, in numerous instances, in producing domestic felicity, of which the verdure of summer,—"when the blue stream is rolling in brightness, and the green bush bends over its course," is fit an imperfect emblem. Nor can it be questioned that in addition to its special and more obvious effects, our movement has excited an influence of a more general character, which has extended much beyond the circle of those who have identified themselves with it. It is acknowledged that of all movements for the promotion of temperance, which have at any time occupied the platform of popular discussion, and have sought to rectify the errors and wrongs of human society, and to spread their shield over the vitiated morals of our juvenile population, that which is at present in operation is unquestionably the greatest. In the present paper we shall contemplate its influence in *augmenting the measure of attention devoted to the evil it seeks to remove; in lessening the sway of tyrannical customs; and in the reformation of the intemperate.*

I. By its influence the attention of the community has been directed to the fearful prevalence of a most destructive vice. In consideration is a great drawback benevolent exertion, perhaps the greatest by which it is impeded. If we form no correct estimate of the amount of the evil to be removed, how shall we put into operation a system of means adequate to its removal? The judicious promoter of any benevolent scheme will, therefore, be careful in its advocacy, to communicate information, first of all, regarding the need of the operation of some such plan of benevolence, and if he fails to produce an impression of its necessity or utility, he may abandon his attempt to enlist the sympathies of others on his side. The truth of these observations has often been exemplified in connection with the evil of intemperance. Surely the community have not formed a proper estimate of this evil, else they would have despatched a system of means for its removal. There has long existed an unaccountable apathy regarding it, which is as ruinous as its dishonourable. The prevalence of this vice is a sad feature in the history of our times, but it is aggravated a thousand fold by the general insensibility and unconcern with which it is contemplated. In this we perceive a

verification of the prediction: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Fortunately for the interests of morality, this subject is beginning to receive that share of public attention which its importance so peremptorily demands. True, indeed, it has seldom received more than a passing notice in the public instructions of our religious teachers, but even here it is now acquiring that prominence to which it is so justly entitled. Hence we sometimes hear of a sermon on the evils of intemperance from a preacher who has not identified himself with the Abstinence Society. The press, in all its departments, is beginning to deal with the subject, and by this means information is being conveyed to many who occasionally betray their ignorance of the subject by their expression of profound astonishment at the appalling facts with which, by this means, they become acquainted. But by far the most important source of information and excitement is connected with the societies which have been established for the removal of this evil. Had there been no temperance societies, it is probable that we would have had no such works as those of Baker, Dunlop, Parsons, and Grindrod. The high respectability of these writers has caused information on the subject of which they treat to find its way to many whom it might not otherwise have reached. These works are greatly valuable to those also who have identified themselves with the temperance movement. He is not likely to be a very intelligent promoter of this movement who has not made himself acquainted, we say, not with all of these publications, but at least with some one of them. Indeed it seems absolutely unpardonable for any member of our Society to be without a copy of the incomparable essay of Grindrod. Surely no teetotaler can speak of inability to purchase it now when a new edition is published in a form so cheap. I would rather live for a time on coarser fare than want a work so valuable. I had almost said, let him that is without a copy of it "sell his garment and buy one." Nor are these the only sources of information on this subject. Our advocates, in travelling from place to place, are busily engaged in collecting facts, and rousing attention by their impressive statement of them in their public addresses. It is not, therefore, on account of the want of means of information if the public are not informed on this subject. There can be little doubt that the want of vigorous effort to stem this torrent of iniquity, in the case of very many, results not so much from ignorance of the existence of the evil as from the influence of prejudice, and the bondage of the social drinking customs. It is so far well, however, that the attention of the public has been aroused to this subject, and we may safely predict that unless a speedy amelioration visit our dissipated countrymen, the time is not distant when indifference to this subject will be counted sin.

II. Another important result of our movement is, that by its influence the system of what has been called the artificial and compulsory drinking usages is gradually losing its hold of the public mind. It will not be questioned that the drinking customs so generally patronized by our countrymen, have originated the intemperance by which it is now degraded, and it were well if it were also acknowledged that until these customs are abandoned the redemption of our country from this vice is utterly hopeless. These customs, however, have, by their prevalence, come to be regarded as an essential part of the ordinary courtesies of life; they have as it were entwined themselves around the very framework of society, and many who bewail the prevalence of intemperance, and anxiously wish for its removal, seem to regard the sacrifice as too great if they must abandon these customs ere they get quit of drunkenness. Alas, for our country! if this crouching, shrinking policy is allowed to prevail. But present indications justify us in anticipating that it will speedily be supplanted by a