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Pamphlets



Health Tract, No. 8.

TRUE TEMPERANCE.

“EVERY man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.”—PAUL.

“Look not thou upon the wine when it is red.”—SOLOMON.

“Cattle know when to go home from grazing; but a foolish man never knows his stomach’s measure.”—SCANDINAVIAN PROVERB.

True temperance is the proper use of good things, and total abstinence from bad things.

“He who knows what is good and chooses it, who knows what is bad and avoids it, is learned and temperate.”—*Socrates.*

It is a grave popular error that temperance is the moderate use of everything, irrespective of quality. Good things may become evil when used in excess, on account of quantity. The most wholesome food may cause serious diseases when thus abused. There is a class of substances which are intrinsically bad. They are evil, and only evil, in all proportions and quantities. They have no redeeming qualities. The slightest indulgence in these articles is intemperance. The glutton is intemperate because he abuses, by excessive use, that which might nourish him if taken with moderation. The tippler or wine-bibber is intemperate, not because he uses wine or brandy in great quantities, but because he takes even the smallest portion of the poisons. The boy who robs an orchard is a petty thief. The official who puts his hand into the national treasury and abstracts the public money is a defaulter. Each individual is a thief. Both are criminals of the same class. They differ

only in the degree of the crime committed. They stand, respectively, at the two ends of a long series of gradations which all incline in the same direction.

Intemperance presents two similar extremes. At one end is the man who takes his daily or occasional glass of wine or beer—just to make him “feel well,” or “for his stomach’s sake”—and at the other is seen the confirmed inebriate reeling into a drunkard’s grave. Both individuals stand in the same line, their names belong in the same category. Moderate drinkers—as small tipplers term themselves—really differ from beer-guzzlers, toppers, and “old soakers,” in only one particular. They have taken only a few degrees, only the initiatory, perhaps, while the latter are nearly ready to graduate in ignominy. The moderate drinker has only to continue his course in the same direction in order to bring up at last in the same slough with other wretched victims of intemperance.

The Sin of Intemperance.

Primarily, the crime of intemperance is a sin against the body. The moral evils which result are the natural consequences of injuries suffered by the physical organism. The act of drinking, itself, is not a sin, whether the liquor taken is beer, wine, or brandy, or be the individual a hod-carrier or a clergyman; no criminality can be attached to a mere mechanical act. The real sin consists in subjecting the body to *unnatural and harmful stimulation*. Nature has given to each organ of the body its proper function. When allowed to act unrestrained, these functions are all properly performed, and harmony reigns in the vital domain. But so soon as any organ or set of organs is unduly excited, the harmony is destroyed, and discordant action results. A whole train of ills then follow as immediate consequences of the disturbed action. The mental and moral evils which result from the use of intoxicating liquors are the direct consequences of the first sin against the body, *artificial stimulation*.

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Opium and Tobacco Drunkards.

Alcoholic liquors are not the only means by which artificial stimulation may be indulged. A large number of drugs and poisons possess properties which are capable of occasioning the same results. Tobacco, opium, hashish, tea, coffee, and absinthe are some of the more common of these. The effects of these several agents may be said to be essentially the same in kind, though some of them are doubtless productive of more injury than others. True temperance discards all of these poisons. They all go together. It is a question upon which there is considerable division of opinion, whether rum or tobacco is productive of the greatest amount of injury to the human family. We will not here discuss the relative importance of a reform in the two directions. Both are great evils. Both will stand or fall together.

The use of opium as an intoxicant has of late years increased to such an extent that considerable alarm has already been excited among observing physicians on account of this growing evil. The custom returns show that the amount of opium yearly consumed in this country far exceeds that used for medical purposes, which proves beyond doubt that the largest share of the narcotic is employed by devotees of the drug.

Every city, town, and country village has its opium-eaters. We have frequently been assured by druggists that they would astonish us should they reveal the number of persons of high standing in their communities who are so addicted to the weed as to consider it a necessary of life.

The worst feature of this evil practice is the fact that it grows almost wholly out of the practice of physicians in employing opiates so constantly for the relief of slight pains, and in the treatment of a variety of affections, especially those of a nervous character. By this means the ranks of opium-eaters are being constantly reinforced by new victims.

Thousands of ladies are annually rendered slaves to this fascinating drug by the injudicious prescription of the family

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physician. No physician should venture to take the responsibility of using this powerful drug without considering the possible consequences.

Dr. Arlidge, of England, has recently called attention to the fact that tea drunkards are very common among the women of the laboring classes of that country, and every physician knows that similar cases are not uncommon in this country.

Dr. A. cites the cases of numerous ladies who had become so addicted to the use of strong tea that they had lost their appetite for really nourishing food, and attempted to subsist upon nothing but strong tea with a morsel of white bread and butter. In several instances this most pernicious practice was found to be the cause of scurvy and all its dire results.

Chemists long since determined that both tea and coffee contain distinct poisons which are capable of producing death if taken in any but very minute portions. These poisons are stimulating in character in small doses, and narcotic in larger ones, like the alcohol of whisky or the nicotine of tobacco. The tannin which these beverages contain is also productive of great harm, though not itself an active poison. It precipitates the gastric juice, and thus interferes with digestion. This fact has been proven by careful experiment, and is established beyond the possibility of question.

True Temperance Platform.

The only true platform upon which the cause of temperance will ever find a substantial basis is total abstinence, not only from alcoholic drinks, but from every other stimulant or narcotic. There is no room for compromise on this subject. Christian temperance is more radical still, and requires that the appetite shall be held within the bounds of moderation in eating as well as in drinking.

. For a descriptive list of Temperance and Health Publications, including bound books, tracts, and pamphlets, address the publishers of this tract.

GOOD HEALTH, Battle Creek, Mich.