

is a stimulant, but in large doses a narcotic.

Let us take a glance at the so-called restrictive measures now in vogue. They apply either to the seller, the place, or the drink. Evidently if the drink is the agent which does harm, restriction should be directed against the drink; and measures otherwise directed will not touch the root of the evil or in the least prove to be restrictive. Thus the character of the seller has nothing whatsoever to do with the effect of the drink; but it is said a man of good character will not abuse the trust placed in him. Our reply to that is no good man will go into a business which does so much evil as the drink traffic. Again, we hold that the goodness of the man will not serve to decrease, but rather to increase the drink evil. The goodness of the man will surround the business with a respectability which serve to make it a resort for respectable people, who would otherwise probably keep outside the saloon. The respectability of the saloon will then in its turn quiet the public conscience as regards it, and serve to delay public agitation against it. This is a sufficient answer to Dr. Rainsford's quixotic proposal of church saloons.

Penalties for the violation of the excise laws have been urged as good restrictive measures. It is an utter error to suppose that penalties adequate for the execution of any excise laws could be enforced or secured. Licensing the traffic is a wholly arbitrary and unconstitutional proceeding. This truth is more deeply felt and acted upon than realized or understood. Public sentiment is, therefore, instinctively opposed to any very severe measures against the saloon keepers. The demoralizing effects of the saloon business on the whole community are so widespread and so deep that no general movement in that direction can be brought about. The whole experience of the past is against any such proposition; and at present the traffic is so powerful in politics that no party can even attempt

to pass such restrictive laws as would, if enforced, suffice to make the traffic law abiding. Hence adequate penalties for the violation of excise laws are not obtainable, and even if obtainable would be made nugatory by the power of the traffic in politics. But supposing, for argument's sake, that they were obtainable and could be and should be enforced, what then? They would bind the saloon-keeper not to sell to minors, children under sixteen years of age.

Unless every young man about the age of sixteen was compelled to produce his birth certificate when he visited a saloon for the first time, it would not be fair to condemn a liquor seller for sometimes erring on the side favorable to his business; but would not such a provision as the showing of the birth certificate serve to bring that provision into disrepute, indirectly render nugatory the whole restrictive policy, and therefore lead to the enactment of more liberal provisions?

Then, again, if minors wanted to drink, could they not in a hundred different ways evade the law by getting adults to buy for them, or to treat them? Is not the prohibition against the serving of minors an incentive to the young to drink, for the same reason that, as we are told, prohibition of all drink is sure to produce more drinking than ever? If not, why not?

Take the provision against sale to drunkards. Who is a drunkard? Nearly every court in every land is at sixes and sevens on this question; and surely if the courts are unable to adjudicate on the meaning of drunkenness, it can scarcely be regarded as fair that the liquor-sellers shall be held competent to decide that point. Habitual drunkards may be labelled as spotted sheep, but how about the occasional or periodic drunkard? How shall he be defined? By what general and infallible signs shall he be known? Surely the liquor-seller has a right to get an authoritative definition of this term in the law. How otherwise can he be held guilty for the violation of its provisions?