



# Canada Temperance Advocate.

*Temperance is the moderate use of things beneficial, and abstinence from things hurtful.*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE CANADA TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE:

SIR,—The following fact came under my own observation. In the hope that it may tend to promote the cause of Total Abstinence, I now place it at your disposal.

About six years ago, I became acquainted with a family in one of the principal towns in England. The family consisted of Mr. C—, Mrs. C—, four sons, and four daughters. Mr. C. had been nurtured in the school of wisdom and piety, under the tutorage of his excellent parents; and at the time I became acquainted with him, had been, for many years, a pillar in the church of God. He was remarkably kind and generous. He seemed to think nothing too much to do for the advancement of the cause of his Redeemer; and having cultivated habits of close attention to business, he was not wanting in ability. His wife was by no means inferior to himself, and their children seemed to be endeared to them by almost every human excellence. There was a reciprocation of affectionate feeling between the parents and the children, which gave a peculiar holiness to the family. Nothing used to afford me greater pleasure than an opportunity to spend a few hours in this earthly paradise.

Soon after my acquaintance with this family had been formed, I had occasion to leave that part of the country, and I heard no more of them for nearly three years. One day, however, while spending a few hours in a town in one of the midland counties, I called to see a sister of Mrs. C. Of course, I made particular enquiry about my friend, and expressed, with strong feeling, the many happy hours I had spent in the society of him and his excellent family. The good woman sighed deeply, and with great emotion told me that my friend C. was now in the Lunatic Asylum, occasioned by excessive drinking; and she added—"My poor sister (his wife) is almost broken-hearted; for she is not only bereaved of her husband, under these heart-rending circumstances, but her eldest son, to whom she had looked for consolation and protection, has also acquired intemperate habits; and need I tell you the rest, their circumstances are embarrassed."

Shortly afterwards, it fell to my lot to remove to the town where my unfortunate friends were resident. As soon as convenient, I called at the once-happy home. But ah! how changed! The enemy had been there. The desolation was horrible. The scene was almost too much for me. As soon as we had become somewhat collected, Mrs. C. gave me a short account of her husband's intemperate career.

About two years before, on account of some pain, or slight complaint, he had been recommended by the PHYSICIAN to take *daily a little brandy*. This advice was strictly attended to, and seemed to succeed; but he soon found that the quantity originally prescribed, failed to produce the required effect; consequently, the dose had to be increased, not only once, but many times. Very soon he became exceedingly irritable, and whenever any thing disturbed him, he sought relief in the brandy bottle. Soon afterwards, he became negligent of his business, till his affairs were embarrassed; he then threw off the outward restraints of religion, and yielded himself a willing victim to intemperance in its foulest forms. Frequently did he come home at midnight, and turn his distracted wife and helpless children into the street. He became such an enormous and confirmed drunkard, that he has been known to drink nearly a gallon of brandy in one day. This, however, soon deprived him of his reason, and caused him to threaten the lives of his family. He was, therefore, placed in a lunatic asylum. He was in the asylum at the time I received the foregoing account from his wife; but the Governor had sent word, that he was so far recovered, that he must be removed. I was therefore requested to visit him. When I arrived, he seemed much ashamed, but very penitent. He

protested in the most solemn manner, that if I would but intercede for his liberation, he would never again yield to intemperance. I told him I would think of the matter, and promised to visit him again in a few days. The next time I went, I showed him a paper, on which I had drawn out something resembling the total abstinence pledge. But rather angrily, he enquired if his family had sent that document for him to sign, as a condition of his liberty. I answered in the negative, and told him it had originated entirely with myself. I supposed that he was sincere in his repentance for his past folly, and therefore would be glad to avail himself of any means to strengthen his mind against temptation. He seemed, however, to think that to sign such a pledge would be a degradation. As a matter of necessity, he was liberated. But need I add, that in less than another month, he was in his old situation. He continued there till again recovered; and before he was liberated, I again visited him, when he seemed much broken in spirit. All his property had been seized by his creditors, and his family had been almost dependent upon the cold charity of a friendless world. This, and some other painful circumstances, had apparently brought him very low. He promised to sign the pledge publicly, at the first meeting he could attend; but I am sorry to say he did not. For some time, however, he acted upon the principle, and gave encouraging promise of becoming something like his former self. His wife, and family, and friends were almost overjoyed. But, alas! their joy was not of long duration. He had not signed the pledge, and therefore was under no obligation entirely to abstain. He thought he might take a little, and it would do him good; and surely his past sufferings would prevent him from going too far. But no sooner had he taken the little, than the demon entered him, and the thirst for more became insatiable. He at once became irritable, restless, and savage.

A few evenings after, being out a little later than usual, his poor distracted wife, apprehensive of the consequences, retired into a private room, with her two eldest daughters, that they might not dole with one another, and seek succour and protection from above. Very soon he arrived, and suspecting where his wife and daughters were, he went up stairs, and rushed into the room. His wife, perceiving that he had an iron weapon by his side, and seemed as if he were going to attack them, and fearful that he might strike her daughters, instantly stepped forward; when he struck her a violent blow on the forehead; afterwards, he struck her several times. The daughters attempted to rescue her; but finding their efforts ineffectual, and supposing that he would kill their mother, and next wreak his vengeance upon them, they fled out of the room, and with more than human agility, they reached the bottom of the stairs, and the outside of the door, to call the aid of the police. As soon as the demonic father perceived they had escaped from the room, he snatched a razor from his pocket, and put it to them; but they reached the outside of the door before him, and shrieked for help, which was instantly at hand. The wretched father, disappointed that they had escaped him, turned round, and entered the first room he came to, and cut his throat—a dreadful consummation! Who can contemplate the mournful scene without a feeling of horror, and a determination to discountenance the cause of such fearful misery. Surgeons were immediately in requisition, and although both Mr. and Mrs. C. were severely and dangerously wounded, it was found that, with due care, in a few days they might recover. Happily it was so; the wretched author of this misery was then again placed in the asylum, where, it is likely, he will spend the remnant of his days. Part of his suffering family were among some of the last to bid me farewell when I quitted my native home.

I will make no comment upon this heart-rending fact. I think neither the drunkard, nor the moderate drinker, can read the account,