

## Curtailing the Liquor Traffic.

### CHAPTER I.—CONSTERNATION.

It was in Arcadia. The Council of State, patriarchs with gentle eyes and long beards, sat meditating on measures pertaining to the public weal.

The door was suddenly thrown open and a lad, breathless, with cheeks flushed and eyes bulging out with excitement, after several vain efforts to articulate, at length succeeded in saying, "Your Honors,—there's a mad dog—rampaging the streets!"

In a moment all was confusion. The aged counsellors sprang to their feet and stood silent with suppressed excitement. Then as with one impulse they all hastened to the front windows of the Consilium.

"There he is!" cried one of them, "yonder by the cross-roads at the market!"

"Ah, yes! And, oh, horrors! how he is foaming and raging! Woe to any helpless ones that may chance to come before him."

"See by the Pantheon," cried another, "the children are just coming from morning school! They will surely be bitten by this mad beast!"

And bitten they were. One and another of them were torn by his poisonous fangs.

"Oh, this is horrible!" cried one of the venerable men at the window.

"What shall we do about it?"

"Aye, that's the practical question, what shall be done about it?"

"Let us consult the Legalia Convella."

### CHAPTER II.—CONSULTATION.

The Legalia Convella were the Books of Law, the accumulated wisdom of many ages.

The sages sat solemnly bending over the books. Day after day they turned the leaves with no results. Meanwhile the mad dog had bitten many, and there were now scores of raging curs, foaming and lurking at the corner, ready to spring upon the passers-by.

The people mourned. There was lamentation in almost every house. Men, women and children were bitten, and limped or were carried to their homes, where, after weeks of lingering pain, they died in awful spasms.

Still the deliberations went on at the Concilium. The aged functionaries were unwilling to do anything without the authority of law, and as yet they had been able to find nothing.

At length, as they were pouring over the Convella, a gleam of sudden joy lighted the face of one of them and he cried, "I have it; hear it is!"

They looked up eagerly, then bending over the book read as follows:

"*Be it ordained:* That in case any beast shall so rage and rave as to endanger the public safety, his tail shall forthwith be cut off!"

"His tail cut off!" "What will that do? A dog don't bite with his tail."

"No, but he isn't apt to bite so hard if his tail is cut off."

### CHAPTER III.—REGULATION.

"We don't believe it! We don't believe it!" cried many voices!"

"Well, anyway, if we abbreviate the tails of these dogs, we shall be better able to regulate their doings."

"Why so?"