

THE CANADA Temperance Advocate.

TEMPERANCE IS THE MODERATE USE OF THINGS BENEFICIAL, AND ABSTINENCE FROM THINGS HURTFUL.

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Selected Articles.

A Complete View of the Principles and Objects of Temperance Societies.

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[Continued from our last.]

Who manufacture spirits? The temperate. Who sell spirits? The temperate. Who support the manufacturer and seller of spirits? The temperate. Who give respectability to the whole of the courtesies and permanence to the whole of the customs and practices which constitute the school of drunkenness? The temperate. What is the chief apology for drunkenness? The moderate drinking of the temperate. What is the chief cause of drunkenness? The keeping of ardent spirits as a necessary of life in those families who abhor the sin of drunkenness.

The great discovery which now flashes across the world with the lightning's brightness, is, that THE TEMPERATE ARE THE CHIEF PROMOTERS OF DRUNKENNESS.

An estimate has been formed of all intoxicating liquors, false and ruinous in the extreme; and it reflects immortal honor on that disinterested Society of Physicians who have come nobly before the world to disabuse all sorts and conditions of men with respect to the harmlessness of fermented liquors, and the advantage of laying them aside. The undue estimate formed of the qualities of all intoxicating liquors has been truly described as one of the most fatal delusions that ever took possession of the human mind. My concern, however, at present, is chiefly with distilled spirits, as the great master-spirit of evil; and, with respect to it, I proceed to prove a fundamental principle of Temperance Societies—That the temperate are the chief promoters of drunkenness.

Look, then, to the falsehoods which they entertain and propagate respecting the properties of distilled spirits.

They are necessary, it appears, for enduring cold, and heat, and fatigue; they communicate strength; they digest food in a healthy stomach; they prevent contagion, and are a preservative against dis-

case; they are essential to social intercourse. The grand deception in all these cases is, that ardent spirits, when taken diluted, or in small quantities, produce a transitory excitement previously to their deadening narcotic effect. Under this temporary excitement, men imagine themselves better, stronger, more fit for all endurance; but, alas! they have not observed that, after such excitement has passed, their situation is worse than before.

I ask not whether a man presents ten drops at his table, or to his servant, or visitor. If he presents spirits at all, the evil is done—the practical influence of the man has been given to the falsehood that distilled spirits may be properly used as an article of common diet; the ignorant, the weak, and the wicked have been deluded or hardened in his example; and *exactly in proportion to the weight of his character as a wise man, a benevolent man, or a man of God, will be the pernicious influence of his example on the community. The influence of example in the use of ardent spirits by the drunkard can do comparatively little harm—with him it is a beacon raised on high to warn away from the vortex where thousands have perished; but with the temperate it is the ignis fatuus that flits before the glad eye of the wanderer, promising security, and rest, and joy while it leads straight onward to ruin.*

An extravagant and false estimate of the properties of distilled spirits is evidently a great cause of drunkenness. Now drunkards could never have established that estimate. If they alone had praised distilled spirits, their testimony would not have been believed; if they alone had used ardent spirits, then the pernicious effects of such use would have been observed by all. That the temperate must bear the guilt will be evident from the slightest consideration.

If you are influenced by medical opinions, I entreat you to consult them, and you will find that distilled spirit, whether used moderately, habitually, or excessively, always diminishes the strength of the body, and renders man more unfit for any service in which vigour or activity is required. You will find that distilled spirit,

instead of being useful to the healthy stomach, under any circumstances, is positively injurious, not only producing a temporary palsy in the parts which it touches, but disturbing and deranging the digestive process, and laying the foundation for numerous and afflictive diseases.

If you are guided by common sense and experience, consult them, we entreat you, and say, has not the use of ardent spirits, in hot climates, been found to be pernicious? and have not many persons around you, much exposed to vicissitudes of weather, found, as a coach-driver lately told me, that spirits, instead of being useful in heat or in cold, are most injurious? It is customary for men engaged in some of the English iron furnaces to use nothing but water; the boxers in the English ring, having found in their wretched experience that ardent spirits weaken, instead of increasing strength, have discontinued them in their training; and, in voyages to high northern latitudes, it has been most decidedly proved that cold is endured with more safety without any use of ardent spirits. It is not necessary to go to America for proofs of the complete uselessness of ardent spirits, for all common purposes in the persons of a hundred thousand members of Temperance Societies, who are undergoing all the labours and privations of life, and going through all its courtesies, without any assistance from strong drink.—We look to poor labourers in our own country, and ask, Do they, like the mechanics in town, drink intoxicating liquors of any kind to support them amidst all that they are obliged to undergo? We look to places of criminal confinement, or to shops of mechanical employment, and ask, Is it found that drunkards, either forced or sworn* to abstinence, are unable, even with shattered constitutions, to discharge all their engagements as well as their companions? Would any man refuse to receive a servant, whatever was to be his employment, merely because he abstained from strong drink? No, no:

* The practice of swearing to abstain from spirits for a specified time, though common among the working classes of Ireland and Scotland, is probably not much known elsewhere.