



Shakers—Early Teetotalers.

The Shakers are the oldest of the communistic societies in the United States. According to Nordhoff, who writes an account of them, 'they are also the most thoroughly organized, and in some respects the most successful and flourishing.' Mount Lebanon, as their parent society is called, was established in 1792. We refer to them now for their early advocacy of total abstinence. As far back as 1817, we find these verses written by them, which are meant to enforce its practice on their members:—

'From all intoxicating drink
Ancient believers did abstain;
Then say, good brethren, do you think
That such a cross was all in vain?

'Inebriation, we allow,
First paved the way for am'rous deeds:
Then why should poisonous spirits now
Be ranked among our common needs?

'As an apothecary drug
Its wondrous virtues some will plead;
And hence we find the stupid slug
A morning dram does often need.

'Fatigue or want of appetite
At noon will crave a little more,
And so the same complaints at night
Are just as urgent as before.

'By want of sleep, and this and that,
His thirst for liquor is increased,
Till he becomes a bloated sot—
The very scarlet-colored beast.

'Why, then, should any soul insist
On such pernicious, poisonous stuff?
Malignant spirits! you're dismissed;
You have possessed us long enough.'

And then there was afterwards this note appended:—'All spirituous liquors should be kept under the care of the nurses, that no drams in any case whatever should be dispensed to persons in common health, and that frivolous excuses of being unwell should not be admitted.

'Slug,' in the third verse, is a 'cant term for a sluggard and selfish fellow, a kind of creature,' adds Nordhoff, 'they have pretty thoroughly extirpated.' We wish we were in sight of such an extirpation. The prevalence of the 'slug' among us is a curse and disgrace.—'Christian Age.'

A Secular Paper Asks: 'Why Not Cut it Out Altogether?'

It is a matter of fact which no one questions that more failures and loss and ruin come from drink than from any other cause. It ought to follow that any one who could do anything to lessen the extent of such ravages would gladly do whatever was possible to that end.

'If there were any way that one could keep a human being from the curse of tuberculosis would any creature on earth hesitate to help? Yet the drink habit causes far more wretchedness than even the dread white plague. Can any one fail to see the need of doing his or her part, so far as possible, to lessen the volume of that misery and loss?

Any member of any community is as much responsible for the kind of young man which will grow in that community as are the teachers in great university centres. Each one helps to make easier the path of demoralization and weakness, or marks out more clearly the steps which lead to self-control and freedom.

If there were only one human life wrecked in all the world by the grip of alcohol, all the rest of humanity could well fore-swear its use, rather than let another go down before its curse. But when not one, but countless life-wrecks are swept down before the plague, how can any who loves

his fellow creatures fail to say that of all this misery and loss his skirts must be clear?

Fail to say that of all the heartaches and the poverty, the anxieties and the miseries engendered by this terrible blight, there shall not, by any possible chance, be one jot or tittle more because of any word or act of his, and that as far as may be the weight of this awful burden shall rest more lightly on human hearts because of his honest and persistent efforts.—'Rocky Mountain News.'

An Old Legend.

There is an old legend of a man who sold his soul to the devil. The conditions were: For a certain number of years this man was to have all his desires gratified, at the expiration of which time his soul was to be forfeited.

When the time agreed upon had expired this man was unwilling to fulfil his part of the contract, and asked the devil upon what terms he could be released. The reply was: 'If you will curse your God I will release you.'

'No,' said the man, 'I cannot curse the Being whose nature is love. Give me something less fearfully wicked.'

'Then kill your father,' replied the devil, 'and you go free.'

'No,' answered the man; 'that is too horrible to think of. I will not commit so great a crime. Are there no other conditions?'

'One more,' replied the devil; 'you must get drunk.'

'That is a very easy thing to do,' the man answered. 'I cannot kill my father, I will not curse my God, but I can get drunk, and when I become sober all will be well.'

Accordingly he got drunk, and when in this condition chanced to meet his father, who upbraided him, which so excited the ire of the drunken and half-crazed man that he slew his father, cursed his God, then fell dead.

Only a legend this particular case. But how true to the facts regarding the liquor curse!—'Christian Globe.'

A Promise is a Promise for Ever.

Once, when Abraham Lincoln was a member of the House of Representatives, according to a well-known story, a friend criticised him for his seeming rudeness in declining to test the rare wines provided by their host, urging as a reason for the reproof, 'There is certainly no danger of a man of your years and habits becoming addicted to its use.'

'I meant no disrespect, ohn,' answered Mr. Lincoln, 'but I promised my precious mother only a few days before she died that I would never use anything intoxicating as a beverage, and I consider that promise as binding to-day as it was the day I gave it.'

'There is a great difference between a child surrounded by a rough class of drinkers and a man in a home of refinement,' insisted the friend.

'But a promise is a promise for ever, John, and when made to a mother it is doubly binding,' replied Mr. Lincoln. They talk of the man behind the gun, And the deadly work that he has done; But much more deadly work, by far, Is done by the fellow behind the bar. They talk of the man behind the gun— Yet only in battle his work is done; But never ceases, in peace or war, The work of the man behind the bar.

—Selected.

No Liquor for Soldiers.

Sir Charles Napier, speaking to a regiment in Calcutta, said:—

'Don't drink. Let me tell you you have come to a country where if you drink you are dead men. Be sober and steady, and you will get on well; but if you drink, you're done for!'

He, and forty-four others were once attacked beneath a burning sun with sun-stroke, and he alone survived.

He accounted for his escape thus:—

'I do not drink, that is the secret; the sun has no ally in the liquor in my brains.'

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