

"Of that cup which is an apt emblem of the wrath of God;" (Rev. xiv. 10 : xvi. 19); which Solomon, the type of the Prince of Peace, inspired by the Holy Ghost, commands his son "not to look upon," seeing that at the last it "biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder;" (Prov. xxiii. 29, 35;) that "wine wherein is excess," or destruction to the body and soul of man, to his interests in time and eternity; (Eph. v. 18;) "the cup of devils;" 1st Cor. x. 21;) "the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps;" (Deut. xxxii. 33.) Depend upon it, Sir, that as long as the wine, which receives its distinctive character from "alcohol," the principle of physical, intellectual, and moral ruin, to mankind, is continued to be dispensed to professing Christians at the Lord's Table, so long will not only the Lord's day be openly and flagitiously violated, and especially by "riotous and drunkenness;" and other ordinances of God's house be despised by increasing multitudes; but Christianity will be as it is now a by word and a reproach among heathen nations, and crime, poverty, disease, and profligacy will be multiplied indefinitely in spite of all puny legislative attempts to stem the overwhelming torrent. Legislation indeed! Show me the legislation that will avail against the Divine decrees. Point out the law which will do good in defiance of God's law. Governments may "frame mischief by a law," but in doing so they are forging destructive engines which will recoil upon their own heads, and the heads of their abettors and dupes, with tremendous impetuosity, and if they do not repent will involve them in irretrievable destruction.

There is no lack of evidence to satisfy any candid inquirer after truth, that it is the law of God, that "unfermented fruit of the vine" in its fluid form, and not intoxicating wine, should be used to represent the blood of the Lamb, at the Lord's Table, and yet governments in the face of this all but essential doctrine of Christianity, upon which the happiness of thousands, yea millions of the human race depends, impelled by the mighty power of ecclesiastical organizations, mutilate and vitiate their acts to prevent intemperance, pauperism and crime, by introducing into them reservations in behalf of the sale of intoxicating wine for sacramental purposes, while that of every species of alcoholic liquor for dietetic uses is prohibited under the severest penalties.

It has often been asserted with apparently some degree of triumph, that there is no command of Scripture against the use of intoxicating wine. How such an assertion could have been made by men intimately acquainted with the sacred volume, it is not easy to explain. The fact is quite the reverse. Although "the blessed gospel" as has been well remarked by Archdeacon Jeffrey, "is not a book of casuistry, nor a statute book of laws," yet in the case of "wine and strong drink," the general plan of the Divine procedure in leaving specific acts and things to be judged of by men with the discerning, intellectual and moral faculties with which God has endowed them; seems in a remarkable manner to have been departed from by infinite wisdom. The catalogue supplies general laws for man's government, but it does not condescend to enumerate the various modes in which persons may violate these laws. Under the 6th commandment, for example, which is—"Thou shalt not kill"—there is no enumeration of the various means by which murder may be committed; there is no catalogue annexed, of the different poisonous substances, to be found in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, by which life may be destroyed in a more or less summary manner. You find no where in the Bible any legal prohibition of the use of opium or arsenic, or any

other poison known to the ancients. Yet it cannot be denied that danger might have been incurred, and may still be incurred, by individuals, and even death be the result from the ignorant or intentional use of them. But the Almighty has acted differently in regard to "wine and strong drink." They seem to possess certain qualities which might entitle them to be included in the same category with opium; but universal experience has proved that they are articles which surpass that poison, in their power to lead groups of mankind astray from the paths of virtue.\* They possess peculiar seductive properties, by which they often irresistibly lure multitudes to destruction; opium eating being a solitary, while spirit drinking is often a social vice, the prolific parent of innumerable crimes, the destroyer of thousands of souls, the implacable enemy of Jesus and His religion.

It is on account of these singularly perverting and destructive qualities possessed by alcoholic drinks, (may it not be safely and reverently believed,) that Jehovah has singled them out, and made them conspicuous as objects to be shunned by man; and this He has done in instances too numerous to be recapitulated here, and in a great variety of ways, all calculated to arrest the attention, command the conscience, and regulate the will, of all those who consent to examine the question dispassionately and without prejudice.

Is not drunkenness repeatedly denounced as shutting out from the kingdom of God; and is it not true that "principals include accessories, that is whatever approaches, or comes near to them, or as a tendency to them?" Is not the use of alcoholic drinks in man's normal state of health included under this canon of interpretation, seeing it has been admitted by the physiologist, that it is the nature of these drinks to induce a habit which constitutes confirmed drunkenness.† Hear what Dr. Beecher says with uncommon power upon this subject. "But if all the

\*An eminent medical authority, Sir Benjamin Brodie, in a late work (Physiological researches), says: "The effect of opium when taken into the stomach is not to stimulate, but to soothe the nervous system. It may be otherwise in some instances, but these are rare exceptions to the general rule. The opium taker is in a passive state satisfied with his own dreamy condition while under the influence of the drug. He is useless, but not mischievous. It is quite otherwise with alcoholic liquors. When Bishop and his partner, murdered the little boy, in order that they might sell his body, it appeared in evidence that they prepared themselves for the task by a plentiful libation of gin. The same course is observed by house-breakers and others, who engage in desperate criminal undertakings. It is worthy of observation also that opium is much less deleterious to the individual than Gin or brandy."

The Scientific Basis of Prohibition by

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† Would you think it right for children to have indecent pictures put into their hands, or any means practised with them, which could have the least tendency to pollute their comparatively innocent imaginations, and lead to the greatest breaches of the 7th commandment; yet there is no direct and explicit prohibition of such obscene pictures in the Bible, although it is implied in the command against adultery. Is it not wrong, independent of express prohibition to give the wine which is a mocker, and the strong drink which is raging, to children or adults to excite the ferocious appetite for alcohol, which is not natural, but produced by its peculiar stimulus?