

determined, whether medical practitioners shall teach by example.' No doubt we could easily understand it as a very fair and feasible question, if it were to the effect—whether medical men should teach their patients by example; as, for instance, by gulping the salts or the assaetida in their presence; or by holding forth on their peroral or scalp region the Spanish fly in burning operation. Such a question the medical faculty might see very obvious and valid reasons for holding in abeyance. But as to the question, whether medical men shall follow out their convictions, and that which they lay down preceptively as conducing to sanitary well-being, exhibit practically in a consistent example, we suppose to be beyond the reach of doubt or hesitation. Whatever is taught as duty, ought to be exhibited in act as duty; and no more license is granted, in this respect, to the man of pills and plasters, than is granted to him who assumes the chair of moral philosophy. If medical practitioners, as such, see the gulf whether the alcoholic deluge is drifting us, and do not teach by example as well as by precept the obvious way of escape, can it be attributed to anything short of moral cowardice and the conventionalities of society?

But this is not all. Christian morals, it appears, under certain aspects, are matters of taste. These journalists make no pretension to self-mortification in any way. The genial, cheerful view of christian morals is more to their taste. We had thought, indeed, that the great principles of duty so far at least as the christian faith is concerned, were clear, definite, and imperishable. 'Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye like wise to them.' 'To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.' These, we supposed, were the assertion of christian principles, whose admission or rejection was never imagined for a moment to be a matter of taste with any human creature. In what kind of coat the principles were to be applied, brown, black, or grey; in what kind of habitation, brick, wood, or iron; under what kind of sky, Icelandic, Germanic, or Indian,—might all be regulated more or less by the laws of taste, or a regard to personal or social convenience. But how the necessity of being moral in act as well as in precept, should ever be left for a single moment to the caprice of taste, as seen in the diversified customs and fashions from Greenland to Japan, is, in our apprehension of the distinction between ethics and aesthetics, utterly inexplicable. If to be a cheerful christian is more to their liking, why, that may at once be conceded. But if cheerfulness or geniality has to do with the union or disunion of precept and example, and consequently that such a union or disunion is a matter of mere taste, we must protest, in the name of every moralist that has ever lived—pagan or christian—against such licentiousness within the territory of what ought or ought not to be. Duty lies with conscience and right; taste, with the ever-varying aspects of the beautiful in nature and in art.

But why should we stand aghast at this medico-moral melange? They plead guilty to the taking of wine—'what even, perhaps, not absolutely or altogether harmless.' We could understand a bold adventure on social enjoyment with as bold a defence of its innocuous character. We could appreciate the wine-bibber's appeal to all ages, and his chuckling reference to its ancient power of gladdening the heart of man. We could appreciate his position when he shut his eyes on the drugged and brandied wines of the present day, and on the gigantic evils that have flowed and do still flow from the use of intoxicating liquors. But how he should adventure the avowal that he does it not altogether harmlessly, how he should, with unblushing brow, admit that he does it, 'even perhaps,' to his own or his neighbor's injury, is not a little confounding. There is medical light, and is that an assumed acquaintance with christian morals; how then can he drink to his harm, and either as a medical philosopher, or a Christian moralist, stand well in the judgment of his own consciousness? If he suspects the 'harm,' physically inflicted, to any appreciable extent, in his own being, how can he be regarded as honorably legs to the medical profession? Is such procedure in harmony with the laws of that divine art which would lead humanity out of disease into the enjoyment of uninterrupted health? Or, if he suspects that the harm is morally inflicted, can any excuse be found within the regions of ethical well-being for the conscious violation of the dictates of eternal right? This easy, sloped, degenerate mode of dealing with the injurious effect of wine, bereaveth itself ill on the part of the conductors of our medical literature. That of which they are accustomed to prate—the dignity of the profession—is immeasurably lowered by this

anti-hygeamic gulping of the bounties of Bacchus—the vineous, anti-ethical avowal of drinking, 'even perhaps' to their harm.

Let medical men learn that everything in their profession, as well as everything within the department of the general question of morals, demands that precept and example should ever be combined, and that no more humiliating spectacle is ever presented than that of scientific light united to moral blindness. Let them cast aside custom as their scientific intelligence demands, and moral courage will enable them to sacrifice the social enjoyment, if at any time it threatens to inflict physical or ethical harm.—*Scottish Temperance Review.*

The Medical Profession.

(To the Editor of the *Scottish Temperance Review*.)

Cork, 15th August, 1851.

SIR,—I am so much impressed, at the present moment, with a deep sense of the importance of stirring up the minds of the members of the medical profession to the investigation of the physical grounds upon which the doctrine of total abstinence are based, that I hesitate not to address to them, through your columns, a few remarks upon the subject. I wish that I were able to do justice to this too long neglected but noble theme—that I could infuse into the minds of those whom I more particularly seek to influence, a spirit of ardent zeal in inquiring into the claims of these much abused and unpopular doctrines; and, especially, that I could persuade them to realize the vast amount of good which they might be made the honored instruments of accomplishing, if, after painstaking scrutiny, they should be convinced that the censures which have been so lavishly expended upon teetotalism, are unjust, and that its foundation is laid upon a rock which cannot be moved.

I cannot, I will not believe, that there is anything in the character or tendencies of mind of this profession to unfit them for undertaking this investigation in a right spirit, or for conducting it to a happy consummation. Already, indeed, the field has not only been entered upon, but successfully cultivated, by one who holds a most distinguished rank amongst European physicians. Dr. Carpenter has achieved a splendid victory, by a profound induction of physiological and pathological facts, as confirmation of the soundness of the views of those who have identified themselves with the total abstinence movement; and one grand object I have in view in this communication will be answered, if I can only succeed in inducing many of the profession, of every grade, 'to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest' this eminent physiologist's masterly inquiry into the subject. But some one will be ready to exclaim, 'Not so fast! Have you forgotten that a medical testimonial has been widely circulated, bearing the signatures of many hundreds of the faculty, declaring their conviction, among other things, 'that a large portion of human misery, including poverty, disease, and crime, is induced by the use of alcoholic, or fermented liquors, as beverages—that the most perfect health is compatible with total abstinence from all such intoxicating beverages, whether in the form of ardent spirits, or as wine, beer, ale, porter, cider, etc., and that total and universal abstinence from alcoholic liquors would greatly contribute to the health, the prosperity, the morality, and happiness of the human race?' No. I am aware of the existence of such a document, and regard it as a valuable confession of faith, which, viewed abstractly, carries weight with it. But it ought to be borne in mind that there is a wide difference between speculative and practical belief; and hence, with increasing earnestness, I entreat the whole body of the profession not only 'to read,' but 'to mark, learn, and inwardly digest' Dr. Carpenter's admirable treatise. For although not a few may have read it, and a few may even have marked and learned it, yet I fear the number has been comparatively small who have not only read, but marked and learned, and not only marked and learned, but inwardly digested it. I would therefore entreat all who have not derived full benefit from it, to re-peruse it with fixed attention, and self application, and I trust that its facts and influences will make a deep lodgement not only in their memories, but their hearts, so that many of them may come out and boldly avow their principles in the face of the world, and prove themselves to be 'not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word,' and thus may hope 'to be blessed in their deed.' It has been often and justly remarked that example is far more powerful than precept, and