

CONVENTIONS.

BY REV. A. E. GUNTER.
(Published by request of Convention.)
*Up, sanctify the people, and say, sanctify yourselves against tomorrow...

You are acquainted with this interesting item of sacred history. You have all read with interest the story of the taking of Jericho; that marvelous seven days siege; none like it in ancient or modern history.

Then they went up and took the city and that was all. No, that was not the end of it. That first city, the key to the whole land was to be destroyed utterly...

The whole thing must come out. In the beginning of the conquest of Canaan there must be a right start. Everything must come to a standstill, till the iniquity be put away; there can be no propensity in the camp, no success in the next day's victory where there is a defeat unless the guilty party be sought out and punished.

Each is the sin I brought today, the sin of intemperance, the sin involved in the liquor traffic. It is spreading its baleful influence all around; it is the enemy of all classes of society, the rich and poor, the old and young; it attacks every interest, and gives it fall away and it will ruin every industry and blast and ruin every home.

In the bright blaze of God's sunlight, as well as under cover of darkness, this business goes on. Men, void of principle and decency, fatten on the profits of this filthy traffic...

But men are asking, What can be done? what can we do? Again I say, Agitate. Ask your neighbor and fellow citizen, what can be done? Have we a law that is operative? Is that law enforced, or is it allowed to remain a dead letter on the statute book?

There are many counties in these provinces where the temperance sentiment is so strong that the money gets license to sell strong drink, and yet they sell and sell openly, and the men who would not sign a petition for license, will not prosecute them for selling without, and so they go on in defiance of law, in defiance of the moral sentiment of the community.

I, Agitate, agitate, agitate, as a great British statesman said in advocacy of another cause. We must keep this question at the top. We must bring it in contact with men's minds. We must win public sentiment. We must educate the public conscience.

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rather that the highwayman would rush from his piece of concealment and plunge into the bosom of my young manly boy, and see him die in innocency and honor, than have this slimy serpent of strong drink coil itself slowly but surely about him? I tell you before God, I would. Yet these dear ones, the friends of our boys, the boys and girls of our country, the hope of the church of Christ in the days to come, who must take up this blessed work when your fathers and brethren are called up higher, if the work is to go on and prosper...

No! we must not, we dare not, hold our peace longer. We are verily guilty of our brother's blood! If we do.

Heaven has been long a witness to our apathy, not that we have entirely overlooked this grave question. Resolutions have been brought before this body; but they have not been passed upon in the most summary manner possible.

But I believe now I was mistaken. We cannot preach the whole gospel and do our whole duty as gospel ministers without striking against every form of vice.

I am more than ever convinced that the church must raise a crusade against this vice, and the ministers of Jesus must be consecrated to the rank and file to this sacred encounter.

It will not do for the churches to lay this huge responsibility on organizations outside their pale.

These societies have been attempting to abolish this evil for years, but they have been fighting against mighty odds, owing to the general lethargy of communities, and must I add, owing to the supineness of the church of the living God.

And yet brethren, we have only to open our eyes to see in our midst, in the very heart of Christendom, an oppressor more cruel than any that ever existed in the world.

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well as the moral questions of the near future.

It has not very long ago that a leading distiller in one of the head centres of the distilling interests of the neighboring Republic, said to a minister of the gospel: "Sir, the political issue, sooner or later, will be temperance, and he is a man who does not and will not recognize the fact."

It is acknowledged across the border that the pulpits saved the Union by arousing the indignation of the people; and it would be to the lasting disgrace of the pulpit of our day if it could not be said, even more emphatically, that it was proving itself a leading factor in saving our country from the curse of rum.

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at your very doors are watching to hinder the honest and young men of this Christian land and drag them into a slavery vastly more oppressive, a slavery of body and soul. I fear the evil has been so long amongst us and we have become so familiarized with it that we too cannot forget its degrading character.

We are horrified at first, and our whole being tingles with righteous indignation. We arouse ourselves perhaps enough to say, something ought to be done, but not doing any one moving in the matter, we too settle down and shut our eyes to the evil and try to forget about it.

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the easy sea to be victors, the hosts of right warfare fall back before the powers of darkness. What shall be done? Whither shall we fly? Why, just where Joshua did. He fell down before God; he well knew help must come from that quarter. An evil that hinders the success of God's people, that blocks the way to prevent their march to victory, that sends such weakness through their ranks, that they run before the enemy, cannot be removed except under divine direction.

Surely it lies right across our path to complete success. Those who might otherwise be the glory and crown of our strength, are drawn into this fatal snare and ruined for time and eternity.

Must we run before the enemy and have our young men smitten down in our view before the pastors in what to go and did it, then they went up triumphantly to fight against it and take it. Is there no God to hear prayer to-day and give direction against this mighty evil?

We need direction, wisdom and strength from Almighty God. O beloved, let us prostrate ourselves before Him. We shall need to make our confession for so much lethargy and indifference upon this question in the past.

This brings me to the last point. "Up, sanctify." I believe if the church of Christ in these Maritime Provinces were thoroughly clean; if all Christians were living up to the light and temperance sentiment, and doing the work of the church, the "accursed thing" would not be amongst us as it is.

The great anti-slavery reform, both in the old world and the new, met the same obstacle. In the nation alongside of us, both in the north and in the south, were many to acknowledge the evil of the traffic in human flesh, but would not shake the shackles of the slave; the evil has gone into the very fibre of the nation; destroy slavery and you destroy the nation.

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