

fact is, that a majority of this class are a poor "feckless," "fusionless" lot, and are drunkards instead of being vicious in some other direction. They have unstable minds naturally, and have little or no power to resist any habit which may contribute to their personal pleasure or comfort. From first to last, selfishness and gratification are at the bottom of their conduct. They like to be jolly and feel good, let whatever will suffer. Their desires override every other consideration. It is this element in their nature which makes so many of the so-called reformed drunkards profligates in their lives. If you take the highest intellectual type of such as seen in the peripatetic temperance lecturer, we find in a large number of such, habits of gross immorality of life, after their reform from drinking. It usually takes the lascivious form, but if not, their unstable minds show their warp in some other direction. Our ears are filled with the wail that, "The demon, alcohol, is continually dragging down to perdition the *best* of our country." This is supreme nonsense. With very few exceptions, as has often been said, every one who goes by the alcohol line would reach their destination by some other highway were this closed to passenger traffic. In the large number of cases, vice of all kinds is an effect, not a cause, a symptom or sign, not the disease. A nature by heritage or habit is weak and defective, hence vicious. Bad example, corrupt precepts, and contaminating surroundings are to many depraved natures only the match to ignite the powder, whose explosive power needed only the fire to manifest what was lying latent. The lighted match was only the *occasion*, not the *cause* of the liberated force. So whiskey *per se* makes no man inherently shiftless, improvident, lazy, roguish, a poltroon or brute, unless these are in his nature. These bad qualities must have been original factors in his being. Drunkenness only puts the man off his guard; when drunk he acts naturally. *In vino veritas* is an old Latin adage which contains philosophic truth.

Earnest temperance reformers of a genuine stamp are often disappointed at seeing their reclaimed friends so deficient in original qualities of goodness. When the drunken element is subtracted from the equation, it is found that little manhood is left. This applies to even those who have acquired this propensity of drinking by habit. After many repetitions of evil or good the bias in

that direction is formed and it is said to have become a second nature. This is strictly true, and any course of conduct continually pursued assumes a normal habit and virtually becomes a part of our nature. In this law of being lies the great resources of evil. "The devil," we are told, "delights to fish in muddy water," and here he indulges in his piscatorial pursuits to his heart's content. Physical disability, disease and moral obliquity are largely preventible. This is apparent everywhere in nature and in the region of law, without any resort to Utopian speculations. For intemperance the only effectual remedy is prohibition; but this must include all intoxicating drugs, or our last end will be worse than the first. Nature's cure for crime and vice is extermination. It is an economic function of nature everywhere operating and is "a survival of the fittest." As a rule, the debased classes are short-lived. "The bloody and deceitful man shall not live out half his days," is not the average of to-day. Such live, as a rule, less than half the average of life. Take a thousand of social pariahs, such as thieves, prostitutes, cheats, chronic drunkards, and rascals of all kinds, and watch their careers and it will be found that they are short-lived because of their profligate habits. Their weak natures become witnesses, judge, and executioner, and perform the office of extermination with commendable despatch. It is true the burglar, the forger, or the head of a band of outlaws, may be a sober and steady man with all his wits about him, but such are few in comparison to the rank and file. It is well for the community that so few leaders in evil follow a correct life, and that the masses of corruption are weeded out by nature's inexorable law.

History shows that in the profligate age, when the aristocracy revelled in all kinds of debauchery their direct descendants were soon destroyed because of immorality. Very few of the nobility of to-day can trace their immediate line of ancestry back two centuries. Tennyson's "daughter of a hundred earls," is a poetic fiction. Society has been said to be like a vat of good wine, scum and froth at the top, dregs and sediment at the bottom, and good, pure, clean liquor in the middle. Vice is a clarifier of a thorough kind, and its morbid work skims off the skum and draws off the dregs. This deadly agent improves our people, and were it not for its purifying