

dangerous feature of it which we are more particularly considering—is the obtaining of spiritual strength. Human appliances, which, at the best affect but the exterior, must fail to effect a real cure. Nothing but the grace of God, and therefore, as far as we are concerned, nothing but the use of the means of grace which God has provided in His Church, can be of real benefit. There is, however, one means of grace which should be especially used; I mean *self-denial* or *fasting*. I need not quote my authority for this. If it is the body that is usurping improper control it must be kept under, and brought into subjection. But not only do I believe that regular, systematic self-denial on the part of every Christian, is one of the principal cures for this disease, I go further; I believe that one cause, yes the great cause, of the prevalence of intemperance is the neglect, aye the almost general neglect of this duty. The Church undoubtedly prescribes certain days and seasons for fasting, but how are these observed by the generality of her members? Of the families which constitute our congregations, how many make any pretence of distinguishing between these days and any others? Can we not find some nominal Churchmen ready to brand their Clergyman as a heretic if he speak of a fast? What wonder that there are drunkards!

I care not for the boastings of success made by humanly devised societies. I have no faith in any of the prescriptions which are the emanations of the human intellect; there can be no success, no real cure, until on each fast day each member of the Church is ready to accept the advice of good old Herbert:

“The Scriptures bid us fast: the Church says now;
Give to thy mother what thou would'st allow
To every corporation.”

There was One Who “came eating and drinking,” and who was at the same time the great Advocate of true temperance. He has told us how a man may be His disciple—“Let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.”

“Who goeth on the way which Christ hath gone
Is much more sure to meet with Him, than one
That travelleth by-ways.

Perhaps my God, though He be farre before,
May turn, and take me by the hand, and more,
May strengthen my decayes.”