

they gathered statistics showing the percentage of crime, poverty and insanity that should be charged to dyspepsia, to indigestion, over-eating, gluttony, etc. If men learned to eat right, they would not become dyspeptic, and if men would not go to excess in drinking, there would be no drunkenness. Was there ever anything good that was not accompanied by evil? Was there ever a virtue that was not practised to excess, as a certain writer states, that did not turn to vice and crime? Drink temperately and eat temperately, and you will be healthy and strong, virtuous and wise, generous and affectionate. Man loves liberty; it is ingratiated in his very being; he loves personal freedom above everything else, yet it is hard to understand why he will allow a few well-paid agitators to determine for him what he should eat or drink, or to supply him with certain rules of conduct.

We have a great deal of legislation on our statute-books in this country. I have heard it stated on one occasion that the best governed country is the one that is the least governed; yet we have in our midst so-called moral reformers who are to-day popping up here and there, advocating their pet theories for the regeneration of the human race. These men do not even stop at the intemperate use of alcoholic drink. If they could induce public opinion to favour their theories, certain amusements would also be placed out of commission. Card playing, according to their theories, should be forbidden in general, simply because some men or women go to excess and become card fiends. Dancing is looked upon as a sin, because, according to their distorted ideas of morality, dancing has caused the downfall of a few, and therefore all others must abstain from the pleasure of this amusement. The habit of using tobacco, according to their theories, is a vicious practice and must be stopped, because tobacco contains nicotine, which is a poison. Yet they forget that both coffee and tea, if taken to excess, are harmful, because both of these beverages contain a certain amount of caffeine and theine. These are poisons, a few concentrated grains of which would kill a man instantly. These are no arguments, I will admit, but they are just as good as the arguments of some prohibitionists.

Again, people in many towns and cities  
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in Canada say that street cars must not run on Sunday. Yet I have never heard of a law prohibiting a rich man from taking an automobile ride on that day, whilst the poor man, who has worked ten hours a day from Monday until Saturday noon and wishes to enjoy the fresh air and the beauties of nature, is compelled to walk a considerable distance with his family in the hot sun to the distant park. With many it is a crime to have a Sunday sacred band concert, with others it is an absolute sin to allow little children to skate or enjoy the slides on the Sabbath day. Toronto take notice. We have come to this pass: that a stranger cannot even buy a newspaper on Sunday in our large cities, and a cry of horror has gone up because certain well-meaning gentlemen, who had the best interests of the country at heart, have suggested that the libraries and museums be open on Sunday for the general good of the public.

A spectacle was presented a few nights ago when the Lord's Day Alliance actually objected to the holding of Sunday evening recruiting meetings. As this was practically the limit of endurance, their wishes came to naught. All these irksome restrictions, if we do not wake up, may be placed, as a bar to our happiness and comfort, on the statute books of our country by a few well-paid organizers, backed up by men who have seldom or never been up against the real issues of life, who draw weird pictures of misery and degradation about things that never took place, even if there is a semblance of truth in the story, they generally grossly exaggerate it. If one half of the time now devoted by the moral reformers and prohibitionists to this propaganda were given to aid in securing legislation to improve the conditions in factories, where thousands of men are yearly mangled and killed, there would be fewer victims of our industrial machines.

Legislation is desirable to make mines safer, and also to secure safety appliances for railroads and cars that would protect life. A great field is open to these people to limit the scourge of tuberculosis, and though to-day we have many good men and women who are doing noble work for the sufferers from the white plague, yet there is room for more of them, and if half the energy now devoted by these gentlemen to the attempt to prohibit alcohol were devoted to securing legislation to overcome some of the other evils, there would be more happiness and good fellowship in