

THE GLEANER

AND NORTHUMBERLAND SCHEDIASMA.

VOLUME II.]

"Nec arane arum sane levis ideo melior, quia ex se sola gignunt nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes."

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THE GLEANER.

ON TEMPERANCE.

Concluded.

I shall render this position obvious by a familiar illustration. Suppose my boy were to become the companion of a profane swearer—he not being accustomed to such language, would at first take offence at his companions oaths; but if he continued to associate with him, his abhorrence would diminish by familiarity with such language, and by the force of his example my boy might also become a swearer.—In this case the analogy would be allowed to hold, simply because my boy at first took offence at his companions oaths. But, suppose I were in the daily habit of using spirit, and by habitually giving my boy a share of them, I cherished in him an appetite and love for spirit, and insensibly led him, by my example, to become a drunkard. In this case the analogy would not be allowed to hold, simply because my boy instead of taking offence at my drinking might think me all the while to be a kind and indulgent father. But will any man dare to affirm, that his first companion incurred guilt, when, by his example, my boy became a swearer; and yet contend, that I am exempted from guilt, though by my example he became a drunkard? It were a perversion of the soundest laws and principles of moral rectitude to presume so. The result was the same in both cases—We both led him into sin,—we both incurred guilt, and therefore, by the great law of Christian charity, both practices must be abandoned. It is not merely in the giving offence, but in the causing to offend, that the strength and authority of this great principle lie. And hence, the Apostle terminates the controversy by a declaration, which can neither be weakened by argument, nor darkened by sophistry, "If meat made my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." And not less explicit is the declaration of our Saviour, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

This declaration requires neither comment nor application, for human argument can add nothing to the weight of Christ's authority. But will any such declaration cause us to tremble; for who will say, that the customs and practices, of society, in regard to the use of spirit, have not been the occasion of the intemperance of our people? Who will say, that our own habits and example have not cherished the evil that now wastes and destroys our country? Shall we make poor drunkards the scape-goats on which we lay the burthen of our iniquities, and send them to perdition to bear the punishment of them? No, we cannot. For if the position which I formerly stated be true, that drunkards are formed by the practices of temperate men, that temperate men are the producers of drunkards, and temperate men are therefore of the occasion of drunkenness. They cannot escape from this conclusion. They may stifle their consciences as they will. They may apologize for their continuance in their practices as they will. BUT THE SIN OF INTemperance LIES AT THE DOOR OF TEMPERATE MEN.

And oh, what a powerful and touching appeal does the great Apostle make, on this important subject! God is the supreme good, and to be like unto God, is the highest perfection of our being, and ought to be the unceasing aim of our souls. He, the Being against whom we had rebelled, was the very Being who found out the remedy for recovery, and He gave up his son unto death, to redeem our guilty race. When we think of this, the appeal of the Apostle ought to come with a resistless energy to our hearts. "For meat destroy not thy brother, for whom Christ died." Can we be so unlike to God, as to destroy those whom he sent to redeem? Shall we hinder and disturb those unseen but gracious operations which is carrying forward for the regeneration of our world. And if Christ died to save our brethren, shall we continue to destroy them by our intemperance?

6. But, it is said, cannot the Gospel cure the evil? Why has not Christianity arrested its progress? The undeniable fact is, Christianity has not done it; for the country which most largely enjoys its blessings, has become the most intemperate. And the problem is easily solved; for Christianity has never been brought to bear upon the evil. Christianity, has always been made to address its remonstrances, and to level its denunciations against drunkards; but they generally come too late, and they fell powerless among them. We forgot—yes, we forgot, that it was in the sentiments and habits of temperate men that the evil lay. We forgot that our own customs and practices of social life and hospitality, were the nurseries of drunkards—were the schools of intemperance. It was against these, that the whole force of Christianity ought to have been directed—and then would it have been successful. We know the power of the Gospel, but the Gospel that could not exert its power against sin, was not conceived to exist. The Gospel could never heal, when it was never applied to the disease. And this also explains the mystery, why the tracts published by Temperance Societies, work such a powerful charm, and produce such a reformation; while the thousands of tracts against drunkenness, formerly circulated by Tract Societies, were productive of so little good. The former tracts were directed to drunkards; but they also generally came too late, and they fell powerless among them; the present are addressed to temperate

men, where the evil originates, and among whom reformation can be effected, and they have been successful. The failure of none of these instruments arose so much from weakness, as from misdirected efforts. Besides, not only drunkards, but a large portion of those who have entered the path which leads to intemperance, lie wholly without the range of Christianity.

But these confederacies into which we wish them to enter, can neither be originated or maintained by intemperate men. And this throws us back again on the temperate members of society, for establishing and upholding these institutions, and by their influence and example to induce their heedless and intemperate brethren to unite along with them. And this furnishes another argument in favour of Temperance Societies, and shuts up temperate men to the duty of becoming members. For, in the present condition of things, redemption from the evils of intemperance cannot be effected but by such a compact. These societies, therefore, instead of superseding or taking the place of Christianity, would become most powerful auxiliaries to its success. For they are well fitted to remove many stumbling-blocks out of the way of its progress. They will bring the wanderers back within the sphere of its influence.

7. I shall close my notice of objections, by adverting to a feeling which indisposes many to enrol themselves as members, because they are required to sign a declaration. From all that I have observed, I can regard this in no other light than that of an over-nice scrupulosity, which they can never well define, nor offer any solid reason for.

Some think they as effectually serve the cause by acting on the principle, without becoming members. This is a delusion; it wants some of the essential requisites which constitute the strength of our cause. It wants the public testimony against the evil, which forms one of the chief elements for counteracting it. It divests your example of much of that influence, which the simple fact that you are a member, would lead to it. It deprives us of the advantage of that union and combination, which are found to give strength and success to every other cause, for it is a long established maxim, that "union is strength." There are others who consider it an impeachment of their principles, by inferring that they cannot keep themselves sober, without such an obligation. It implies no such insinuation against those who possess better principles and the fact, that it is temperate men whom we principally wish to become members, repeats such an insinuation. But, have you no sympathy for your weaker brethren who possess them not? Many who possess no such principles as can stay their minds against the insidious allurements of this deceitful enemy. And in the absence of such, is it not well to anchor their minds by such an obligation, to prevent temptation from breaking them away, and driving them continually on the quick-sands of destruction? Many feel this obligation, when they would no other; and it is in the fact that they are members that their chief safety lies. It furnishes an apology by which they can resist every solicitation from their acquaintances. It fixes their resolution, and settles in their minds, that they are done with the practice; and thus it terminates all these hankerings and desires which would betray them into evil. There is a power and charm in being a member, which from a fine panoply of defence to many, who possess no higher principles to protect them.

And will you withhold your name, and thus discourage your weaker brethren from enrolling their? Oh, if the many good-men who now hang back, were aware of the fearful condition, into which our country has come, they would burst through all these scrupulosity, and rush forward to our aid. For intemperance is so debasing the character, destroying the reason, and depraving the hearts of our people, that a large portion of them have come into that condition in which it is morally impossible for God to bless them. If he send them adversity, and blighted harvests, and commercial distress, they sink under his curse. If he send them prosperity, and rich harvests, and commercial success, they turn them into licentiousness and rebellion against himself; and thus his blessing becomes a curse. If he frown on them, they are cursed—if he smile on them, they are cursed; for there is a transmuted power of evil resting among them, which turns even the rich beneficence of heaven into a curse. By their intemperance, also, they have cast themselves almost beyond the means of recovery. They live as much without hope or desire of future blessedness, as if no dispensation of grace had ever been revealed to our world. Yes, they live as much without any divine and healing influence, as if no remedial scheme of mercy had ever been promulgated from heaven. And can you allow such a state of things to continue? We beseech you, by the temporal and eternal welfare of our people, to come to our aid, and by means of Temperance Societies, sweep this moral pestilence from our land.

I have finished my observations on these points which form the chief objections to Temperance Societies. I have endeavoured to expose those fallacies and delusions which seem to hinder temperate men from becoming members of them. I have endeavoured to disengage them from all these subtleties, in which men seek to shelter themselves from their continuance in those pernicious customs and practices, which will inevitably bring our country to ruin. And if I have succeeded in my attempt, it must be perfectly obvious that Temperance Societies are not temperate men—that the principle of these Societies must be total abstinence, to secure

the intended good—and that on the great principle of Christian charity, it is the duty of every man, who loves his brethren, to abstain from that which is causing so many of his brethren to sin.

And I know not what unaccountable influence it is, that withholds men from doing so. For if they have no love of drink, it can be no sacrifice to them; and well may they blush for their benevolence and Christian spirit, when they will not surrender that, for the welfare of their brethren, which they pretend they care not for. And if they have acquired, or are acquiring, a love of strong drink, or if it has become necessary to their comfort, then already are they under its insidious influence, and the sooner they quit it completely and forever, the better. Experience has shown, that man is absolutely safe who continues habitually to drink. Every man who does so, places himself, at least, in the path of the destroying angel.

HOME, COUNTRY, ALL THE WORLD.

We love our native home, our native place, our native land. There is a peculiar and distinct link of attachment belonging to each of these relationships; but patriotism is the bond of the whole, and he who loves his country loves his home and all between. But at home, and in our country, this sentiment, like the light of heaven and the air we breathe, is so familiar that we are scarcely conscious of its presence, unless reflection be powerfully awakened to it by the return of some national or domestic occasion on which we are wont to facilitate ourselves and those who are dear to us, on THIS cause of so much of our mutual felicity. In a strange land it is so far otherwise; the smallest incident there which reminds us of what we have loved from our childhood, and left perhaps for ever, touches the finest springs of affection; and the sight of a flower, the sound of a voice, the cast of a countenance, the colour of a garment, the air of a song may electrify both nerve and spirit, and quicken emotions more deeply transporting than have ever been inspired by the scenes and enjoyments themselves which are thus overwhelmingly renewed. The pleasures of memory are sometimes, though seldom, more lively than the pleasures of hope, but they are always more defined; and the certainty that we "have been blest" is sometimes still in possession, which a wise man would not exchange for the unreal reversion of blessings to come, in the precarious contingencies of life. The farther, too, that we are removed from the time and the place of our earliest and sweetest associations, the more they are endeared to us and the oftener recollected. The very sadness which accompanies the remembrance of "departed joys" makes them a thousand times more exquisite. Man is so little of a hermit by nature, that he runs out of the desolated island of himself to seek social existence in the hearts of his fellows; and, though his happiness must ever begin and end in his own bosom, there is ample room within range of his affections to embrace the whole species. Next, however, to his kindred and friends, his neighbours, and then his countrymen, claim the warmest share of his spontaneous ray, rather his involuntary esteem; for it bursts out so unobtrusively, suddenly, instinctively, that he can hardly say he has any choice, or will, or power in the matter. With these, according to circumstances, especially in countries where both are absent, he cannot help forming new and often intimate connexions. It is wonderful as well as amusing to observe how unexpectedly meeting, even in a neighbouring county, attract stragglers, who are unknown or indifferent to each other at home. Two persons from the same village or town, who never speak when they pass in the street, coming together at the other end of the kingdom exchange salutations almost before they are aware, and each is right glad to ask or answer, that all friends at— are well. Two Englishmen, though the one be from Berwick-on-Tweed and the other from Penzance, suddenly encountering on the banks of the river of the Amazon's, would exult in the desert as if a brother had found a brother. Two Europeans, though one were a German and the other a Welchman, would shake hands like "old acquaintance," and vent their joy in gutturals which neither could understand, were they to start out of a forest, face to face, in the heart of Japan. Two inhabitants of this earth, though one were a Chinese and the other a Parisian, lighting at once on the TERRA FIRMA of the planet Jupiter, would see all the world in each other's countenances, and inquire as eagerly for tidings from any quarter of it as if there were not a speck on its surface which was not comprised in the country, eye, in the home of each.—Mr. James Montgomery, in the *Annulet*.

Moss Mattresses—made with fine moss are now getting into general use in Russia and Sweden. They are filled to a depth of twelve inches, are very elastic and wholesome, and the cost of renewing them is of course trifling.

If a fellow or runround be coming on your finger, you can do nothing better than to soak it thoroughly in hot lye.