

other replies, "that he ought to be more charitable, for, assuredly, he will, by such strong statements, damage the cause of truth."

The man of truth, still feeling anxious that the liar should be convinced that he is wrong, attacks him upon lower grounds. He tells him that speaking the truth makes a man better respected in the world, and states his own case, and many others, who by a strict adherence to truth, under all circumstances, are happy and respected. His opponent says, "I do not doubt any of your facts: they may be all true; still, they are only exceptions to a rule." "What!" says the other, "I could tell you of thousands." "Very well," coolly replies the other, "then I must be the exception to your rule, for, most assuredly, no one can prove that I don't get on better by lying than I could by telling the truth; indeed, in my case, your scheme is quite impracticable."

In a similar manner might the honest man argue with a thief:—

"To steal is to do wrong," says the honest man. "I do not see it in that light," says the thief.

The honest man does not think it needful to go into details knowing dishonesty to be a violation of a fundamental moral law; but he must go into detail, for his opponent is a logician, and believes himself a Christian; and, therefore, demands the why?

The honest man repeats the eighth commandment. His opponent tells him that that is a partial text, and reminds him of the jewels that the Israelites took with them in their flight from Egypt.

The man of truth, to prevent text-fighting, tells him that "The whole scope of the religion of the Bible is plain dealing between man and man." His opponent replies that "it consists in faith," and he (the thief) "is very much afraid that his opponent is trusting too much to the carnal part of the Bible, and forgetting the spiritual results;" and, with fervour, he wishes for the spread of honesty through the land, "but not by the paltry and one-sided way of practising it" himself, "but by praying for its general adoption."

Similar to the above are the scenes constantly occurring between those who drink and those who abstain. Scripture is prostituted, common sense and the experience of thousands are set at nought in the vain attempt to conserve the drinking usages.

"You should give up intoxicating drinks," says the teetotaler. "I think otherwise," says the drinker. "But you are surely aware that they do a great deal of harm, and it is our duty to forego whatever tends to the furtherance of evil, and to use our best efforts to promote virtue. Strong drink makes men drunkards; and, as Scripture teaches us to pray that we may not be led into temptation, it must be a violation of that prayer to take that which is proved to be a rock of stumbling to the best of men."

"But the letter of the Bible is opposed to your principle," says the drinker; "Christ made wine. It is spoken of as cheering the heart of God and man—it is especially recommended to Timothy; and, therefore, it cannot be wrong for me to take that which had God's favour, Christ's sanction, and Paul's recommendation."

The teetotaler reminds him that he cannot prove that the wine thus alluded to was intoxicating, and goes on to show "that, as a great many centuries have elapsed since that time, it is not likely that the wine now used was identical with the wine used in Judæa 1800 years ago. Men wore coats in those days—men wear coats now; but no one supposes that in shape or material they are the same, although they are the same in name; and it would be as logical to say that you drink the same wine that cheered God's heart, that was made by Christ, and prescribed to Timothy, when you drink a pint of port or modern Madeira. That it was not

the same, and if not the same, therefore of no use in the present controversy, is my opinion," says the teetotaler.

His opponent observes he always thought these teetotal doctrines would lead to infidelity, and now he sees in this trying to evade direct Scripture texts, proof positive. "That the wine was intoxicating there can be no doubt. Was it not wine that stupified Noah—that overcame Lot—that is spoken of as having caused redness of eyes, babblings, contentions, and all kinds of strife—and does not modern wine produce like results?" Having thus delivered himself, it is vain for the teetotaler to tell him to bear in mind that this is not the kind of wine spoken of as a blessing, but that this kind is invariably pronounced a curse. His opponent has already expended his logic, and now contents himself by saying, "Oh, beware how you supersede the Gospel, by the vain imaginings of man."

"But," says the teetotaler, "you must surely admit that these drinks hurt the constitution—that 2,000 medical men have pronounced them to be the cause of much human misery, including disease and crime?"

But the drinker answers that "he cares nothing about what doctors say—he knows that they have often done himself good; and, therefore, they cannot be bad." "Besides," he says, "it is the abuse, not the use, that causes misery and the other evils complained of. God sent them as gifts to be used, and not abused; and, therefore, it is blasphemous not to be thankful for them."

"But," says the teetotaler, "you forget that the abuse is involved in their use. God sent the grape and the grain to be used with thankfulness and enjoyed with propriety; but man's inventions have opposed God's design, and the innocent grape is made to yield a deadly poison—a poison that not only destroys the physical frame, but poisons our moral and spiritual existence."

And as the ghastly array of ruined hopes, of emaciated frames, and characterless men appear before his mental eye, he waxes warm in his denunciation of these drinks, and the system that supports them in society, and further reminds the drinker "that we are in the midst of misery the most intense and heart-rending;" and he thinks "time would be better employed in meeting the evil with manful energy than by quibbling about texts." He urges him to "think for himself, uninfluenced by prejudice, and he will find that not only is the mere letter, but also the grand rationale of the Gospel on the side of teetotalism, and that he is convinced, while Christian men are in a hostile attitude to this principle, they are not doing all that can be done, to hasten the advent of Christ's reign on earth—that the man whose love for his fellow-man is so cold, that he will not forego a gratification to save them, is not yet initiated into the Christian life. These and kindred facts the teetotaler urges with manly zeal. The drinker, unable to meet broad facts, although he is able to quibble at small details, tells him to be charitable, for such strong statements will assuredly damage his good cause; and goes on to say "that he is very friendly to the cause; but really these assertions reflect upon good Christian men."

The teetotaler would be unworthy to be called man, if he, at the back of such hypocritical cowardice, condescended to any sham charity.

We have thus seen that lying and stealing might be as well supported by arguments, as the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and yet no sham charity is ever demanded by Christians for liars or thieves. The greatest evil of such vices consists in their effects upon the person who commits them. The degradation of man, the image of his God arises from all three—sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, to the wretched victim himself.

The man who, for the first time, tells a deliberate lie, feels acutely his guilt. The man who, for the first time, robs