

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE STAR.]

MR EDITOR.—Conceiving that the nature and utility of TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES are not enquired into so generally as might be useful; and that if our attention is withheld from the subject, our neighbours, who have assisted in the formation of one, may be disposed to charge us with an indifference to the moral question, involved in a move for or against such an institution. I have to request the favour of an insertion of the accompanying Manuel of Temperance principles, "drawn up by the Rev. Thomas Tilly of Portsea, who conceived that a short Epitome of the objects and operations of Temperance Societies might be useful in Sunday and other schools, and be convenient to the advocates of the Society and to persons who have not much time for reading, and who therefore may be induced to use it as a sort of note-book with advantage."

Your most obedt. Servt,

W. F. TEULON.

Carbonear, April 16, 1834.

CATECHISM ON TEMPERANCE.

Q. Can you tell me what is the principal evil which at present afflicts our country?

A. Intemperance,

Q. What is intemperance?

A. The eating or drinking more than nature requires, or than does us good.

Q. Which is the most injurious in its nature, intemperance in eating or drinking?

A. Excess in either is very mischievous, but drinking to excess is the worse of the two evils.

Q. Why is immoderate drinking worse than excess in eating?

A. Because it stupifies the mind of intelligent beings, drowns the senses, and degrades men far below the level of beasts which perish.

Q. What is there in liquors generally used to produce such injurious effects?

A. SPIRIT, which, when drunk in large quantities, very much impairs the constitution.

Q. What are the liquors now in general use?

A. Water, cider, perry, malt liquors, such as beer, ale, and porter, wines and distilled spirits.

Q. What are distilled spirits?

A. Brandy, rum, gin, and whiskey, all of which are injurious to the constitution, and ought never to be used except in extreme cases, and then only as medicine.

Q. What are the peculiar effects produced by ardent spirits?

A. They produce an unnatural circulation and feverish excitement, destroy the delicate coats of the stomach, and sow the seeds of disease and death in the constitution; corrupt the blood, destroy the liver, inflame the eyes, and produce dropsy, epilepsy, apoplexy, and sudden death.

Q. What are the maladies brought on the mind by drinking spirituous liquors?

A. They produce mental imbecility, gloom, melancholy, and madness.

Q. You have stated the evils of intemperance on the physical and mental powers of man; can you tell me the consequences as they affect the immortal soul?

A. Yes; while they destroy the lives of about thirty thousand of our fellow creatures every year, they expose the souls of drunkards to the wrath of God, and to the misery of hell for ever.

Q. How can you prove that awful declaration?

A. From the epistle of Paul (1 Cor. vi. 10.) where it is said that "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Q. But do they produce no good effects on those who use them?

A. They do not produce one nutritious quality that can either support or strengthen the frame; they only produce a momentary excitement, then leave the individual more injured than benefited by their use.

Q. How is it then that they are so generally used?

A. Because the public mind has been grossly deceived as to the nature and properties of spirituous liquors, until the evils produced by them have become so alarming as to lead to an investigation, which has awakened society to a sense of their danger.

Q. Could not medical men correct the errors of the public, and point out the evil?

A. They have frequently done this; but, as a great part of their practice arose from the general use of spirits, and as the love of strong drink led the multitude to trifle with their opinions, they declined to urge the necessity of abstinence.

Q. Do you know the opinions of any medical men of note and eminence on the subject?

A. Yes; Sir Astley Cooper says, "I never suffer ardent spirits in my house, thinking them evil spirits. And if persons using them could witness the white livers, the dropsies, and the shattered nervous systems which I have seen as the consequences of drinking them, they would be aware that spirits and poisons were synonymous terms."

Q. Can you mention the opinion of any other?

A. Yes; the late Dr. Lettsom, an eminent physician of London, declared that most of the instances of sudden death which came to his knowledge, and the illness of the greater number of his adult patients, were occasioned by the practice of taking a glass of spirits and water after supper.*

Q. Do you know of any other medical opinion?

A. Yes; Dr. Trotter says, that of all the evils of human life, no cause of disease has so wide a range, or so large a share, as the use of spirituous liquors; and that most sudden deaths are occasioned by them.†

Q. Have any other persons of the profession recorded their opinions?

A. Yes; more than four hundred of the

* My own observation exactly accords herewith.

† Dr. A. T. Thomson of the London University says of the invention of Alcohol, it was, "next to War the greatest curse which ever befel the human race."

most skilful have declared that spirits are not good, either for the weak or strong, ie sickness or in health—either to the young or the aged, in cold or heat, either going out or coming in.

Q. Has any thing been done to rescue the people from the danger, and prevent their ruin?

A. Yes; Temperance Societies have been formed in different parts of the world for the purpose of undeceiving the public, that they may avoid the danger.

Q. What is the plan they propose for this purpose?

A. A total abstinence from ardent spirits and moderation in the use of all other liquors.

Q. Who are the persons who constitute these Societies?

A. They are in general persons of temperate habits, who, seeing the havoc and destruction which prevailed around them from excessive drinking, have resolved to give up the use of spirits themselves, and by their example and exertions to do all they can to counteract this enormous evil.

Q. Can you tell me where these institutions originated?

A. In America, in 1826, since which they have extended to other parts of the world, and recently to England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Q. What is the principal rule by which the members of these Societies are governed?

A. "We whose names are subscribed agree to abstain entirely from the use of distilled spirits, except for medicinal purposes,* and to discountenance the causes and practice of intemperance."

Q. What effects have they produced on society?

A. They have been the means of reclaiming many already who were addicted to intoxication.

Q. What other advantages have resulted from them?

A. There has been a vast decrease in the consumption of distilled spirits, and many persons once diseased are recovering a healthy and vigorous constitution.

Q. Can you mention any other good resulting from them?

A. Yes; many persons whose families were before in poverty and wretchedness, are now living in comfort and well provided for: and the parents, who spent their time and money in ale-houses, now send their children well clad to Sunday Schools, and appear themselves in public places for divine worship.

Q. What spiritual advantage has resulted from the influence of Temperance Societies?

A. Many persons in our own country, having been reclaimed from intemperate habits, have not only attended public worship, but have been made "wise unto salvation;" and in America, their establishment has in many cases been followed by revivals of religion.

Q. What do you mean by revivals of religion?

* Even in medicine they answer no purpose, but which may be otherwise effectuated.