

time he offered his penknife, which was refused. In short, he became a poor, misanthropic, degraded being—whose sole enjoyment was drink, and whose sole study was how to procure it.

Such was J. Ranson one time, but a wonderful change has taken place now. To the astonishment of his friends, he has now become a sober, respectable, and religious character. The manner in which this reformation was brought about, was the following, according to his own account of it.—Conversing one day with a Mr. J——, a respectable tradesman in this city, he was told very plainly that he had been a drunkard. Poor R. acknowledged it—"well," added Mr. J——, "I have drunk nothing that will intoxicate these seven years."—This was something new to Ranson—the idea immediately struck him that *he would try*—he signed the total pledge, bade farewell to drink, and is now a worthy and respectable member of society.

His views respecting intoxicating liquor have undergone as great a change as his character. He loathes it now as heartily as he once loved it, and it gives him pain to see others tampering with it, under the idea that it does them good. To use his own language—"Some must take a little for a *weak inside*—some because they are *flatulent*—some because they are *nervous*—some because they are *low spirited*—some because they are *cold*, &c. &c., and thus, under one pretence or another, spirits are lugged into all companies, at all times, and on all occasions, but, could they see the article as I see it, they would be convinced that they could never keep it too far away from them."—"and as to *wine*" he would add, of which many seem to be so fond, if they had been with me in South Africa* and seen the manner in which it is prepared, I think they would never taste it again. I have seen six or eight negroes driven by the Dutch boors into the wine press, and working under a powerful sun, while the *perspiration was streaming down their sides into the wine*—I have seen mothers in the wine press with infants, *muling and puking* in their arms, yet our gentry will sip the wine, and call it good!!

Letter to the Editor

MEDICAL MEN OF MONTREAL.

SIR,—I am in general both pleased and instructed by the various articles which appear in your paper. I wish you all success in your editorial labours, and hope they will be the means of suppressing the foolish and ruinous practice of using intoxicating drink.

There was an article, however, in your last *Advocate*, reflecting, as I thought, rather too severely, on the conduct of the medical men in Montreal, on which I crave the liberty of making some remarks. The writer of that article

declares, that the Temperance cause owes little gratitude to the medical men in this place, and that some of them, when told of the discoveries that have been made in chemical science, favorable to the cause, have even the presumption to shrug up their shoulders, and attempt to throw suspicion on the truth of such discoveries. Now, Mr. Editor, I would not "shrug up" my shoulders here, nor appear to question for one moment the truth of your correspondent's facts. I am ready to allow that some practitioners may do so, but who are they? Those only, I will venture to affirm, whose practice lies amongst the very lowest in society, and whose education and skill are on a par with their practice. "Newcastle apothecaries," who can indeed "bleed and blister," but never cure a patient, except by chance. I have known some of this description *prescribe* the use of alcoholic drinks, but I have never known such a prescription given by a respectable practitioner.

Your correspondent seems to have forgot that a declaration, favorable to the principles of Temperance Societies, was signed not long ago by a very large proportion of the medical men in this city, embracing a still larger proportion of the medical talent. And the practice of those whose opinion possesses the greatest weight, is in full consistency with that declaration at the present day. Without wishing to make any invidious comparisons, I will venture to affirm without any fear of contradiction, that the weight of professional talent to be found amongst medical men in Montreal, is decidedly favorable to our cause; and those who "shrug up the shoulder," &c. &c., as your correspondent writes, are, generally speaking, men who stand low in their profession, and whose opinion is little regarded by the public. They may show a pretty large figure in a reckoning of medical men, but assuredly a very small one in a reckoning of medical talent. I arrive then, Sir, at a very different conclusion from your correspondent. I am of opinion that the cause of Temperance, in this city, *owes much* to medical men. They have zealously endeavored to persuade the public to adopt a course which would leave them almost without employment. Let your correspondent should suppose I am writing in self-defence, I beg to assure him, I am

No Doctor.

Artificial Drinking Usages of North Britain.

A pamphlet bearing the above title has been lately published by John Dunlop, Esq. We purpose presenting our readers with some extracts from it from time to time, because it not only makes appalling disclosures of the extent to which intoxicating liquors are used in Scotland, but because, in our opinion, it seems also to point out the real causes which have contributed to produce the evil, and by consequence the steps that are necessary to put it down. In Scotland, intoxicating drink is connected with all the customs and usages of society—it is essential to etiquette and the rites of hospitality. A person would be considered flagrantly outraging all the courtesies of life, if, on certain occasions, he were not to give or take spirits. If one man wishes to give another some mark of kindness, or respect, a most approved method of doing so is to *treat* him, and if he were to

refuse the *treat* in these circumstances, it would be regarded as a gross affront. In short, to offer it, and to take it freely, are considered as marks of politeness and good breeding, and to withhold it, or refuse it, are marks which point out a person of vulgar manners, or a clown who has seen little of good society. On these accounts, the habit of using spirituous liquors is more deeply seated in Scotland, than perhaps any country in the world, and it will of course be far more difficult to eradicate it. On this point Mr. Dunlop remarks:—

"In no other country has spirituous liquor assumed so much the attitude of the authorized instrument of compliment and kindness as in North Britain; and that drunkenness has been reduced into the regularity and prevalence of a general system, will be evident from the following detail; which, however, only professes to give a hasty glance at the outskirts of a subject of fearful interest, whose final desolations seem yet only to be in their approach.

"The system of rule and regulation, as to times and occasions of drinking, pervades all branches of society in Scotland—at meals, markets, fairs, sacraments, baptisms, and funerals; and almost every trade and profession has its own code of strict and well-observed laws on this subject. There are numerous occasions when general custom makes the offer and reception of whiskey as imperative as the law of the land. Most other countries have, on the whole, only *one general motive* to use liquor—namely, natural thirst or desire for it; but in Scotland there exists a large plurality of motives, derived from etiquette and rule. This fact may be considered by most readers as extremely inconsiderable and unimportant; nevertheless, it is one which it will be necessary to keep in mind in the course of the perusal of the following sheets, being the peculiar distinction between the modes of inebriation of this country and most other nations of Europe. There has been constituted with us a conventional and artificial connexion between liquor and courtesy and business; and this unnatural conjunction is not, as in some other places, occasional, but nearly universal; and it has become a perfect science to know its multiplied modifications in every department of civil and of domestic life.

"If we divide the society of North Britain into six gradations, commencing with the nobility, and ending with the labourer and beggar, we shall find, that in all these departments, except the highest, the use of wine and spirits, as the instrument of courtesy and compliment, is general, but becoming more and more strictly and imperatively such the lower we descend. It is a usual, but great mistake, in the upper ranks, to suppose that the decorous chains of outward complaisance and courtesy are less binding on the lower classes than themselves. In some particular cases, the omission of the understood mark or symbol of civility is there not regarded with indifference, but resented as the most cruel affront, and supposed to imply an inveterate determination by the offending party to cease from all habits of amity. The fact is, that some etiquettes are much more binding on the lower classes than among their superiors; and in no case is the tyranny of fashion and rule with them more palpable than in the regulations of drinking. That working man, therefore, who refuses to join a Temperance Society, on the ground that he is a person that can either drink

* This refers only to Cape wines