

use. It is not all classes, however, who can take beer with advantage. With those of a plethoric tendency it is apt to produce headache, heaviness and other sensations described as "biliousness." The majority of wines, more especially the natural unfortified grades, are free from this tendency, and there is scarcely any condition, whether of health or disease, in which they are likely to disagree.

Were our light native wines, many of which compare favourably with the clarets of Europe, to be used in place of much of the vile stuff vended under the name of tea and coffee, it would conduce greatly to the general health of the community. Much less would be heard of those intricate nervous diseases of women and children which baffle the skill of our best physicians, and which are mainly induced by inordinate tea-drinking. The dyspepsia of the Americans, due to the destructive action of the tannic acid of the tea upon the coats of the stomach, is almost unknown in wine countries. *Tabes mesenterica*, which annually carries off thousands of our children, is rare in France, where light wines diluted with one-third of water take the place of tea.

It is amusing to note the ingenious shuffles by which Prohibitionists seek to evade the natural consequences of their false position, even going so far as to pervert the plain words of Scripture in an endeavour to maintain their position. For instance, they claim that the wine of Scripture was unfermented, and insist that it was therefore the pure juice of the grape. It would be a bad day for all the doctrines taught in the Bible if they were subjected to the same kind of reasoning which is supposed to prove the above. The wine used in the Eucharist, being typical, needs to be red. Now chemistry tells us that it is impossible to obtain a red unfermented wine, without the aid of foreign ingredients or by boiling. Except in a very rare variety the flesh of the grape is colourless. The colouring matter resides in the skin, and is in a fixed or insoluble condition, in which state the natural acids of the fruit fail to extract it. The moment alcohol, produced by fermentation, is present it becomes soluble, and yields its colour to the wine. It is possible, however, to obtain this colour by boiling with sugar to a thick syrup, but those who may fancy that this was the way the Hebrews prepared wine should remember that sugar is a modern invention, and was quite unknown to the Jews.

The following are some of the methods pursued, according to chemical analysis, of preparing the so-called unfermented wine. In the majority of instances poor thin clarets were subjected to distillation to get rid of the alcohol, sugar was added to sweeten and thicken, and elderberry to restore the colour partially destroyed in the boiling. In others the juice had been boiled with sugar to a thick syrup, and *salicylic acid* added to prevent fermentation. It should be noticed here that *salicylic acid* has injurious properties, and that chemists have condemned its use in any article of food as an adulteration. In not a few instances which fell under the writer's own observation, *cider* sweetened and coloured has been sold under the name of unfermented wine, and these samples contained a notable quantity of alcohol. The above will give a fair idea of the sophisticated abominations that are being forced upon the public under the cloak of religion and philanthropy.

The only possible way to obtain a wine that will not change, that will have the fine colour and exquisite bouquet, together with the invigorating and beneficial qualities that a good wine should possess, and all these without adulteration, is to permit the grapejuice to ferment naturally by its own fermentive principle—its lovely bloom, that invariable concomitant of a properly-matured grape, and which an ever beneficent nature has evidently designed for the very purpose to which man is so much indebted, viz., the production of a wholesome, beneficial, stimulating, invigorating, pure, natural wine. Because a few abuse this gift (what good gift of God has not been abused?) mis-called philanthropists seek to deprive mankind of a beverage sanctioned by Scripture, the usage of our Saviour, recommended by St. Paul, and extolled by the learned and good of all ages. The great chemist Thudichum,\* in the close of a recent address on wine, said:

'So trinkt ihn denn, und lässt uns alle wege,  
Und freun und fröhlich sein,  
Und wüsster wir wo jemand traurig läge,  
Wir gäben ihn den Wein.'

Aye, wine is a sure cure for melancholy; and if there were more good wine in the world there would be less of melancholy. All factors which promote happiness promote health, and as wine promotes happiness it promotes health. But it does so on condition that it be æsthetically used, viz., in accordance with the dictates of feeling, reason and science."

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## OUR FUNERAL SYSTEM.

AMONGST the many social customs sanctioned by time-honoured observance there are few in which reformation is more urgently required than in our present expensive funeral system. That the system is a bad one all must acknowledge. But the courage to brave the fancied sneers of neighbours, and the ever-present idea that the last earthly journey of the departed should be marked by an utter absence of the slightest semblance of meanness, causes the poorer portion of the community to shun with an unaffected honour the nearest approach to a shabby funeral, whilst the somewhat natural ostentation of recently-acquired wealth, common in a mercantile country like ours, renders a portion at least of our wealthier classes unable to deny itself the melancholy satisfaction engendered by the indulgence in an expensive burial.

As far as the wealthy are concerned it would not be so bad if the matter went no further. Unfortunately, however, for society generally, the matter does not rest at this stage. The number of carriages, the costly flowers, crosses, immortelles, almost covering the handsome "casket" of the dead Cæsar, are all duly remembered and gossiped over by poorer spectators, and when their relatives have paid that debt which nature demands with equal exactness from the rich and the lowly, is it surprising that their hearts seek to offer a last public tribute to the departed which the shrunken purse of poverty can but little afford?

The foolish custom which demands that friends, and even acquaintances, shall attend our funerals is a potent factor in the encouragement of display and expense on these occasions. Real grief shuns publicity, and yet how often are we shocked by the sight of a funeral train largely composed of followers whose conversation and bearing mark only too well the utter absence of grief, and too often even of respect. If a large funeral be the proper outward manifestation of inward grief, what a deeply-lamented race are our much-abused tavern-keepers. Every one knows that this class, though exposed to constant vituperation in life, have in death, as a general rule, the most largely attended funerals—for the same reason, one would suppose, that the wife who has been most abused when living almost invariably rests beneath the finest tombstone and the most touching epitaph after being driven to her last long sleep.

Let us be thankful that we are spared that wretched travesty on grief, the now almost obsolete "mute" system, which used to be so prevalent on the other side of the Atlantic, where the man with the most rueful countenance and the ready tear, born of frequent intoxication, was considered more worthy of hire than his less indulgent companions in grief.

The writer was for some years secretary to one of the largest of our benevolent associations, composed almost entirely of the humbler classes, and it has oftentimes been his lot in the discharge of his official duties to be brought face to face with the funeral question. The society paid one hundred dollars to the widow or nearest relative of a deceased member, and when handing over the benefit allowance it has occasionally been his manifest duty to suggest an economical funeral for the sake of those who are left; but almost invariably without the desired effect. One case in particular will illustrate the utter repugnance with which the masses regard the idea of a cheap and quiet funeral. The beneficiary of the association was a woman with several children, none of whom were able to offer any assistance, and, in addition to this, her old mother had for years been an inmate of an English workhouse. When handing to her the "death allowance" the question arose as to what sort of funeral would be best under the circumstances, and the writer suggested "by all means as quiet and cheap a one as possible." He ought to have known better. The dictionary has never yet been compiled which contained words sufficient to properly describe the supreme contempt with which this well-meant proposal was received by "the relict" and her sympathizing neighbours. The further suggestion that "sentimental regard for the dead should not be allowed to interfere with our manifest duty to the living" was but the pouring of oil on the flames of outraged grief. The "sense of the meeting" decided that "a good send-off is the least we can do for poor Jack," and the result was a funeral that cost \$95. There were hacks employed at \$2.50 each, and not a soul occupied them. But this is the custom, and of what value is a funeral that is not according to the mode? Doubtless the funeral alluded to would be copied at some future date by some even poorer neighbour on that street. If the late Mr. Patsy O'Rourke's remains have been honoured with a first-class wake and funeral, does not the to-day bereaved widow of Mr. Flannigan yearn to give that departed home-ruler an equally imposing "send-off"? Of course she does; and so it is with all of us. The "missing link" is not the only imitative race.

Some people blame the undertakers for much of the unnecessary expenditure by the almost unlimited credit which "the trade" offers. They say

\* Health Exhibition Lit. "Æsthetical Use of Wine." Thudichum.