

## PRIZE ESSAY ON ARDENT SPIRITS.

(Continued.)

The first spirit we have account of in Europe was made from the grape, and sold as a medicine in Spain and Italy under the Arabian term alcohol.\* The Genoese were the first who prepared it from grain, and are said to have made, in the thirteenth century, a gainful traffic by selling it in small bottles at a high price, under the name of aqua vitæ or water of life. Distillation was known in France in 1313, and to this day the common distilled spirit of that country bears the ancient name.

In the 14th century medicated spirits were manufactured and sold in Hungary. A queen of that country is said to have become famous by making a preparation of aqua vitæ with rosemary, which was thought to possess extraordinary medicinal virtues. The medicated spirit called gin, which is distilled with juniper-berries, is said to have been first prepared in Holland in the 17th century.† It is still in vogue among those who labour under certain local obstructions, occasioned by irregular and intemperate habits.

The only regions where no kind of intoxicating liquor is manufactured, are New-Zealand, New-South Wales, and Van Dieman's Land.‡

## CHAPTER II.

*Effects of Ardent Spirits upon the animal economy.*

The first effect of ardent spirit upon the living fibre is stimulating. This has been observed on its application to the web of the foot of a frog. By the aid of the microscope, it appeared that the blood in the small vessels circulated, for a short time, more rapidly than before. Rubbed upon the human skin, or snuffed into the nostrils in the form of liquid or of vapour, it augments the sensibility and quickens the circulation upon the surfaces with which it is brought in contact. Taken into the stomach in a concentrated state, it instantly occasions a burning pain.

When swallowed in a state sufficiently diluted, it throws through the stomach a glow or warmth, which in many cases is transmitted to the remote organs of the body. The brain and the nerves of the senses partake in the exhilaration, and the expressions of the countenance are vivid and emphatic, changing in quick succession, in conformity with the rapidly shifting topics of conversation, denoting that the movements of the mind are led by the influence of its more remote and capricious associations.

As the alcoholic excitation increases, the passions are easily unfolded, as pity, hatred, generosity, revenge, while the reasoning powers and the moral sense are weakened and perverted, and the degradation of these noblest attributes of human nature is manifested by indecent, profane, idiotic, or pugnacious garrulity.

Under the still deeper and more protracted influence of this poison, the functions of the senses and the operations of the mind are slower and less coherent; the voluntary muscles at the same time indicating their enfeebled condition, by the falling eye-lid, the open mouth, the driveling lip, and the hanging head; and the exhausted brain and nerves at length leave the whole system to sink into a state of unconsciousness or profound insensibility, which sometimes terminates in death.

The free and habitual use of ardent spirit, is followed by habitual languor in the functions of the organs of the senses, and in fact of every organ of the body. The physiognomy tells us what has been done. All the exquisite delineations of benevolence, of delicacy, and of high moral and religious feeling, are effaced from the countenance, as their prototypes are from the mind, and stupidity and selfishness occupy their places. Even strong passion is but faintly portrayed by the half palsied muscles of the face, and sluggishness dwells in the mind which was once impelled by a spirit of activity and enterprise. The powers of digestion and nutrition having been effectually invaded, the stomach admits less food than before, and the whole system is but imperfectly supplied with nourishment. Numerous chronic diseases, with melancholy and madness in their train, put in their claim for a residence in the decaying organs of the body; and when acute forms of disease, as thoracic inflammation and pestilential fever, make an attack, the work of ruin, thus begun and prosecuted by alcohol, is completed by death.

In deep drunkenness there is lethargy and stupor, the face is often pale, sometimes flushed, very rarely livid and swollen, and still more rarely natural. The breathing is generally slow, sometimes stertorous or laborious, seldom rapid or calm. The respiratory movements are chiefly or wholly abdominal; the separate acts of inspiration and expiration, particularly the former, occupying but a short time. The puffing of the cheeks as in apoplexy exceedingly rare. The extremities are almost invariably cold; the pulse feeble and slow, and not unfrequently imperceptible; the pupil generally dilated, though sometimes contracted.

In the bodies of persons dead from a fit of drunkenness, the following appearances have been observed, viz.

*The Brain.* Its peripheral or exterior parts, commonly firm; its blood vessels engorged; turbid serum beneath the arachnoid membrane; and turbid or slightly bloody serum, often several ounces, in the ventricles.

*The Heart* and great vessels filled with fluid blood; the right

side of the heart more distended than the left; sometimes bloody serum in the pericardium.

*The Lungs.* Frothy mucus in the air tubes and cells; lower portion of the lungs charged with fluid blood;—sometimes hepatized.

*The Stomach* contracted and small; its walls sometimes three or four times their natural thickness and indurated; the folds of its lining membrane sometimes of a deep red colour; the whole membrane soft and easily torn.

*The Intestines.* Inflammation, thickening and softening of the lining membrane; ulcerations of this membrane in the terminal portion of the small intestine; occasionally preternatural adhesions of them to the other viscera as the duodenum and the pancreas.

*The Liver* large and firm; its surface frequently uneven, pale, mottled, or orange colored, its interior orange colored, exhibiting fatty degenerations.

*The Kidneys* paler than natural, large, and flabby; their cut surfaces sometimes bloody.

[To be continued.]

\*The original signification of the word 'alcohol,' is a substance which is odorous, and easily evaporates.

†Morewood.

‡Dr. Thompson.

## THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 6, 1839.

**EQUIVOCAL LANGUAGE.**—Logicians treat of the importance of discriminating between univocal and equivocal language,—between words which admit of but one meaning, and words which admit of more than one. The equivocal property is sometimes occasioned by a word being applied in different senses,—and sometimes by the arrangement of words or the omission of connecting particles in sentences. Instances of both may be adduced. The word *chase* is of the first class. If a person were to say to one individual, "that was a splendid chase," he would understand that the dogs had followed the game over an extent of country,—and would imagine the flight of fox, hounds, and hunters, over hedge and ditch and stream and field and furrow. The same remark to another would bring to his imagination something of a different kind, he would understand by the term, splendid chase, merely a well made iron frame, for confining printing office type, preparatory to "going to press." Other instances, which are very numerous, need not be adduced, of the various values of words as regards their directness of application, and the unity of idea which is attached to them.

Of the other class, that in which different meanings may be expressed by different arrangement, emphasis, &c., many instances might also be advanced, but one may suffice as in the former class.

An aged and eccentric preacher in an inland County of the United States, is said to have taken the following mode of arousing the attention of his audience. Finding them drowsy, and inattentive, he broke off suddenly, in his sermon, and commenced informing them of some wonderful things which he had seen in York State.

"Among other wonders he said he had seen monstrous great moschetos—so large that many of them would weigh a pound! 'Yes,' continued parson M., 'and moreover they are often known to climb up on the trees, and bark.'"

The people roused up quickly to hear, and grin at, such traveler's stories; but the next day one of the Deacons remonstrated with the minister, on the Maunchausen relation in which he had indulged. 'What do you mean?' enquired the parson,—'why' replied the deacon 'you said that the moschetos in York State were so large that many of them would weigh a pound!' 'Well,' rejoined the minister, 'I do really think that a great many of them would weigh a pound.' 'But,' continues the Deacon, 'you also said they would climb up on the trees, and bark!' 'Well sir,' says parson M., 'as to their climbing up on the trees, I have seen them do that—haven't you Deacon?' 'O yes.'—'Well, how could they climb up on the trees and not climb on the bark?'

The Deacon was nonplussed, of course, yet the reverend gentleman rather trenched on the art of ingenious lying,—he told a story in a manner calculated to deceive, and he did deceive although his words could not have a direct charge of falsehood fastened on them. Such matters, perhaps, may be classed under the denomination "white lies" which some lax moralists consider of but little moment. But, as to the equivocal nature of the language,—the double meaning, in the first part of the story, would be at once renewed by the addition of the words "taken together,"—thus, "many of them, taken together, would weigh a pound." Again, as to the bark part, the repetition of the particle *on* or the word *would* make all definite. Thus, "they are often known to climb up on the trees, and on the bark."

A desire to prevent this kind of equivocation, perhaps, has occasioned the verbosity of law documents, in which, to avoid all chance of being misunderstood, the care seems to be to ensure that nothing shall be understood, as if an invalid, to be kept from exposure, should be actually buried alive.

**TEMPERANCE.**—We again give a column on this interesting subject. Last week we mentioned the influence of a Rev. Mr. Matthew in Ireland in the cause of Temperance, a scrap giving further information on this point, since met with, is now subjoined; it is from the Waterford Chronicle.

"The Rev. Mr. Matthew has proved himself to be the most powerful and successful agent of the advocates who have yet appeared in the arena of the Temperance Societies. After due reflection and prayer, he has taken up the subject, and grace and blessing appear to attend him in all his acts and footsteps. Though but a short time engaged in the salutary work, he had up to last Sunday evening 42,219 visitors, and, singular to say, not one who joined the society under him has violated his pledge. The people are flocking to the reverend gentleman, and we have heard of several instances of the most extraordinary reformation, on the part of his followers. At Clonmel, on Wednesday, we saw six persons take their seats for Cork, at Mr. Bianconi's office, on their way to the reverend gentleman. The friends in Clonmel are recommending their servants to visit him—and, in some instances, those who join the society are preferred in the employment of some of the merchants of that town. A poor man who attended the cars at Bianconi's office as a menial for adjusting packages, was scarcely ever sober; he visited Father Matthew; since his return his conduct has been more exemplary, so much so that Bianconi has promoted him to the care of the stables, and that gentleman has been heard to say, that if the man perseveres in his present good conduct, he will place him in a more beneficial and respectable situation in his establishment. On our way to the Clonmel, the driver, Owen Sullivan, stated that he had joined the society under Father Matthew; that he was in the habit of taking sometimes two glasses of whiskey, three pints of beer, and two tumblers of punch, daily, some days more and some days less, and that since his visits he would not for any price take a glass of whiskey. In the county of Cork a member died, 5000 other members attended his funeral, and, when interred, they raised a subscription for his widow."

This is a pleasing evidence of "how it works" in Ireland, where, from the social habits of the people, the cause was expected to make but slow progress. They have taken it up, however, it appears, with their usual warmth, as the journey of about forty miles, from Clonmel to Cork, by six persons, for the purpose of visiting the favourite advocate of Temperance, proves. The persons named "Friends" in the extract, are members of the society called Quakers, a most prosperous and influential body of people in that part of the world. Mr. Bianconi is an extensive horse and car proprietor. He runs most of the jaunting cars which traverse the roads of Ireland, and keep up the communication by a cheap, speedy, and pleasant mode. He owns some hundreds of good cattle, and excellent cars, and his name is familiar in every nook of the land.

**LITERATURE.**—A sort of literary warfare is going on between two "big-bugs," of the "periodical" world,—Bentley's London Miscellany, and the Knickerbocker, New York, Magazine. The latter has charged the former with appropriating, without due acknowledgement, articles published in the Knickerbocker, written by Washington Irving. Bentley attempts to explain, but the Knickerbocker reiterates the charge in round terms, and shows but little courtesy to the conduct or talent of its transatlantic contemporary.

A Mr. Goodrich has been lecturing in New York, on Ireland. The lectures are historical, containing delineations of manners and customs, and advocacy of the Irish character. Some of the most respectable of the newspapers speak highly of Mr. Goodrich's discourses. Mr. Espy has been lecturing in New York on his theory of storms,—his means of procuring rain, &c., and appears to have made a very favourable impression.

The proprietors of the Mammoth Sheet, called the Boston Notion, are about to publish the whole of Nicholas Nickleby on one sheet, and to sell it at 6½ cents! It is supposed that a million numbers will be sold. The work costs in England upwards of 20s sterling. At the price proposed, and the supposed sales, the proceeds would be upwards of £15,000. A profit of two cents on each would leave between £3000 and £4000 clear gain to the publisher. Raise the price to 8 cents, and give the author the surplus, he would thus get about £3000 for his labour. This is a proof that literary productions may be sold at an extremely low price, and yet remunerate all concerned. In such attempts however, there is a great risk of a vast quantity of waste paper, which will always act as a safety check on speculators. Publications according to the common mode pay the author, by means of a high price, and at a small comparative risk in publication. But suppose 100,000 copies, reckoning a very small profit on each, and then a dull sale; the result would be an awful debt to the printer, book-binder and paper-maker, which might prevent the blotting of any more foolscap for some time.

An American edition of the poetical works of Edmund Spencer, with notes, is announced. Nicholas Nickleby has been published in a volume, with illustrations, in Philadelphia. The new work by Dickens is to appear simultaneously in England and America.

The Press is an organ of great power at present,—it is to b