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Thy Way, Not Mine.

Thy way, not mine, O Lord!
However dark it be!
Lead me by Thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be or rough,
It will be still the best.
Winding or straight, it leads
Right onward to Thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot.
I would not if I might.
Choose Thou for me, my God.
So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I see
Is Thine; so let the way
That leads to it be thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Take Thou my cup and it
With joy or sorrow fill
As best to Thee may seem.
Choose Thou my good and ill.

Choose Thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health;
Choose Thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine, the choice
In things or great or small.
Be Thou my guide, my strength,
My wisdom and my all!

H. Bonar.

Total Abstinence, a Duty.

REV. JAMES DENNY, D.D.

IT has been said that the intellectual interest of the Temperance cause has been exhausted. That is true. But its moral interest is as deep as ever; and the same remarks apply to many other causes. When we read these words we see how deeply our Lord was moved by questions like those which concern Total Abstinence. You may say that societies of this kind tend to narrow and distort our interests in life. Christ, you say, came eating and drinking; He taught that not what enters into the mouth defileth a man; everything that God has created is good, and may be partaken of with prayer and thanksgiving. But Christianity has another aspect; it works through abstinences and sacrifices; it has a place to-day for martyrdom and Puritanism.

These words bring home to our consciences the fact of our individual responsibility. The offence of which Christ speaks may be given by an act, or by a word, or by a look, or by other form of conduct intentionally on our part, or it may arise out of mere thoughtlessness; but whatever the form, the offence is one in His sight. Indeed, to Christ moral thoughtlessness is one of the worst forms of sin. We are surrounded by "these little ones" men who are too weak to resist the slightest temptations, and we are not always on our guard lest our conduct should offend them. We consider them too insignificant to regulate our actions. We laugh at them. We laugh at

drunken characters in fiction and the drama, but that is not the way in which Christ would have us look at them in real life. Let us never indulge in contempt towards those who are weak enough to be overcome. Whatever there is in the Gospel there is this: that weakness is no ground for contempt, but for consideration. Christ does not appeal for the strong man, not even for the average man, but He does claim the greatest consideration for the weak. He speaks in these passages with, one may say, an abandonment to passion. The next time you hear anybody preaching on Total Abstinence, and using strong language, remember who spoke these words: "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

The philosophy of Puritanism is this: "that there are many persons whose only choice lies between Puritanism and perdition. They must pull out the right eye, blind themselves to the half of life, they must cut off the right hand, sacrifice half the varied interests of life, or lose their life in God. You object that such a theory, by crying down one evil, tends to develop rank hypocrisy, and to destroy balance of character. But the point of our Lord's words is "this or no character at all." And Jesus knew what was in man. There are men here whose only chance of life in God is total abstinence from strong drink. Men are reluctant to believe a statement like that about themselves, but assuredly that is why our Lord used such strong and passionate terms.

Again, responsibility is incurred not by the individual only, but by society at large. To me the most patent fact in relation to this cause is that a large part of the responsibility for the present state of affairs devolves upon the society which legitimates the public-house. Society itself is responsible for such an institution among us. It does not exist without leave, nor does it exist without effects—effects on the welfare of men here and hereafter, effects on God's entire interest in men. Plans are being brought forward to remedy the existing state of things. About the different plans I will say nothing; this only, that that plan is best which forces upon citizens the consideration of duties, that plan which brings the conscience of the community into burning contact with the responsibilities of the case.

The Church has not felt its responsibility as it ought with regard to this question; but there are signs of progress. I note one in particular. The Roman Catholic Church in Canada is waking up to a due sense of its responsibility. An address issued by the bishop to the clergy shows a grasp of the true situation. The Church there, as it is here, is afflicted with a great number of drink-sellers, and the bishop in convincing terms says that the great source of danger to the Church, the impediment of its progress and the defacer of its agencies in doing good, is the American saloon—and we here may read the British public-house, for they are indistinguishable. We may think what we like of allegiance to the Pope, but that address contains a note of the true Church.