

BAD HABITS—THE DRUNKEN FARMER.

It is of importance to every young farmer to establish habits of industry and industry. The latter will lead to wealth, the former secure its enjoyment. Our habits for good or evil, are easily formed, but when once established are very difficult to change. In early life is the time to guard against a propensity for drinking; for a taste for liquor once acquired, the fruits of the past are soon squandered, and the prospect of the future is only poverty and suffering. No matter how fortunate the man has been in life, in the acquisition of wealth or reputation—no matter how strong and numerous are the ties of friendship or connexion, nor with what endearments he is surrounded and blest—the habit of intemperance once formed, he may bid an eternal farewell to all that has heretofore constituted his highest enjoyment—to all that has made toil a pleasure, and himself the envy of the malignant, and the boast of his friends—he now had to the full his draught of felicity—he has nothing left to anticipate, but a life of degradation for himself—a trial of endurance and suffering for his family—and to his friends he has now become an object of painful reflection and remark. It is right that he should be so. The act on his part is voluntary. He has renounced all these ties and enjoyments for the most heathen intoxication: and if the world and friends desert him, he deserves his fate, because he has rendered himself unfit to associate with those whose lives have not been impaired by so gross an indulgence. The establishment of little groceries, or taverns, in a small neighbourhood of farmers has a most injurious tendency. As soon as one of these establishments is opened in a small but thriving agricultural community, it becomes the scene of revelry for the young, and the seat of resort of the old. There they congregate to spend their evenings, to hear the news, to attend trifling lawsuits, to buy small necessaries for their families, and the thousand other occasions that they can find excuses for; but at each time they meet a friend, and they must either treat or be treated. The taste for liquor and company is soon acquired, and then their ordinary business becomes neglected; they lose their relish for labor; the farm is neglected; the family is badly provided for; and in the lapse of a few years, the debt has accumulated, creditors become pressing, and the homes of their wives and little ones, and perhaps of their fathers must be given up to strangers for ever.

We knew a farmer who in early life came into possession, partly by industry and partly by inheritance, of a farm of 300 acres of first quality land. He married a woman well adapted to his business and character, and who faithfully and affectionately discharged all her duties. He became the parent of a numerous family, principally of sons, but his farm afforded all an ample maintenance, and by his industry, good temper and prosperity, his life appeared to be one of ease, of perfect contentment,—every want seemed to be supplied,—every desire gratified. The earth yielded to him of her abundance; the appearance of his house, farm, family, and every thing around him, betokened comfort and future wealth. Creditors were none. Years passed in this way, when an unnecessary expense was established in his neighbourhood, under pretence of accommodating travellers. He called occasionally to see his neighbours the landlord, and found him so sociable that he could not leave him, nor without giving something for the entertainment he had afforded him. At times too he found a few of his neighbours there, and they must sit down together to talk upon religion, politics, or the news of the day. Evenings were at first occasionally spent in this manner, but it presently became a habit. The long sittings became by degrees later and later, and to make a shorter son was often sent to remind his father that it was late, and all the family in bed except the messenger and his anxious mother. Still he would linger: he could not yet leave his interesting companions; he must have another talk, and its necessary accompaniment another glass; the night was long—he could sleep no longer before morning. In this way he would beguile time, persuade his son to stay a little, and yet a little longer—urge him to bid the landlords good cheer, until the son from his oft repeated visits to the tavern to fetch his father home, became pleased with company, and took his share of the beverage. As the eldest son proved recalcitrant to the mothers injunctions, a younger was sent to supply his place, who from his tender years and habit of going early to bed, and urgent entreaties, might persuade the father to give reasonable time to return to his home. The father permitted him too to taste until liquor became unpleasant, nor that he was forgotten: A few years rolled on in this way; the father became a confirmed drunkard; the whole of the farm de-

volved on the wife, for the eldest son had by this time become almost worthless. The constitution of the parent was at length broken down. He became sensible that intemperance had taken a fatal hold upon him—he resolved to break up the habit—he persevered for a short time, gave evidences of reform and returning health; but alas! he once more gave way and was soon after laid in the grave. Before his death he frequently spoke of the cause of his ruin "that his example might be fatal to his sons; of the injury he had done to all his children; and the sufferings he had occasioned his unhappy wife." By his neglect too of his business a debt had been entailed on his estate. All these were painful reflections, and his own conduct the cause of them. Some time before his death his whole manner toward his family had become changed; instead of being the kind and affectionate husband and parent, of which we had often been the witness, how did our soul shudder, when once in a state of intoxication we saw him changed into a demon of meditated cruelty. It was on a cold day of December when of all times in the year, home feels the most comfortable, we saw this man just returned from the tavern, pursuing his submissive wife with one child in her arms, and another following, around his own house with an axe in his hand, threatening and swearing he would kill them all. How terrible the effects of intemperance! The kindest temper it endows with the ferocity of the tiger—the best friends become objects of hatred and vengeance; and after having deprived us of all that is dear in life, the relish for it still increases, until it strikes down its victims, and whole families become beggared by the fatal indulgence. Within one short year the eldest son was laid in the grave by the side of his father. The taste for liquor had been so early cultivated, that he soon gave way to the temptation, and as he was yet in the green tree his constitution was the sooner undermined. But the effects of early initiation did not end here; a third victim was preparing, and in two more years the second son, who was coming into manhood, and who when a boy had been sent too often to the tavern to bring home a drunken father, he too had acquired the fatal propensity, and was now in a due course of preparation for the tomb. The anxious mother had one time hopes of reform, and she said it was at that time some comfort to her that he drank daily only two quarts of cider brandy. These were her own words and she spoke them in the sincerity of her feelings. Up to this period it was often thought necessary for these sufferers to have the occasional use of liquor. It had become therefore, almost a family store, and two younger sons, from having been sent frequently to procure it, became somewhat familiar with its use and effects. The last victim had hardly been sacrificed, before another brother gave indications that he too had acquired a passion for drinking, and as his constitution was different from the others, it soon changed him into a maniac, and he is now confined in the asylum of the insane. The faithful wife and mother has struggled on through all these trying difficulties with a patience that was never exhausted, and a feeling and fidelity worthy of all commendation. By her industry and good management she has been enabled in a measure to keep the estate, and make the rest of the family comfortable.

The above narration is literally true. The misfortune is, that with similar scenes we are all too familiar.

POISONING BY ARSENIC.

Your paper of the 12th instant contains an article with the above title, in relation to poisoning by Arsenic, and its antidote, the *hydrated peroxide of Iron*. The hydrated peroxide of Iron freshly prepared, was announced in 1834, by Dr. Bunsen, of Göttingen, is an antidote for Arsenic, and its efficacy has since been confirmed by M. M. Orfila, Leauver, and other chemists and experimenters, both in Europe and this country. The writer has for several years past devoted himself to the investigation of this subject, and in the year 1840, when a family in Spruce Street were poisoned, published in the daily North American an article similar to the one which appeared in your paper of the 12th instant, and gave a formula of the preparation of the antidote, which has since been adopted by the "U. S. Pharmacopœia."

The necessity of the antidote being *freshly* prepared, has been frequently discussed by the Chemists, and the writer was criticised for having insisted that it was a *sine qua non*, that the antidote must be *freshly* prepared; his assertions have been lately verified by the able and interesting course of experiments on this subject by Mr. Proctor, of this city, in which he proves conclusively, that when it had been made for a day, it required an hour or more to take effect;