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Address on the Effects of Ardent Spirits.

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(Continued from page 260.)

I will examine for a moment the effect, the immediate effect of ardent spirits upon the man. I will take a man in health, and give him a glass of ardent spirits. The effect is to produce mental derangement, and false notions and conceptions. But one glass will not have much effect. I will give him another, and if he loves rum he feels better; another, and he feels better; another, better yet. By this time he has got to feel pretty well he is quite happy. He has no fear or shame. He can curse and swear and break things. "He is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils." He fears no consequences, and can accomplish impossibilities. If he is a cripple, he fancies he can dance like a satyr; if he is slow and unwieldy he can run like a hart; if he is weak and feeble in strength, he can lift like Samson, and fight like Hercules; if he is poor and penniless, he is rich as Croesus on his throne, and has money to lend. This is all a correct representation. It is what happens universally with a drunkard. I know one man who is intemperate, who is poor and never known to have five dollars at a time, who, when he is intoxicated, has often, and does usually offer to lend me a thousand dollars. Poor, miserable and deluded man! But he feels well; he is one of those who feel better to drink. He is mentally deranged; his imagination is disordered. He fancies bliss, and felicity, and plenty, and abundance, which do not exist; and he awakes to misery, and poverty, and shame, and contempt. Yet this is the exact feeling of all those who feel better to drink spirits. He who drinks but a glass, has not the same degree, but precisely the same kind of feeling with the one I have described.

And this is all—this is all that rum does to make a man feel better. If his wife and children are starving he feels it not. He feels better. If his affairs are going to ruin, or are already plunged into ruin, he is not sensible to his condition. If his house is on fire, he sings the maniac's song, and regards it not. He feels better.

Let him who likes this better feeling enjoy it. Enjoy it, did I say? No. Reclaim him, if possible. Convince him that he labours under a delusion. Restore him to truth, and to reason; banish the cup from his mouth, and change the brute into the man.

And now need any more be said to persuade mankind to abandon the use of ardent spirits? the appalling facts, in relation to them, are known to all. Experience and observation teach us that they are the source of ruin, and misery, and squalid wretchedness, in a thousand shapes. They are the three-headed monster; they are the Gorgons with their thousand snakes; their name is Legion. And shall I yet find advocates for their use? Will this enlightened community yet say they are useful and necessary? All those who have used them, and discontinued the use of them, say they are totally unnecessary and useless. We see that those who live without them enjoy more happiness and better health than those who use them—that they live longer lives. But, oh the folly, the stupidity and the delusion of rum-drinkers!

But perhaps it may be said, that the effects and consequences that I have mentioned, result from the abuse, and not from the proper and moderate use of ardent spirits; and

that on many occasions, in small quantities they are useful. Let us examine the circumstances and occasions when they are said to be necessary, and perhaps I cannot do it better than in the words of another.

"They are said to be necessary in very cold weather. This is far from being true; for the temporary heat they produce is always succeeded by a greater disposition in the body to be affected by cold. Warm dresses, a plentiful meal just before exposure to the cold, and eating occasionally a cracker or any other food, is a much more durable method of preserving the heat of the body in cold weather." In confirmation of this, the case of the vessel wrecked off the harbour of Newburyport, a few years since, may be adduced. On an intensely cold night, when all the men of that vessel were in danger of freezing to death, the master advised them to drink no ardent spirits. He told them, if they did, they must surely freeze. Some took his advice, while others, notwithstanding his most earnest entreaties, disregarded it. The result was, that of those who used the spirits, some lost their hands, some their feet, and some perished; while the rest survived unhurt.

"They are said to be necessary in very warm weather. Experience proves that they increase, instead of lessening the effects of heat upon the body, and thereby expose it to diseases of all kinds. Even in the warm climate of the West Indies, Dr. Bell asserts this to be true. Rum, says this author, whether used habitually, moderately, or in excessive quantities, always diminishes the strength of the body, and renders man more susceptible to disease, and unfit for any service in which vigor or activity is required. As well might we throw oil into a house, the roof of which was on fire, in order to prevent the flames from extending to its inside, as pour ardent spirits into the stomach, to lessen the effects of a hot sun upon the skin." And here permit me to add, that they are said to be necessary in cold weather to warm, and in warm weather to cool. The bare statement of the argument on these two points confounds itself.

"Nor do ardent spirits lessen the effects of hard labor upon the body. Look at the horse, with every muscle of his body swelled from morning till night, in a plough or a team. Does he make signs for a glass of spirits, to enable him to cleave the ground or climb a hill? No, he requires nothing but cold water and substantial food. There is no nourishment in ardent spirits. The strength they produce in labor is of a transient nature, and is always followed by a sense of weakness and fatigue."

Some people, nevertheless, pretend that ardent spirits add to their strength, and increase their muscular powers; but this is all a delusion. They think they are strong when they are weak. Rum makes them boast, and that is all. The truth is, it weakens them in body, but strengthens them in imagination. Why was Samson forbidden by the Angel of God to drink either wine or strong drink, but to increase and preserve his strength? When you hear a man telling how strong rum makes him, you may be sure he is weak both in body and mind.

There is one other occasion for using ardent spirits, which it will be proper to examine. They are said to be necessary to keep off the contagion of disease, and are recommended to attendants upon the sick. But the united testi-