

them with respect and tenderness coupled with fidelity, and many will ere long give up their taverns and their grog-groceries, and their distilleries.

Too many think lightly on this subject. Gain is too sweet to be given up readily. They pocket the gains of a distillery, a grocery, a tavern, with the utmost composure. Would they grasp as readily the proceeds of a brothel, a gambling house, a race course, or a suffering slave? Perhaps they hesitate here; but why? The money is still the same, it has undergone no change by the hands through which it has passed, it is still as valuable, it may be employed as usefully. What is the difference between the wages of selling a poisonous and pernicious liquid, and the wages of committing any other act which the principles of morality and religion can never justify?

If the trade then cannot be justified, why is it continued? Why do many wink at it? Surely in this day of gospel light every thing should be avoided that has the least tendency to retard the diffusion of right principles, to prevent the formation of healthy and virtuous habits, or to injure, in any degree, the intellectual, moral, and religious interests of the community. Yet such is the case with the drinking usages of society. Perhaps I shall be told by one; "If I give up the sale of these liquors, others will step in my place." Let them do so. You are a professed Christian, leave the unholy traffic to the world. Let those whose principles are purely selfish and carnal pursue their vain course; but let others, whose minds are open to conviction, and who readily respond to benevolent and religious considerations, take a firm and decided stand, and work as stewards who must render an account to God. Difficulties may exist, they must be surmounted. Men may frown, earthly interests may appear at stake; but the path of duty will ever prove the way of safety, peace, and happiness. "Godliness is profitable unto all things." The cultivation and development of its principles will prove of immense advantage in this life, as well as that which is future. Let there be no hesitation. The resources of religion will yield, what the world can neither give nor take away.

Merchants of every class! We respect you, and wish you well. But we cannot smile upon that liquor, which so many of you handle and make a gain of. There is evil in all such gain. Put the article away—frown upon its use; shew what principle, benevolence and religion can do for the public good. Deceitful, flattering, and unprincipled men may smile upon you, and appear your friends; but the good and pious, the salt of the earth, though courteous and kind, cannot number you with their friends, nor view you with that complacency which they might otherwise do. The deeper you are engaged in this traffic the more you suffer in the estimation of the fairest part of creation, you bring a blot upon your moral reputation, you diffuse an influence that may injure your own family circle, and descend to unborn generations, an influence pernicious and destructive in its tendency. Ye that deal in distilled and fermented poison, pour your dongs, and calmly enquire, *what can justify the traffic?*

L/Original.

J. T. B.

At the request of a Wesleyan friend, we insert the following  
"EXPLANATION."

"METHODISM.—Statistics are brought forward in the English papers to shew that Wesleyan Methodism in England is on the decline, while Primitive Methodism is greatly on the increase. The difference is attributed to hostility manifested by the former to tee-totalism, while the latter are warm advocates and ardent promoters of it. 'The converts to tee-totalism throw themselves into this connection.'

The above item, which appeared under the head of "Miscellaneous Items" in the last number, had reference to *last year*—the present conference year shews a net increase in the Wesleyan

body of 8,000 members; and many of her ministers, the most able and talented, are amongst the advocates of the principles of total abstinence.

R. D. W.

## EDUCATION.

### Of Fixing the Attention.

A student should labour, by all proper methods, to acquire a steady fixation of thought. Attention is a very necessary thing in order to improve our minds. The evidence of truth does not always appear immediately, nor strike the soul at first sight. It is by long attention and inspection that we arrive at evidence, and it is for want of it we judge falsely of many things. We make haste to determine upon a slight and a sudden view, we confirm our guesses which arise from a glance, we pass a judgment while we have but a confused or obscure perception, and thus plunge ourselves into mistakes. This is like a man who, walking in a mist or being at a great distance from any visible object (suppose a tree, a man, a horse, or a church,) judges much amiss of the figure, and situation, and colours of it, and sometimes takes one for the other; whereas if he would but withhold his judgment till he came nearer to it, or stay till clearer light comes, and then would fix his eyes longer upon it, he would secure himself from those mistakes.

Now, in order to gain a greater facility of attention, we may observe these rules:—

I. Get a good liking to the study or knowledge you would pursue. We may observe, that there is not much difficulty in convincing the mind to contemplate what we have a great desire to know; and especially if they are matters of sense, or ideas which paint themselves upon the fancy. It is but acquiring a hearty good will and resolution to search out and survey the various properties and parts of such objects, and our attention will be engaged, if there be any delight or diversion in the study or contemplation of them. Therefore mathematical studies have a strange influence towards fixing the attention of the mind, and giving a steadiness to a wandering disposition, because they deal much in lines, figures, and numbers, which affect and please the sense and imagination. Historians have a strong tendency the same way, for they engage the soul by a variety of sensible occurrences. When it hath begun, it knows not how to leave off; it longs to know the final event, through a natural curiosity that belongs to mankind. Voyages and travels, and accounts of strange countries and strange appearances, will assist in this work. This sort of study detains the mind by the perpetual occurrence and expectation of something new, and that which may gratefully strike the imagination.

II. Sometimes we may make use of sensible things and corporeal images for the illustration of those notions which are more abstracted and intellectual. Therefore diagrams greatly assist the mind in astronomy and philosophy, and the emblems of virtues and vices may happily teach children, and pleasantly impress those useful moral ideas on young minds, which perhaps might be conveyed to them with much more difficulty by mere moral and abstracted discourses.

I confess, in this practice of representing moral subjects by pictures, we should be cautious lest we so far immerse the mind in corporeal images, as to render it unfit to take in an abstracted and intellectual idea, or cause it to form wrong conceptions of immaterial things. This practice, therefore, is rather to be used at first, in order to get a fixed habit of attention, and in some cases only; but it can never be our constant way and method of pursuing all moral, abstracted, and spiritual themes.

III. Apply yourself to those studies, and read those authors, who draw out their subject into a perpetual chain of connected reasonings, wherein the following parts of the discourse are naturally and easily derived from those which go before. Several of the mathematical sciences, if not all, are happily useful for this purpose. This will render the labour of study delightful to a rational mind, and will fix the powers of the understanding with strong attention to their proper operations by the very pleasure of it. *Labour ipse voluptas* is a happy proposition wheresoever it can be applied.

IV. Do not choose your constant place of study by the finery of the prospects, or the most various and entertaining scenes of sensible things. Too much light, or a variety of objects which strike the eye or the ear, especially while they are ever in motion or often changing, have a natural and powerful tendency to steal