

times a boundless plain, rugged, pebbly, parched and unutterably desolate—this frightful image of an unwatered world, would be absolutely impenetrable were it not that here and there an insignificant spring, or a lone oasis lifts up the vital element, and tells that after all it is a world where water lives and reigns. But all else in this terrible region of lifeless emptiness—this burning, thirsty, life-destroying wilderness—shows us but the ordained dependence of physical life on water, and that the heart of every living organised thing beats aloud and for ever for this indispensable nourisher of its being.

The great fountain of this vital agent is, as we have said, the ocean. Out of somewhat less than two hundred millions of square miles which form the surface of our world, not less than one hundred and thirty millions are covered with water. Two thirds of the surface of the globe thus present a reservoir of boundless resources—water existing in superficial measurement, to an extent, at least, which is double that of the land. The briny, uniform, restless ocean may be regarded as the great nutriment-provider of all lands; for out of that ocean plain—that magnificent storehouse of aqueous nourishment—come the life sustaining waters of every tract and region of the world. If it were asked, How? In what way does this saline and saline mass arise and water the earth? Simply through its own tendency, on the one hand, to arise in vapour—so becomes expanded and elastic like an invisible air; and on the other hand, from the capacity of the vast atmosphere of common air surrounding our globe to drink up and bear along an immense body of this vapour.—Under the solar rays, and consequently to a greater extent as we approach the central regions of the earth, this vaporisation goes on; and obedient to those laws which regulate the mobility of the atmosphere, this vapour is carried towards the great continents and islands. It is poured down in rain or in snow, or in dewy moisture. So that from the gentlest rivulet murmuring in the most sequestered dell, to the mighty stream of the Amazon rolling its sea-like waters onward to the ocean, one fountain, and but one, effectually feeds the whole. The lazy, hesitating mist settling down on the mountain side; the dashing, roaring tumbling waterfall; the inland lake, fed by a thousand cascades; and the single diamond drop that sparkles in the morning sunbeam—acknowledge Ocean as the common parent of the whole. The very draught of water with which we cool and comfort the tongue of fever, may have one day dwelt amid the coral reefs or roaring surge of far distant lands; the very vapour that now issues from our lips, may be caught on the wings of viewless winds and carried hence to water the fruits and flowers of an Indian clime.

Water, then, the great life-sustainer, is thus provided and treasured in the ocean deep; its rise and diffusion are thus secured through the mediating presence of the circumambient air; and its incessant movement into vapour, into clouds, into rain, into rills and rivers—rising out of ocean and hastening back to ocean again—is thus found attesting and fulfilling its marvellous ministration in carrying out the destiny of life in every living thing. Were we to arise and view the vegetable kingdom from the dreariest pinnacle of polar regions, till we arrive at the giant vegetation of tropical lands, every step, from the dwarfish, stunted, and almost shapeless products of arctic, ice-bound fields, till we stretched our weary limbs beneath the shade of the imperial banyan, or snuffed the odours of flowers, and fruits, and foliage decked with incessant bloom,—would bear witness that one vital agent, at least, had everywhere ministered life to the whole. 'The green pastures' and 'the still waters' are everywhere associated; while, on the other hand, a land of drought is a land covered with the shadow of vegetable death. Vegetation sickens and dies, whether on the arid steppes of North-western Asia, or on the llanos of South America, when the season of drought has fairly set in. But

no sooner do the heavens pour down the needed moisture and saturate the dried, cracked, and powdery surface of the earth, than forth again the energy of vegetable life awakes and covers the face of nature with her veil of living green.

And then, again, under the same survey, we should find the animal kingdom moving, *pari passu*, with vegetation, its mediate source of existence as teeming the globe.—When vegetable life thrives, animal life no less vigorously thrives. Where the genial rain, the bubbling brook, or the irrigating stream crowns the earth with verdure, not only do the most inferior of the locomotive tribes begin to congregate and live, but onward to man the place of water is the place of life. Shut up the heavens in rainless, burning, metallic aspect; drink up the fountains and springs; and then the parched and maddened tongue of animal existence will be ready to curse its destiny and die. The agonised and pained countenance of despair will indicate the ordained dependence of all animal, as well as of all vegetable life, on the last of the ancient quaternary—'blessed water.' With what solicitude do the tribes or nations that dwell under a tropical sun, in regions where the periodicity of their rains is calculated almost to a day, lift their eyes towards the heavens and mark the tokens of the coming change!—Breathing, panting, and almost ready to faint beneath the burning breath of a cloudless sky and the sun's direct effluence, they welcome with the joy of universal sentient nature, the first drops of the life sustaining element. Even a tornado, seemingly commissioned to bear the vengeance of the Supreme Ruler over devoted lands, is regarded as a physical deliverer from the still, stifling, choking atmosphere of a rainless season.

How seldom do we in these temperate climes bear in remembrance our absolute dependence on water! And yet that it is to us, in our present state of being, an absolute essentiality, is as evident as that we live. Our food, whether vegetable or animal, has its root deeply set in the fides of the ocean; and we ourselves, the lords of creation, are as dependent on its vital agency as the tiniest fish that gambols in the mountain stream. Our foundation is not only in the dust—it is laid in the waters which are under the earth. And whilst these bear up and have ever borne the living tenantry of time onward in their living career, they stand in their instability the image of man and of all his living co-occupants of the globe—'unstable as water'—ever coming and ever disappearing, like the morning cloud and the early dew; 'a vapour that appeareth for a little and then vanisheth away.'—*Scottish Temperance Review*.

A School for Young Men.

Those who see in the Order of the Sons of Temperance only an instrument for the suppression of intemperance, have taken but a very narrow view of its bearings. This Order has proved itself powerful, not only to save from destruction, but it has raised a multitude of minds from tame mediocrity to earnest, brilliant activity in high spheres of intellectual and moral effort. The exercises of the Division room have operated to develop minds which, in ordinary circumstances, would have remained dormant; their faculties have been roused; the habit of investigating and discussing important questions has been formed and perfected; the young debater has become conscious of his own power, and cultivating the gift within him, has, in due time, made himself known and his influence felt in swaying the thoughts and actions of large masses of men.

We have in mind one example of a multitude in the case of a young man in the British Province of New-Brunswick. This youth was brought up in a drug store, a quiet, unpretending person, of whom no one expected more than that he would be an exemplary, upright, reliable citizen, but without any special abilities to win popular favor or guide popular