

matter from escaping, and renders the skin more susceptible of cold; than producing eruptive and cutaneous disorders, the evidences of which are frequently seen in the blotched face and pimpled red nose of the sot.

The brain, however, the most important of all the organs of the body, is most seriously affected by intoxicating drink; its indulgence not only tending to undermine the strongest constitution, but to destroy, mentally and morally, the most highly gifted of mankind.

The immediate effect of alcohol on the brain is to excite the passions into activity, and weaken the power of self-control; while every subsequent indulgence gives the morbid craving for drink a gradual ascendancy till it has acquired a mastery, and too often prostrated the nobler powers of the man below the level of the brute.

Alcohol being conveyed to the brain, in the current of the blood, the character of which it alters by its poisonous nature, causes the serous, or watery, portion to penetrate the sides of the vessels into the surrounding tissues. This, combined with alcohol, operating on the delicate membranes, vessels, and medullary matter of the brain, irritates, hardens, and injures them; and eventually destroys their functions. Moreover, as every operation of the brain is accompanied by waste, it needs pure blood to nourish and repair it, instead of the poisonous fluid described; which pure blood not being afforded, the brain consequently suffers. Hence by these joint effects the brain is gradually impaired; and imbecility, insanity, delirium tremens, and other mental diseases induced. Upwards of one-seventh of the lunatics in the asylums of the United Kingdom alone are proved to be the victims of intoxicating drink; and, from a recent American report on idiocy, one-half of these unfortunate beings have been proved to be the children of drunken parents.

Seeing, then, that the use of intoxicating drink tends to inflame, corrupt, and disease the whole bodily structure,—that every moderate indulgence of it serves to create a morbid appetite in its favor, and step by step to weaken the power of self-control,—that the strong and the weak have equally become its victims,—that it forms the prolific source of most of the diseases that afflict us,—that half of the crimes committed can be traced to the love of drink,—that it dries up, or poisons the fount of education,—that it saps, the mental and moral stamina of our people, and forms the great barrier to all social and political progress,—perceiving all this, are we not morally bound, not only to avoid the temptation ourselves, but by precept and example to dissuade others against so insidious an enemy.

But we are told, by the interested and the unreflecting, that drink will the better help us to perform labor, sustain fatigue, endure cold, and help us to withstand the world's hardships and man's oppression!—assertions having no foundation in fact, and disproved by abundant evidence.

That it cannot give us strength to labor is proved by the fact, that alcohol does not only not contain any element that can be converted into blood, but that it always injures the blood's nutritious properties.

That so far from helping us to endure fatigue, the poisonous effect of alcohol in the blood prevents the nourishment of the muscle; while its stimulating effect on the brain leaves the body in a state of greater depression.

That instead of drink keeping out cold, it lowers respiration, and consequently prevents the usual supply of oxygen, the great essential for keeping up animal heat; thus it rather diminishes the power of resisting cold, and for that reason is frequently eschewed in frozen regions.

That a sound mind, a healthy constitution, a comfortable home, and an earnest resolution to perform our mission bravely, are great essentials for enabling us to withstand the hardships, difficulties, and oppressions we may meet with in our journey through life; poor and paltry substitutes for which are found in intoxicating drink, and in the cheerless misery of the drunkard's home.

ABUSE.—Plutarch, in his admirable biographies, tells us that Cato the Censor, being scurrilously treated by a fellow who led a licentious and dissolute life, said to him quietly, "A contest between thee and me is very unequal; for thou canst bear ill language with ease, and return it with pleasure; but for my part, 'tis unusual for me to hear it, and disagreeable to speak it."

Terrible and True.

Another victim has been sacrificed upon the reeking altars of Bacchus;—in our city a few days since, a man died of *delirium tremens*. Who can say that he was not directly murdered with rum and by the rum seller? Is any degree of sophistry able to hide this fact? It is not; the awful truth will not be blotted out. He was murdered, as certainly as if he had been stabbed to the heart by a more pardonable and (to our mind) less infamous assassin. And now shall we be overmerciful to the being who furnished the draught which sent him into eternity—who placed the poisoned chalice to his lips and bid him "drink and be merry," when he knew that within that sparkling cup a deadly serpent lay coiled—when he knew that it would work his ruin, and that it might thrust him, as it has, into a premature and dishonored grave? Shall it be said that it is unjust, unrighteous, or impolitic, that, under the law, we should seize and destroy the instrument of this murder? Awful indeed must have been the end of that victim; instead of the presence of bright-winged angels to smoothe the pillow of death, and gently waft the spirit from this darksome sphere to a brighter and happier world—instead of these, which attend the good man when he enters the silent-land, fiends, grim and horrible, haunted his pillow—fitter companions for the man who dealt out the spirit of evil which begot them; his diseased imagination transformed friends into demons; reason had forsaken her throne, and he died a maniac—"died as the fool dieth"—"died and made no sign; and his spirit winged its way—God alone knows whither! He was murdered directly; but is his the only blood which crieth from the ground?" What an awful emphatic "No!" responds. His end came speedily, but hundreds are being poisoned as surely, though more slowly; his vitals were sooner struck, but others are exposed to as certain death. Wherever the intoxicating cup lingers—there is death. From the first glass to the last, it is a system of murder. None can deny it. But this is not the greatest evil it inflicts. The murder of the drinker is but a drop in the black flood that emanates from the accursed traffic. It destroys domestic felicity; it robs its victim of reason, character, property, friends, and happiness, before the fatal blow is struck; it clothes his family in rags and wretchedness—robs them, too, of all the joys of life—makes his wife more than a widow, his children worse than orphans; it begets vice, pauperism and misery, and spreads evils untold broadcast through the land. No pen can describe, no pencil can sketch all its dark deeds; their name is legion. And yet we are told of a "too stringent law!" We may destroy the implements of the gambler and the counterfeiter—the infected cargo—the teams of the trespasser upon our public lands—but we must not meddle with *this* "property!" The law which destroys this, we are told, is an "ill digested outrage." This monster must be cherished and perpetuated. It is the abuse, they say, not the use, which causes all these evils. What folly! The whole history of alcohol stamps it as a perpetual plague spot upon all that it dears. No man can point to the good purposes it has ever served, which shall be sufficient to atone for the evils it produces in one family, where the husband and father is under its infernal spell. And men talk of using it as a medicine; they do use it—Temperance men cling to it for this purpose. Tell them that it is a poison, and they answer, "so is calomel—so are many substances to be found in the materia medica." What of that? Have these wrought any of the moral, social or political evils, which rum has wrought? Granting that it is useful in medicine, are not its awful effects otherwise enough to warrant its banishment from society—its utter annihilation. It is not indispensable, and so long as it finds a place in the sick room, so long there will be drunkards, so long will that most terrific of diseases, delirium tremens, claim its victims; so long will its endless train of misery and moral and physical death be seen.

But we are getting ahead of the times. Let the law be enforced as it is—and we will endeavor to be content. It is inconsistent to harbor for medical purposes, the very agency we war against; it is morally inconsistent and inexcusable; and the law which provides for it is not perfect. But it is said that men are not yet prepared to do without it. Heaven grant that they may soon wash their hands of this shame. Meanwhile let the law be cherished, and judiciously but rigidly enforced. No man with a spark of principle can guiltlessly oppose it. If, with all the dark deeds of rum before him, he can oppose its legal destruction, he must be less than man, and more than demon.—This is strong