

TEMPERANCE ADVOCATE.

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE & NEWS.

PLEDGE.--We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use Intoxicating Liquors as a Beverage, nor Traffic in them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.

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The Bottle and "The Field."

Much is said in these days of the growing abhorrence of excess in sensual indulgences found in the upper regions of society, and certainly no one who compares our social gatherings with those of half a century ago can deny the progress of this healthy reform. Every day we have proofs of it. If there was one place, more than another, where we should have expected an attachment to the bottle to have lingered, it is the hunting field or the sportsman's dinner table, where "Tom Moody" usually divides the chorus with "Here's to the Maiden of blushing fifteen," and a variety of kindred compositions. But even there, is inebriety becoming disgusting, and the beauty and worth of temperance appreciated. Of this we have a notable proof in the last Number of *The Field*, now a highly popular journal amongst sporting men,—where the drinking habits of hunting officials is commented upon with much earnestness, and practical application.

"What numbers of otherwise excellent servants," freely observes our contemporary, "there are, who are rendered perfectly useless by this fatal propensity! It comes upon them so gradually, yet so surely, that it is almost impossible to say when sobriety ended and intemperance began. First of all, perhaps, they take a glass because a glass is pressed upon them, then they take a glass because a glass is offered them, then they take a glass because a public-house comes in their way; next they make their way lie in the way of public houses, until it becomes a matter of glass, glass, glass, morning, noon, and night." Great allowances, the *Field* thinks, must be made for the temptations to which they are exposed. "Hunting being beyond all doubt the most popular amusement of any, numberless people are anxious to testify their admiration of it, by pouring something potent down the throats of the hound followers. Moreover, giving the servants a glass is an excuse for people taking a glass themselves; and if, in the course of a ten miles' trot, the huntsmen and whips have to receive a tribute of admiration from Mr. Wheatshaf, the farmer, another from Brisket, the butcher, a third from Mr. Sharpe, the miller, and top up with a glass before the Hall, their nerves will be pretty well strung for that day at least. But a day of reckoning assuredly comes, and that which to-day braces and sustains, to-morrow shatters and enfeebles. Then, the same process must be repeated in larger and stronger doses, until the hand and nerve of the smart judicious horseman becomes 'dare-devilled,' as it were, and finally merges into that of the timid, irresolute rider. The man is then done as a hound servant, or indeed, any sort of servant, for it is a lamentable fact that people are rarely reclaimed from drinking. They may make promises and resolutions, when dejected by

ill health or adversity; but a restoration to their old haunts generally recalls their old habits, and they keep falling lower and lower, until no one will have anything to say to them. We have seen a man who was once a good huntsman, in a first-rate place, come down to carrying a letter-bag on a donkey."

This kicking of the bottle round the hunting field is such a novel picture, that we must look again:

"If we look at the thing calmly and rationally," continues our contemporary, "it seems odd that there should be any pleasure in pouring alcohol down one's throat under any circumstances, save that of a regular starvation wetting; but we suppose there is a pleasure in 'tippling,' as it is called, that tipplers only know. We once saw a party of hard trotting butchers arrive at a public-house, the leader inquiring of each as he pulled up what he wanted to drink? 'Brandy!' cried one; 'Gin!' shouted another; 'Rum!' roared a third. 'What will you hev?' asked he of a quiet-looking market-gardener, passing along in his gig. 'Nothin' thank you,' replied the man meekly, adding 'I'm not dry.' Why, ye brute beast, d'ye nabbut drink when ye're dry?' demanded the butcher, amid the derisive shouts of his companions.

Hunting and drinking are clearly two men's works, and when a man takes to drinking, the sooner he gives up hunting the better. The worst of it is, that the transition from sobriety to sottishness, as we said before, is oftentimes so gradual and imperceptible, that an establishment may go all wrong before a master finds it out. Horses are abused, hounds hurried on the road and neglected at home, and things, though not perhaps exactly wrong, are still not right; and altogether there is the want of the supervising eye that makes the difference between a neat establishment and a slovenly one. It is not money alone that keeps things right. There is a constant watchfulness necessary to prevent things getting wrong, which is never found where there is drinking going on. Then if the huntsman is a drunkard, the whips must be the same, or they will have an uneasy time of it under him; and the vice is found generally to descend lower. It is far from our wish to check or curtail the liberality of sportsmen to kennel servants, but we should like to direct it into a channel that will neither be productive of injury to the man nor of inconvenience to the masters. We all know there is no greater nuisance than that of changing servants; and if this is felt in the mere 'boots, shoes, and hot-water' relations of life, how much more must it be where the man is a servant essential to the pleasures of a whole country, and who requires training and experience in the country before he can be of much use in it? Let, then, we say, Farmer Wheatshaf convert his grog into a goose or other domestic fowl; let Mr. Brisket make his into mutton, and each, according to his calling, present the men with something in his own peculiar line, instead of always producing the terrible black bottle that has wrecked so many able hands."