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DRINKING!

WHETHER it be attributable to our chilly northern skies and foggy atmosphere, or to the strong native appetite for stimulus which, from time immemorial, has characterized our race, certain it is that the people of Great Britain are a very drinking people, consuming enormous quantities of ardent spirits, wine, and fermented liquor of various sorts. They seem to have a hot spark in their throats, which stands in need of perpetual cooling, or to be troubled with a thirst which is perennial, or almost unquenchable.

The drinking of intoxicating liquors enters into and pervades our entire social system. We drink at births, marriages, and deaths. We drink in celebration of our successes, and we drink to console ourselves for our defeats. We drink to enhance joy, and we drink to drown sorrow. When friends meet they drink, and when they part they drink. Men drink because they are together, and they drink because they are alone. Political rejoicings, social meetings, party gatherings, are all crowned with drink. Commercial men treat their customers to drink, working men gain their "footings" by drink, members of parliament secure many "most sweet voices" by drink. In winter we drink to keep out the cold, in wet weather to keep out the wet, in summer to keep out the heat. We drink to make our food digest; we drink to "qualify" this, that, and the other dish; we drink to keep away the cholera—in short, one would almost imagine, from the various uses of the kind to which drink is put, that it was the immortal Catholicon, the Grand Universal Remedy. But excuses to drink, in every way and on every occasion, are always ready at hand; and when it is employed in such a variety of ways, and on such a multitude of occasions, it need scarcely be matter for wonder that the quantity consumed in this country should be so very prodigious.

We consume yearly about thirty million gallons of ardent spirits alone. The average annual consumption is above two quarts for every man, woman, and child in England and Ireland, and above two gallons a-piece for every man, woman, and child in Scotland. In the latter country, whiskey is cheap, the climate raw, and the people "drouthy;" and hence the enormous consumption of the natives—each Scot consuming as much ardent spirits yearly as every two Irishmen, or every three Englishmen.

The favourite potation of the latter is beer and stout, of which the consumption in England quite as much exceeds that of Scotland, as the latter exceeds the former in its consumption of ardent spirits. About twenty-five million bushels of grain—equivalent to some fifteen hundred million pounds of bread (were the grain converted into bread instead of malt)—are consumed annually in England in the manufacture of beer, porter, ale, stout, and such like drinks.

Englishmen are generally quick at counting the cost of things: and a word may be said on this head. A little "Black Book" was recently published, showing the cost of the Government at something like sixty millions a-year—truly a formidable sum—the details of which have excited no small amount of indignation. But what will the people say when they are told, as we now tell them, that not less than forty millions a-year are voluntarily spent by them upon drink? We do not defend the former excessive expenditure, nor can we say anything in defence of the latter. But we must remember, that for the expenditure on the purposes of Government, we have at least an admirable post-office, an army and navy, courts of law, diplomatic and consular establishments, penitentiaries, Queen, Lords, and Commons, and a great deal more. And what have we in return for our other expenditure? Only a prodigious quantity of poison, producing poverty, demoralization, and crime! A searching reform in our public financial affairs may be very urgently called for; but we think it will be admitted, that there is even a still more imperative necessity for an equally searching reform in our personal and social expenditure, in respect of drink.

From the year 1801 to the year 1846, the people of the United Kingdom spent nearly fifteen hundred millions of pounds sterling in intoxicating drinks; about £800,000,000 on spirits, £176,445,060 on wines, and £595,904,000 on malt; or equal to about double the amount of the present National Debt! The *duty alone* which we paid on the above articles during these forty-five years, amounted to £644,968,553, or equivalent to about five-sixths of the National Debt.*

*For further authentic details, see "*Statistics, on the consumption &c., of ardent spirits, wines, and malt, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, from 1801 to 1846 inclusive*," By DAWSON BURNS, one of the late secretaries of the National Temperance Society. Houlston and Stoneman.

OUR RAMBLES BY THE DOVE.

ADDRESSED TO C. C. IN AMERICA.

'Tis well to proudly tell me of the glories of the West,
Of the stream with rapid torrent and the lake with heaving breast,
Of the mountain and the prairie, of the forest and the bluff,
Savannah spot so fragrant and the jungle dell so rough.
I know that there are wonders in your own gigantic land,
The gorgeous and the beautiful, the startling and the grand,
I know the cataracts are bold, the fields of maize are wide,
I know the pines are thick enough to let the lightnings hide;
But glad I am to hear thee say with warm and clinging love,
Thou thinkest of Old England and our rambles by the "Dove."

Prize as thou wilt the banks that keep thy clear broad rivers in,
Where panthers drink and light canoes bear on the tawny skin,
Be speaking fondly as thou may'st of hills that climb around,
And boast of wildflowers that bedeck the trackless "hunting ground"
Magnolias are exquisite and humming-birds are choice,
And "whip-poor-will" may charm thee with his melancholy voice;
But canst thou quite despise the thrush that whistled on the thorn,
And those "forget-me-nots" that wore the jewels of the morn,
Canst thou shut out the green below and cloudless blue above,
That led us still, still onward in our rambles by the "Dove?"

Oh, no indeed, I know *thy* land will never chase away
The happiness we found in *mine* on that long, sunny day;
I know thy great White Mountains cannot dim the winding steep,
That lured us dreamily along to gain the "Lover's Leap,"
Do you remember how we sat, and tried to find a word
That would express the plashing gush of water that we heard;
And how we watched the alders bend, as peacefully and light,
As though an angel's wing had passed and touched them in its flight,
And how we said that Eastern clime held no Arcadian Grove,
Of more romance and sweetness than the valley of the "Dove."

We were familiar with the place, we had been there before,
But somehow on this August day we worshipped it the more,
And every crag of old grey rock and every wave-washed stone,
Seemed touched with richer colouring and breathed a softer tone.
That tiny river, how it crept beneath the leafy shade,
Where golden perch and silver dace in glancing frolic played,
And how it dashed in foaming haste adown the mossy wall,
Where granite fragments broke the flow and made a waterfall,
And how we stood in silent joy with hearts brim full of love,
And saw the great Creator gliding onward with the "Dove."

Oh, do not let the mighty scenes that meet thy vision now
Shut out "Thorpe Cloud" that standeth like a frown on Beauty's
brow.

Oh, do not let the noble trees that spring upon thy sod,
Prompt thee to spurn the bramble arms that hugged us as we trod,
Thou wilt be seeing many things to win thy loudest praise;
But let Old England's woods and dales yet steal upon thy gaze,
Think of our merry travels on this narrow island earth,
And own that we have often found rare spots of Eden birth,
And when amid the vast and fair thy native footsteps rove,
Call up our sunny rambles by the waters of the "Dove."

I breathed a prayer while straying there, God grant 'twas not in vain,
It asked the boons of Life and Health to seek that place again,
It asked that those around me then might share the future joy,
The hope was earnest, strong, and pure, God keep it from alloy.
Write on—and proudly tell me of the wonders of the West,
But glad I am that more than once thy spirit hath confessed
Affection for our daisied fields, green lanes, and babbling brooks,
Our orchards and white cottages, and fairy-haunted nooks,
For I believe that thou wilt come with all thy olden love,
And let my prayer be answered by the waters of the "Dove."

ELIZA COOK.

HOW USEFULNESS IS TO BE ESTIMATED.

The usefulness of a man is not to be estimated by the length of time during which he is employed, but by the character of the resources, powers, and qualifications, which he combines, and puts vigorously in operation, while he is engaged in any undertaking. Some men will be more useful in *an hour*, than others will in *a year*.

DIAMOND DUST.

PROUD men never have friends; either in prosperity, because they know nobody; or in adversity, because then nobody knows them.

NEVER condemn a friend unheard, or without letting him know his accuser, or his crime.

THE commentary of a severe friend is better than the embellishments of a sweet-lipped flatterer.

AN ape is ridiculous by nature, but men become so by art and study.

THE morning hour has gold in its mouth.

POETRY accommodates the show of things to the desires of the mind.

THERE is nothing ugly for those who know the virtues and beauties of all the things which God has made.

IT is more easy to forgive the weak who have injured us, than the powerful whom we have injured. He that has cut the lion's claws will not feel himself quite secure, until he has also drawn his teeth.

WHERE merit appears, do justice to it without scruple.

THE future is always fairy-land to the young. Life is like a beautiful and winding lane, on either side bright flowers, and beautiful butterflies, and tempting fruits, which we scarcely pause to admire and to taste; so eager are we to hasten to an opening which we imagine will be more beautiful still. But, by degrees as we advance, the trees grow bleak; the flowers and butterflies fail; the fruits disappear, and we find we have arrived, to reach a desert waste; in the centre, a stagnant and lethean lake, over which wheel and shriek the dark-winged birds, the embodied memories of the past.

YOU can never overtake time. It is best therefore to be always a few minutes before him.

FORGIVENESS of injuries—The odour flowers yield when trampled on.

WICKEDNESS is generally a plant of slow growth, and we rarely find that extreme youth is totally devoid of virtues, though it may be stained with many vices.

GO not to your doctor for every ail, nor to your lawyer for every quarrel, nor to your bottle for every thirst.

A READY wit retorts upon our persecutors, and they get laughed at, but by displaying it we make ourselves enemies.

THE public mind is the creation of the master writers. ERRORS are good examples.

THERE is a mode of presenting that gives value to anything.

POLITENESS is like an air cushion—there may be nothing solid in it, but it eases the jolts of the world wonderfully.

HE that pryeth into every cloud may be stricken with a thunderbolt.

THERE are times when the meeting of the past and the present is sensibly felt, from their strange contrast. We have all seen two rivers unite and flow on in peace, mingling their waters together so gradually, that the line of their junction can scarcely be told; but many have beheld two torrents rushing down in fury, like contending armies, and, for a time, struggling in a whirlpool, ere they blend and rush away.

LITERATURE is an avenue to glory, ever open for those ingenious men who are deprived of honours and of wealth.

A man's works make a man of him.

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