

in regard to the lawfulness of abstinence from intoxicating drink, that there are several instances of such abstinence recorded in the Scriptures, with the pointed approbation of God, and some of them the subjects of his positive commands. Thus, for example, he commanded the Priests of old: "The Lord spake unto Aaron saying, Do not drink wine, nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations." And are not Christians now a royal priesthood unto God, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to him by Jesus Christ? And ought they not, as such, to abstain from those intoxicating drinks, by the influence of which, they also, like Aaron's sons, may be led to offer strange fire unto the Lord?

Again, the Nazarites, when their vow was upon them, and they were separated unto the Lord, were commanded "to drink no wine, nor strong drink, nor vinegar of wine, nor vinegar of strong drink, nor to drink any liquor of grapes." And are not the followers of Christ, Nazarites to God? And are they not, as such, under a perpetual vow of separation from the world, and self-denying holiness and devotion? Again, of Samson and John the Baptist, and others, it is said, that they "drank neither wine nor strong drink," and Timothy himself, after our Saviour's time, was acting so rigidly on the principle of total abstinence, that nothing less than an Apostolic injunction was sufficient to induce him to take a little wine, and that—let it be carefully observed—only as a medicine for the sake of his health.

But especially, consider the case of the Rechabites, who are supposed to have been descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law, and are mentioned in the Scriptures with great approbation from God. Their case is a most interesting one. They formed the first Temperance Society of which we read. They acted upon the principle of total abstinence. The circumstances of their case, as far as we can learn, are some-