

Temperance Talk.

Only One Drunkard.

He is now in jail for abusing his wife. He was arrested once before for similar cruelty, but his wife refused to testify against him. He is a good workman between drunken sprees.

His wife had property, but he has wasted it. He sells wheat and potatoes at half price to the drink shop-keepers and spends the money for drink. His children are not properly fed or clad. The tax-payers are supporting him in jail. This is not an uncommon case. In every neighborhood there are such men. Probably there are hundreds of them in this Christian land. They are essentially alike, though some of them do not beat their wives or starve their children, and all of them are not a public charge. Some of them when they get drunk in their club rooms or in "respectable" bar-rooms, are sent home in carriages, and they are not publicly disgraced by arrest and imprisonment. But they are drunkards, disgraced of men and condemned of God, and their families suffer worse than hunger and cold. And there are over two hundred thousand men and women in this Christian land licensed to make drunkards!

Exceedingly important is it therefore for good neighbors, good citizens, good Christians to consider what should be done to prevent this evil work. Regulation, taxation, license have signally failed. Nearly twice as much liquor is used per capita now as twenty years ago. There are more arrests for drunkenness under high license than under low license.

It does little or no good to send a drunkard to jail for thirty or ninety days. Drunkenness in its beginnings is a vice; in its maturity it is a disease. A drunkard should be treated as a sick man. Put him in a hospital where he must work and cannot possibly get liquor for a year or more. Give him work to do, improve his physical health, and minister to his moral well-being. His earnings after supporting himself in a healthful, plain way should be devoted to his family. If after his release he gets drunk again, double or treble the time of his detention. He needs not a jailor so much as a physician and a pastor. His cure under such care will not cost so much as ordinary imprisonment again and again for drunkenness, and meanwhile his soul may be saved from death.

A Reply to the Moderate Drinker.

That staunch old Scotchman, Dr. Arnot, gives a good illustration of the total abstinence question. You will find the world full of men who will tell you that they are not obliged to sign away their liberty in order to keep on the safe side, that they know when they have had enough, that there is no danger of their becoming drunkards, and the like.

Dr. Arnot says: "True, you are not obliged, but here is a river we have to cross. It is broad and deep and rapid. Whoever falls into it is sure to be drowned. Here is a narrow footbridge, a single timber extending across. He who is lithe of limb and steady of brain and nerve may step over it in safety. Yonder is a broad, strong bridge. Its foundations are solid rock. Its passages are wide, its balustrade is high and firm. All may cross it in perfect safety—the aged and feeble, the young and gay, the tottering wee ones. There is no danger there. Now, my friends, you say: 'I am not obliged to go yonder. Let them go there who cannot walk this timber.' True, true, you are not obliged; but as for you, we know that if we cross that timber, though we may go safely, may others who will attempt to follow us will surely perish. And we feel better to go by the bridge."

Walking a foot-bridge over a raging torrent is risky business, but it is safety itself compared with tampering with the drink.

A Famous Opinion on the Liquor Business.

In Crowley v. Christensen, 137 U. S. 86, 90, the Supreme Court of the United States says:

"It is urged that as the liquors are used as a beverage, and the injury following them, if taken in excess, is voluntarily inflicted, and is confined to the party offending, their sale should be without restrictions, the contention being that what a man shall drink, equally with what he shall eat, is not properly matter for legislation.

"There is in this position an assumption of fact which does not exist, that when the liquors are taken in excess the injuries are confined to the party offending. The injury (from the use of intoxicating liquors), it is true, first falls upon him in his health, which the habit undermines; in his morals, which it weakens; and in the self-abasement which it creates. But, as it leads to neglect of business, and waste of property and general demoralization it affects those who are immediately connected with and dependent upon him.

"By the general concurrences of opinion of every civilized and Christian community, there are few sources of crime and misery to society equal to the dram shop, where intoxicating liquors, in small quantities, to be drunk at the time, are sold indiscriminately to all parties applying. The statistics of every state show a greater amount of crime and misery attributable to the use of ardent spirits obtained at these retail liquor saloons than to any other source.

"The sale of such liquors in this way has therefore been, at all times, by the courts of every state, considered as the proper subject of legislative regulation. Not only may a license be exacted from the keeper of the saloon before a glass of his liquors can be thus disposed of, but restrictions can be imposed as to the class of persons to whom they may be sold, and the hours of the day and the days of the week on which the saloons may be opened. Their sale in that form may be absolutely prohibited. It is a question of public expediency and public morality, and not of federal law. The police power of the state is fully competent to regulate the business—to mitigate its evils or to suppress it entirely.

"There is no inherent right in a citizen to thus sell intoxicating liquors by retail; it is not a privilege of a citizen of the state or of a citizen of the United States. As it is a business attended with danger to the community, it may, as already said, be entirely prohibited, or be permitted under such conditions as will limit to the utmost its evils. The manner and extent of regulation rests in the discretion of the governing authority."

Liquor and Labour.

In defense of the baby, I would close the saloon at whatever cost," says C. N. Howard, "but the most unthinkably stupid of all is the man who defends the saloons in behalf of labor.

"All the distilleries and breweries in this country put together give employment to less than 45,000; and what their product costs the people over the bars of 200,000 licensed rum-shops would build 200,000 American homes at \$2,000 each, paper their walls, carpet their floors, furnish the rooms, fill their clothes-presses, with garments, their pantries with food, and their cellars with coal, exhaust the surplus manufactured stock of the nation, require four hundred million dollars' worth of raw material to manufacture, employ a million and a quarter more men to make and give to this country the most unexampled period of prosperity that ever came to any nation since King Solomon made silver as stones in the streets of Jerusalem.—American Ex.

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