

In the face of these facts it is astonishing how eastern people cling to the idea that in this country prohibition means no liquor. Yet I have constantly met young men who have been sent up here to cure them of drinking habits; indeed, the town at which I am at present staying seems to be a kind of refuge for inebriates—a refuge, however, which never cures its victims, but invariably drags them down to the lowest scale to which their appetite can reduce them.

Prohibition, then, in the North-West in the way it is at present carried out, it must be confessed, is a failure. Under another system it might attain a certain measure of success, but it is very doubtful whether prohibitory measures, under any form whatever, could be of real or lasting benefit. The whole system of endeavouring to compel a nation to become sober or moral in any way by legislative measures, no matter how incapable its people may be of self-control, is fundamentally and fatally wrong. Here, as everywhere, the true remedy is found in educating the community up to the standard of choosing right when wrong lies within its reach. Respect a man and he will respect himself. Treat him like a child, and he will indulge with all the wild thoughtlessness of unreasoning childhood in the follies which manhood's knowledge has taught him. The state of affairs here is a very good exemplification of the truth of these facts.

The settlers are told they may not have a certain luxury. This is revolting to them, for they see clearly that their own judgment should be the proper guide whether they should have it or not. The desire for the forbidden something becomes ten-fold stronger because of the difficulties thrown in the way of obtaining it. A sullen determination to evade the law, which is as a rule crowned with success, is the result, or a mad debauch follows, in which each one tries to out do his neighbour in brutish excess, on the principle of getting as much as he can while opportunity lasts. Thus the very law which professes to make the people sober is at once the cause of abnormal desire or mad indulgence. To tamper with the free agency of man, an eternal and God-given gift, has ever been a dangerous and useless experiment. Appeal, rather, to his strong spirit of manhood, which prompts him to refuse to yield to temptation, no matter how powerful it may be, instead of weakening his will and dethroning his self-respect by the cast-iron restriction of the "Thou shalt not!"

This method, of course, would be very unacceptable to those who are in love with the *theory* of prohibition but have never seen the utter worthlessness of its practical working; it would be scoffed at by the rabid "temperance" lecturer, with whom vituperative epithet very often takes the place of argument. Notwithstanding, however, the sneers of the apostles of total abstinence, I would urge that since prohibition in this country is proved to be an utter failure, the people be freed from the trammels of a useless and hated restriction, and that it be superseded by this other system, higher and better, in that it gives credit

to human nature for more exalted purpose and stronger resolve, and tends to develop and nourish in a people whatever there may be in them of true manhood and moral stamina.

F. CARROLL MACDONALD.

WIT AND HUMOUR.

If a person were asked to define the boundaries of wit and humour, he might, without reflection, reply that there is no sharp line of demarcation between them. But I think that on further consideration he will change his opinion and pronounce the line clear and distinct.

Wit is generally the outcome of a keen logical and critical intellect, while humour is found in all classes. In fact, the sense of humour is often very well developed in some individuals who cannot express in words what tickles their fancy. True humour springs as much from the heart as from the head, and must always be tempered and is usually accompanied by good sense, moderation, and sensibility. It is the plaster which heals all the wounds that wit, irony, and sarcasm may inflict. Wit, although it always carries away our reasoning faculties by its acuteness and penetration, does not always excite our sympathies nor mellow our minds as true humour does. A humorous person may not necessarily be a witty person, but a witty person is generally a humorous one.

The wit and humour of a nation are as characteristic as any of its other traits. The typical down-east American whom Judge Haliburton has so well portrayed in his amusing sketches, is essentially a boaster. He abuses foreign institutions and extols his own. He tells the *Eye-talians* that his "Niag" will put out their "Vesuve" in ten minutes. He calls the Alps a bit of risin' ground that he came over in his matudinal walk. He is afraid of walking about in England for fear of stepping over the edge.

He has a tendency to exaggerate. The negro that Lowell describes was so black that charcoal made a white spot on him. What stories we have of the War of Secession! From all that I can gather there was only one private in that war, the rest were generals, colonels, majors, &c.

With the western Yank this tendency to exaggerate seems to grow in direct ratio to his distance west. He goes beyond exaggeration, he is, in fact, a fluent and picturesque liar. How many improbable stories do we hear of animals, mountains, trees, desperadoes, and cyclones from the far west? The trees in California are so high that it takes two men and a boy to see up to the top of them; the tornadoes so fierce and swift that a Chinaman could, in lieu of a kite, fly an iron-shutter with a log-chain attached to it. Nature is on a big, large, and immense scale, and man must talk grandiloquently to describe her phenomena. The rude life of the western man has begot in him a love of simplicity, as an eastern man once learned