

# The Dietetics of Temperance.

BY THOMAS C. WATKINS.

The really important question is not so much how alcohol is generated, as what it does when introduced into a healthy human being. None hold that it is a neutral element. Does it act as nourishing food or as mere stimulant—as nutriment or as poison? Will it help to sustain health and strength, which is the chief use of food, or, will it act in the opposite way, and lessen the strength, and injure the health of its votaries? If it really is adapted to man's organism, so as to strengthen and nourish the system, then the use of it is no violation of temperance principles; but if its properties or relations are unsuitable to man's normal wants, then temperance positively dictates abstinence from it. I am happy to say that the chemical experiments of late years, conducted by men of the greatest renown in that science, and the experience of the most daring and successful explorers, and commanders of armies, all go to prove incontestibly that alcohol is a poison which slays more men, and women too, in all the walks of life, from the beggar to the prince, from the private soldier to the general or admiral in command, from the poor Indian on our Northwestern shores, or the Hottentot in the vast jungles of Africa, to those wealthy merchants, whose god is Mammon, who disgrace the fair fame of Canada, Great Britain, the United States and most of the great commercial countries

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of Europe, by sending out cargoes of whisky, brandy and rum, to poison, to imbrute, to destroy those poor, simple children of nature, to slay them by the thousand—yea, the million! And to offer upon the altar of Bacchus more victims from every nation, than the destroying angels of pestilence, famine and war have ever done. The experience of hundreds of thousands of total abstainers, under the severest trials, the most varied circumstances—in all regions; as well amongst arctic or antarctic ice and snow, as on the burning sands of equatorial regions; has proved that people are better able to perform the labor and the duties, and enjoy the natural pleasures of existence, without alcoholic liquor than with it. The fact has been incontestibly proved amongst the soldiers in India, China, Afghanistan, the Crimea, Africa, Canada, amongst the farmers and workers of all classes in Britain, the United States, Canada, etc. The abstainer has also a decided advantage on the score of health, and length of days over the moderate drinker. The death rate amongst the British troops in one presidency, after an experiment extending over several years, was, that out of equal numbers, four free-drinkers and two moderate drinkers died to one abstainer. The *British and Foreign Medical Review* gives the following report from Mr. Bell, Surgeon to the Cameronian regiment at Fort William,