

WOMAN'S WORK IN THE CAUSE OF TEMPERANCE.

THE greatest objector to the interference of the weaker sex with the prerogatives of the "lords of creation" can scarcely go so far as to state that women should be "silent" on this pre-eminently social and domestic question. As home, for the most part, is the place where intoxication, with its countless train of evils, makes its destructive inroads, there, most certainly, should be stationed a powerful opposing force. St. Paul says women are to "guide the house;" and, in the Old Testament, one of the essentials of the good woman's, that she should "look well to the ways of her household." These texts from God's Word give a power and authority to women in their homes which no one may gainsay, and which, if exercised in the glorious cause of temperance with the discretion a good woman is supposed to possess, is surely capable of diminishing, to an almost unlimited extent, the horrible vice of drunkenness.

But, unfortunately, most women have to conquer two great enemies within, before they can successfully attack the foes without; these enemies are, Ignorance and Self-indulgence.

It is perfectly astonishing to find the ignorance that prevails on the subject of intoxicating drinks, and the immense number of women who think they are a necessary of life; when, in reality, instead of saving or prolonging existence, they kill prematurely tens of thousands.

It is a disputed point whether alcohol is useful even in disease, but in ordinary conditions of health it has been proved, time after time, that exercise, fatigue, and the cares and functions of maternity, can all be borne and performed better without alcohol than with it. Dr. Edward Smith, in his "Practical Dietary," lately published, and dedicated to Mrs. Gladstone, the wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, says, speaking of ardent spirits: "They should not find place in dietetic arrangements;" of wine he says, "It is quite unnecessary under the ordinary conditions of health;" and of beer and porter, "While we cannot deny them the position of food, it may be doubted whether they are necessary ones, and whether others may not be found which offer the same advantage at a less cost;" and "indeed it is impossible to call them a necessary food." All these are admissions from a non-teetotaler, and, of course, pre-supposes these articles are what they profess to be; but, would the limits of this paper permit, volumes might be referred to, which prove that alcohol is not only unnecessary, but injurious under ordinary circumstances.

If women could only be persuaded to inform their minds, by reading the best authors on sanitary and dietetic arrangements, they would soon be convinced that spirits, wine, and beer are neither useful for their own health, nor that of their families.

It seems strange that people will travel by railway, send messages by electricity, and avail themselves of the countless improvements of the age, but, in the matter of intoxicating drinks, they will not admit of a new light; the old, old system of filling the stomach with the atrocious compounds which pass under the name of wine, beer, and spirits, must be persevered in, even if the heavens should fall.

If this ignorance among those who "guide the house" should be overcome, one great step forward will be gained, and one great foe banished.

Self-indulgence is the next enemy to be mastered.

That the form in which alcohol is presented to our acquired taste is gratifying to it is useless to deny; and that it gives an apparent stimulus in fatigue and weakness is no doubt true; but when the frightful array of evils which attends its abuse by one or more of far too many families are placed in the balance against the paltry advantages *apparently*, not really gained by indulgence in them, how the latter kicks the beam? and what an amount of responsibility rests on the woman who should "look well to the ways of her household," if she has touched, tasted, handled the doubly dangerous and accursed thing. One might almost say the thing in which Satan lies hid, and though she may not pass the bounds of moderation, alas! her son, on whose tall and vigorous young frame she looks with pride, may, by following up the path in the first steps of which he has been led by her, plunge headlong into a sea of vice and misery, in which soul and body will alike be lost! Imagine the feelings of a sensitive and right-minded woman, on seeing her son for the first time come reeling home; then let her imagine the company he may meet night after night, excited with drink and sin; — it is too horrible.

Now, the greatest part of these evils might be avoided, if she who "guides the house" would take up her true and womanly work in the cause of temperance, and use her powerful influence with DISCRETION; first, by herself abstaining from the use of alcohol, and then, if she has not the power to banish it entirely from her dwelling, to begin kindly, little by little, a gentle warning here, a remonstrance there, a sanitary or dietetic argument now and then, and sometimes a positive command. It is impossible, however, to lay down rules, but there is no doubt that sooner or later efforts made prayerfully and JUDICIOUSLY, will be crowned with success, and she who has "guided the house" so that "the ways" of it are right, will have been the means of making valuable members of society, and good citizens of the world.

The stone blindness that seems to possess many unhappy women, unhappy through the drinking habits of father, husband, or son, is positively amazing. They cannot or will not see how necessary it is to refuse its use steadily and constantly themselves; for how can they expect others, who have greater temptations to drink, to become sober when they, the stayers at home, will have their wine and beer. Some may say that man, being the nobler animal, ought to set them the example; and so they ought, but they do not; so the woman who "guides the house" must do it instead, and there is not the shadow of a doubt, that if she will use the power and influence she really possesses, EACH IN HER OWN HOME, this country might be rid almost entirely of the stigma now attached to it, of being A NATION OF DRUNKARDS.

D. M.

THE REAPER AND PUBLICAN.

IN the harvest of 1848 a young woman, who was an abstainer, went to reside in the country. Being out of a situation she sought and obtained employment as a reaper. She thought with an anxiety she might do good, and one evening, after a hard day's work, she assembled together, in the place where she was staying, ten or three children, and began to speak to them about abstinence. She told them