

# Canada Temperance Advocate.

Devoted to Temperance, Agriculture, and Education.

No. 24.

MONTREAL, APRIL 15, 1843.

VOL. VIII.

## THOU ART THE MAN.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"How can you reconcile it to your conscience to continue in your present business, Mr. Muddler?" asked a venerable clergyman of a tavern-keeper, as the two walked home from the funeral of a young man who had died suddenly.

"I find no difficulty on that score," replied the tavern-keeper, in a confident tone: "My business is as necessary to the public as that of any other man."

"That branch of it which regards the comfort and accommodation of travellers I will grant to be necessary. But there is another portion of it, which, you must pardon me for saying, is not only uncalled for by the real wants of the community, but highly detrimental to health and good morals."

"And pray, Mr. Mildman, to what portion of my business do you allude?"

"I allude to that part of it which embraces the sale of intoxicating drinks."

"Indeed! the very best part of my business. But certainly you do not pretend to say that I am to be held accountable for the unavoidable excesses which sometimes grow out of the use of liquors as a beverage?"

"I certainly must say that in my opinion a very large share of the responsibility rests upon your shoulders. You not only make it a business to sell liquors, but you use every device in your power to induce men to come and drink them. You invest new compounds with new and attractive names, in order to induce the indifferent or the lovers of variety to frequent your bar-room. In this way you too often draw the weak into an excess of self-indulgence, that ends, alas! in drunkenness and final ruin of body and soul. You are not only responsible for all this, Mr. Muddler, but you bear the weight of a fearful responsibility."

"I cannot see the subject in that light, Mr. Mildman," the tavern-keeper said, rather gravely. "Mine is an honest and honorable calling, and it is my duty to my family and to society to follow it with diligence and a spirit of enterprise."

"May I ask you a plain question, Mr. Muddler?"

"Oh yes, certainly, as many as you please."

"Can that calling be an honest and honorable one which takes sustenance from the community, and gives back nothing in return?"

"I do not know that I understand the nature of your question, Mr. Mildman."

"Consider, then, society as a man in a larger form, as it really is. In this great body, as in the lesser body of man, there are various functions of use and reciprocity between the whole. Each function receives a portion of life from the others, and gives back its own proper share for the good of the whole. The hand does not act for itself alone—receiving strength and selfishly appropriating it without returning its quota of good to the general system. And so of the heart and lungs, and every other organ in the whole body. Reverse the order, and how soon is the entire system dis-

eased. Now, does that member of the great body of the people act honestly and honorably, who regularly receives his portion of good from the general social system and gives nothing back in return?"

To this the landlord made no reply, and Mr. Mildman continued:

"But there is a still stronger view to be taken. Suppose a member of the human body is diseased—a limb, for instance, in a partial state of mortification. Here there is a reception of life from the whole system into that limb, and a constant going back of disease, that gradually pervades the whole body; and unless that body possesses extraordinary vital energy, in the end destroys it. In like manner, if in the larger body there be one member who takes a share of life from the whole, and gives back nothing but a poisonous principle, whose effect is disease and death, surely he cannot be called a good member—nor honest, nor honorable."

"And pray, Mr. Mildman," asked the tavern-keeper, with warmth, "where will you find, in society, such an individual as you describe?"

The minister paused at this question and looked his companion steadily in the face.—Then raising his long, thin finger to give force to his remark, he said with deep emphasis—

"*Thou art the man!*"

"Me, Mr. Mildman? me?" exclaimed the tavern-keeper, in surprise and displeasure.—"You surely cannot be in earnest."

"I utter but a solemn truth, Mr. Muddler—such is your position in society! You receive food, and clothing, and comforts and luxuries of various kinds for yourself and family from the social body, and what do you give back for all these? A poison to steal away the health and happiness of that social body. You are far worse than a perfectly dead member—you exist upon the great body as a moral gangrene. Reflect calmly upon this subject. Go home, and in the silence of your own chamber, enter into unimpassioned and solemn communion with your heart. Be honest with yourself. Exclude the bias of selfish feelings, and selfish interest, and honestly define to yourself your true position."

"But, Mr. Mildman——"

The two men had paused nearly in front of Mr. Muddler's splendid establishment, and were standing there when the tavern-keeper commenced a reply to the minister's last remarks. He had uttered but the first word or two, when he was interrupted by a pale, thinly dressed female, who held a little girl by the hand. She came up before him and looked him steadily in the face for a moment or two.

"Mr. Muddler, I believe," she said.

"Yes, madam, that is my name," was his reply.

"I have come, Mr. Muddler," the woman then said with an effort to smile and effect a polite air, "to thank you for a present I received last night."

"Thank me madam? There certainly must be some