



Temperance Department.

ONLY A LITTLE ALE.

Dr. Barker one morning called to see James Mason, the carpenter, and requested him to attend to some alterations in his house, which James readily promised to do. On going to the door with the doctor he was surprised at his saying: "Ah! James, I am sorry to see you in such danger."

"In danger of what, sir? What do you mean?"

"This," said the doctor, pointing with his cane to a mug of ale which stood on the work-bench. "If you don't look out you'll get in trouble."

"Oh!" said James, "that is only a little ale. I always want some in the morning. But I see you don't approve of it, sir."

"No, I don't," said the doctor.

"But why? It is a harmless drink and made from good barley. It certainly is nutritious."

"Not as harmless as you suppose, James; and as for nutrition, I can prove to you that there is more nutriment in as much flour as can be laid on the point of a table-knife than there is in two gallons of the best beer. But you don't drink it on account of the barley. You like it because of the alcohol in it."

"Ah! doctor, there you mistake. You can't call me a drinking man, because I never take anything as strong as brandy, whiskey, or the like. I'm down on all such."

"I don't know how long you will be, James, as long as you make a friend of this. I know all about it, and once thought as you do. When I was a student I was foolish enough to follow the example of my chums and take a glass of beer every day at dinner. My one glass soon grew to three, and sometimes four or five, every day. I grew fleshy, and people said, 'How fat you are getting!' It was not good, solid flesh, though—it was beer-bloat. It worried my good old mother, and especially when others asked her if I did not drink. Some said they would never employ a doctor who drank any liquor whatever; and finally, to please her, I promised to leave off my beer. I thought I could easily do it, but found it pretty hard work for a while; and, looking back now, I can see I was in great danger. Of course, the more beer I drank the more alcohol I drank, and I would soon have wanted something stronger. How is it with you, James—do you drink any more now than you did six months ago?"

"Why, yes, I must confess I do."

"How about your head; does that trouble you?"

"Yes, it aches a good deal; feels heavy."

"All on account of the beer, James. My head is a good deal clearer than it was when I used the stuff, and, in fact, I feel better every way. Do I look very weak, James?"

"Far from it, sir. There's not a healthier looking man anywhere around here; but that is because you're a doctor and know how to take care of yourself."

"You may think so, James; but one very strong reason is because I have not for many years taken anything which has alcohol in it. Take my advice and do the same."

"Doctors ought to know," said James. "Guess I'll take your advice."—*Youth's Temperance Banner.*

A DEADLY CURE.

At a large and influential meeting held recently in the Strand, London, Mr. Monroe, of Hull made the following remarkable statement, which we give in his own words:

"Are not medical men, by the promiscuous ordering of intoxicating drinks for their patients, answerable for much of the drunkenness which is now the great curse of the land? With regard to the prescription of alcoholic beverages, I will relate a circumstance which occurred to me some years ago, the result of which made a deep impression upon my mind. I was not then a teetotaler—would that I had been!—but I conscientiously, though erroneously, believed in the health-restoring properties of stout. A hard-working, industrious, God-fearing man, a teetotaler of some years' standing, suffering from an abscess in his hand, which had reduced him very much, applied to me for advice. I told him the only medicine he required was rest; and to remedy the waste going on in his system, and to repair the damage done to his hand, he was to support himself with a bottle of stout daily. He replied, 'I cannot take it, for I have been some years a teetotaler.' 'Well,' I said,

'if you know better than the doctor, it is no use applying to me.' Believing, as I did then, that the drink would really be of service to him, I urged him to take the stout as a medicine, which would not interfere with his pledge. He looked anxiously in my face, evidently weighing the matter over in his mind, and sorrowfully replied:

"Doctor, I was a drunken man once; I should not like to be one again."

"He was, much against his will, prevailed upon to take the stout, and, in time, he recovered from his sickness. When he got well, I, of course, praised up the virtues of stout as a means of saving his life, for which he ought ever to be thankful, and rather lectured him on his foolishness for being such a fanatic as to refuse taking a bottle of stout daily to restore him to his former health. I lost sight of my patient for some months; but on one fine summer's day when driving through one of our public thoroughfares, I saw a poor, miserable, ragged-looking man leaning against the door of a common public house, drunk, and incapable of keeping an erect position. Even in his poverty, drunkenness and misery, I discovered it was my teetotal patient, whom I had not so long ago persuaded to break the pledge. I could not be mistaken. I had reason to know him well, for he had been a member of a Methodist church, an indefatigable Sunday-school teacher, a prayer-leader, whose earnest appeals for the salvation of others I had often listened to with pleasure and edification. I immediately went to the man and was astonished to find the change which drink, in so short a time, had worked in his appearance. With manifest surprise, and looking earnestly at the poor wretch, I said, 'S———! is that you?' With a staggering reel, and clipping his words, he answered, 'Yes, it's me. Look at me again. Don't you know me?' 'Yes, I know you,' I said, 'and am grieved to see you in this drunken condition. I thought you were a teetotaler.'

"With a peculiar grin upon his countenance, he answered, 'I was before I took your medicine!' 'I am sorry to see you disgracing yourself by such conduct. I am ashamed of you.' Rousing himself as drunken people will at times, to extraordinary effort he chaffingly replied, 'Didn't you send me here for my medicine?' and with a delirious kind of chuckle, he hiccoughed out words I can never forget: 'Doctor, your medicine has cured my body, but it damned my soul!'

"You may rest assured I did not sleep much that night. The drunken aspect of that man haunted me, and I found myself weeping over the injury I had done him. I rose up early the next morning and went to his cottage, with its little garden in front, on the outskirts of the town, where I had often seen him with his wife, and happy children playing about, but I found, to my sorrow, that he had removed some time ago. At last, with some difficulty, I found him located in a couple of rooms in a low neighborhood, not far distant from the public house he had patronized the day before. Here, in such a home as none but the drunkard could inhabit, I found him laid upon a bed of straw, feverish and prostrate from the previous day's debauch, roundly abusing his wife because she could not get him some more drink—she standing aloof with tears in her eyes, broken down with care and grief, her children dirty and clothed in rags, all friendless, and steeped in poverty. What a wreck was there! Turned out of the church in which he was an ornament, his religion sacrificed, his usefulness marred, his hopes of eternity blasted, now a poor dejected slave to his passion of drink, without mercy and without hope.

"I talked to him kindly, reasoned with him, succored him till he was well, and never lost sight of him, or let him have any peace, until he had signed the pledge again. It took him some time to recover his place in the church, but I have had the happiness of seeing him restored. He is now, more than ever, a devoted worker in the church; and the cause of temperance is pleaded on all occasions.

HE DRINKS.

The above proposition is true of every man;—nay, of every living creature, it is the fact that he or she drinks.

This being so, the statement "he drinks" or "she drinks" is, in the nature of it, a mere truism. Applicable to every one, it cannot have, so far as the literal meaning is concerned, a special application to any one.

And yet we all know, and know too well, that this is a common phrase, a phrase used with a special application—a phrase employed in a restricted and specific but well understood sense, conveying a meaning that is sadly and painfully definite.

When it is said of persons that they drink, it is meant, first, that they drink a beverage of a particular class, and, secondly, that they drink that beverage to a degree that is more or less discreditable and injurious to them-

selves. This is its minimum of meaning. It suggests more than this,—a general sense of misgiving as to the future career, embracing the darkest and most extreme possibilities.

This is the sense in which the phrase is employed, not merely by any one particular section of the community, as, say, the temperance reformers. It is the universal sense of the phrase. There is scarcely even a distiller, or brewer, or publican who would be found engaging a man to fill a position of trust, however competent he might be in other respects, if his recommendations were accompanied by the whisper "but he drinks."

Now why is it that an expression so indefinite conveys a meaning so specific? Why is the predicate sufficient without the mention of the object? It is because the object is universally understood. But why is the object universally understood? This question admits of one answer and one answer only, namely, that there is no other beverage that stands in the least risk of being confounded with intoxicating liquor in the injurious and ruinous consequences attending its use. But we are told that it is not the use of the article that does harm: it is the abuse. And all things are liable to abuse. Be it so, we reply; nevertheless you yourself take this particular article out of the common category. How so? Whenever you make use of the expression "he drinks," or whenever you hear it used and understand it as you do in its current sense, you recognize thereby intoxicating drink's liability to abuse, and its specially dangerous and injurious character in the community. Our common vernacular is thus seen to bear the impress of the exceptionally mischievous character of intoxicating drink. To those who deny, or ignore, or question this character by confounding it with the ordinary articles of diet and beverage, ringing changes on the terms "use and abuse," we simply reply that their speech betrays them. If any of the other articles of beverage were subject to liabilities of a nature to be compared with those which attend the use of alcoholics, it would have been impossible for the phrase, "he drinks," to have attained the sense which by universal consent has been assigned to it.

These liquors, then, being indisputably proved to be exceptionally dangerous and injurious to society, it follows as a matter of course that the traffic therein requires to be dealt with in an exceptional manner. Our common experience has led to the adoption of a phraseology which is a standing witness against the sale of strong drink being placed on the same footing as that of the ordinary articles of consumption.

The daily and ubiquitous employment of the phrase, "he drinks," with its peculiar and deep significance, pointing out an article which needs not be specified, this is a standing evidence of the universal, albeit in some cases latent, consciousness of its deleterious character. It also presents an unanswerable argument for the suppression of its common sale. As beheld in this light, how glaring is the iniquity of forcing the traffic in strong drink upon a locality alive to its evils and wishing to be free from them!

These considerations are fast "coming to the front" in the minds of prudent and reflecting men. Light from all sides is converging upon the subject. The notion that has hitherto possessed the minds of so many amiable and well-meaning men, and has hampered and crippled the temperance reformation, viz., that intoxicating drink so confessedly potent for evil, is nevertheless in itself a beneficial and to some persons a necessary article of beverage—this notion is being gradually exploded, and the conviction is spreading and deepening, that while the evil results of the drink beggar all description and defy exaggeration, the alleged good is the most unfortunate sham that ever beguiled the simplicity of mankind, and that, therefore, the traffickers in the drink are not only the agents of evil, but of evil only and evil continually.—*Alliance News.*

CAUSE OF THE HIGH DEATH-RATE.

A discussion at the recent Social Science Congress, in London, on a paper read by Dr. Norman Kerr, brought out the following points:

Dr. HARDWICKE, coroner for Central Middlesex, in a long and impressive speech, narrated the astonishment which he felt at one time when he traced the history of those dying in the district over which he was officer of health. He found hardly any deaths attributed to alcohol, and he knew this must be quite inaccurate. He found the causes of death returned as disease of brain, heart, or liver, sunstroke, &c. When he ascertained the truth, he found that alcohol was the cause of more deaths than all other causes put together, that was at certain ages. Between twenty-five and fifty, he found something like thirty to fifty per cent. had been really killed by alcohol. Dr. Kerr, though he was the first to

place this matter on a scientific basis, had been wonderfully cautious and exact, and he was convinced that that gentleman's estimate of 120,000 dying annually from their own intemperance or the intemperance of others, was under rather than over the truth. Dr. Kerr's conclusions were staggering, but from his own experience, both as the medical officer of health of a large borough, and as coroner holding 1,500 inquests a year, he was convinced that the estimate would ultimately be found to be an under-estimate. If such fatality, which really was after all preventable, were to occur among sheep and pigs the country and the farmers would be all up in arms, but no one seemed to care for the slaughter of human beings by alcohol. Health officers, too, ought to call the attention of their vestries to the great death-rate through alcohol.

Dr. FARR—Do you, Dr. Hardwicke, from your extensive experience, say that Dr. Kerr's estimate is not exaggerated?

Dr. HARDWICKE—I do most decidedly. Dr. Kerr has a very large practice, and has had such an opportunity as few medical men have of ascertaining the truth. I am certain 120,000 will, when we are able to thrash out the whole matter, be found to be under the truth.

Dr. FARR—Well, perhaps 30,000 or 40,000 may die from drinking, but the certificates of death do not say so. Turning to Dr. Kerr, Do you consider you are doing your duty when you do not say on the certificate that a person has died from drinking if you believe he or she did?

Mr. COLLINGS—It's the want of moral courage.

Dr. KERR—That is the last remark that can with justice be applied to a teetotal doctor practising in the West-end of London. If there was any courage in the question, it would be an act not of moral, but of immoral courage to proclaim to the world that a patient had died of secret drinking. At present any person could register a death, and everybody could see either the certificate or a copy of it, so that every undertaker's half-drunken man knew all about the causes of death. The Registrar-General did not ask whether impure air or bad diet had brought on the disease that killed the patient, and it was monstrous to suppose that he or any other honorable medical man would harrow the feelings of the relatives by announcing to the neighbors that a loved wife or daughter had died a secret drunkard. Let the present unsatisfactory system of registration be superseded by the medical attendant being compelled to forward a certificate of death direct to the registrar or other Government official, the certificate to be seen by no one but the Government, and then, but not till then, would medical practitioners be in a position to tell the whole truth concerning alcohol.

Mr. EDWIN CHADWICK—Teetotalers are very unwise. The primary causes of drinking are bad water and impure air. Let the temperance reformers agitate for these truly primary causes of drunkenness. The Permissive Bill is impracticable.

Dr. KERR—It is the most practicable and practical measure before Parliament. During ten years of almost constant residence in Maine I saw the remarkable improvement in health and morals under prohibition.

A voice from the platform: But there has been a reaction.

Dr. KERR—The only reaction, if that is what you call it, has been to fine brewers and distillers £20, with a month's imprisonment, for the first offence, if convicted of making a single glass of beer or spirits.

The Rev. S. D. STUBBS, vicar of James', Pentonville, said that in the course of a long experience among the working classes in London he had never known a teetotaler live long in an unhealthy and small room. He very soon gave the landlord notice, and moved to a higher priced and healthier dwelling, if the landlord failed to do his duty. Temperance reformers were quite as alive to the virtues of good water and pure air as any moderate or immoderate drinker.

Mr. E. H. TUCKER, barrister, could quite understand how family medical attendants, from no sense of fear, but simply from a desire to spare the feelings of the living, were at present placed in a false position, but he had no doubt some way could be found to remove the difficulty.

Mr. CHADWICK—Many of us think that deaths ought not to be certified by the attendant on the deceased, but by an officer of health, and thus Dr. Kerr's object might be attained, and the evils of the present loose mode of registration somewhat remedied.

Dr. HARDWICKE again spoke on the vast importance of this enquiry, and trusted Dr. Farr would aid them in securing an improved and more accurate system of registration.

Dr. FARR—We are very much obliged to Dr. Kerr for his valuable paper.—*League Journal, Nov. 16.*