

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.

I offer no apology, and do not think any is necessary for reverting again in these columns to the subject of High License. This is a most important question. We are not hearing just as much about it in Canada to-day as, it is not unlikely, we will hear in the near future. The liquor traffic feel that prohibition is fast marching upon them. As each step of progress has been made in the Temperance reform, knowing that their craft was in danger, the liquor dealers and their friends have been ready with some move to "head off" just the reform that has been asked for. This is exactly the position of High License to-day. It is an attempt on the part of those gentlemen to "head off" prohibition by this latest piece of sophistry.

On the 2nd of the present month a public discussion on the question of High License as opposed to prohibition took place in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York. It was a significant gathering, because of the large attendance, and more especially because of the importance and value of the papers and addresses on either side of the question that were presented. The symposium, for such it really was, was opened by a paper favorable to High License, by General Dorman B. Eaton, of New York. It will be our endeavor, so that readers of the CITIZEN may see both sides of the question, and have all information possible directly before them, to summarize the arguments furnished on both sides, on this particular occasion.

Gen. Eaton prefaces his paper by saying, "We at least all seek a common object, the suppression of the fearful evils of the liquor traffic." The only difference that he sees between himself and the prohibitionist is the difference in means adopted by each. His first argument is that the profits of the liquor traffic to-day (which he agrees are enormous,) have become a potent, secret and demoralizing power in politics. "Everywhere it is used by the most unscrupulous politicians, and the adroit agents of grog shop keepers, to defeat the policy of the Prohibitionists, to misrepresent them, to intimidate them, to elect their enemies to office, and to bribe, if possible, their supporters and agents." The argument is, that by placing a high license on the traffic, the money, or, at least, a considerable portion of it, that now goes for these demoralizing political purposes, can be applied by the State to lessen that distress which the liquor traffic itself creates. In answer to the argument that the conscience of the people is stultified by a high license policy, he appeals to their patriotism and says that he does not believe that the money taken from these same profits can in any way be made to so utterly debase the conscience that a majority of voters can be bribed by it to condone all the great evils on which we are making war.

Put in a sentence or two, the argument is, that the High License Bill, in principle, a legislative declaration that the hundreds of dollars from towns, the thousands of dollars from villages, the tens of thousands of dollars from cities, and the hundreds of thousands of dollars from the States at large, annually contributed for the corruption fund of elections from the profits of the liquor traffic, and which have, for generations past, been more and more used to bribe voters, to buy the press, to elect corrupt demagogues, to support mercenary partisan cliques, to defeat the most worthy candidates, and to degrade and debase our politics generally,—such a bill, such a law, is a legislative declaration that these vast sums from such profits shall no longer be used for such purposes. It declares that a part, at least, of these profits shall go to a useful and honest purpose. They shall go into the treasuries of towns, counties and States, to be used perhaps to help support the poor-houses and asylums, to which the liquor traffic brings the most numerous and degraded inmates.

In answer to the argument that at the best High License is only a compromise, and will delay the triumph of prohibition, Mr. Eaton replies that in substance this argument is, "that to remove an evil in part is in itself an evil." He believes, of course, that High License will result in closing one-third or one-half the grog shops, and will in the same proportion reduce drunkenness. Then follows the oft-repeated argument that reforms are always gradual, and instances in history to this effect are quoted.

When it comes to a statement of facts, Nebraska, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, as

also the city of Chicago, are quoted, and certain figures presented. Taking the latter place, for example, he says: "In Chicago, during the period in which the population increased from 450,000 to 700,000, the number of licensed places fell from 3,821 to 3,000. The arrests at the same time, fell away in still greater proportion, while the license tax increased from \$200,000 to \$1,750,000." Concluding on this point he says, "If there were time I might tell you of the crime and drunkenness reduced in the large number of towns in the various counties and States in which High License restriction has resulted in prohibition."

Such are the main points of the argument favorable to High License. The reply was made by Professor Samuel Dickie, Chairman of the National Prohibition committee, the gentleman, it will be remembered, who succeeded the late lamented Hon. John B. Finch, as head of the prohibition party in the United States.

Mr. Dickie opens his argument by the statement that Gen. Eaton assumes, as do all advocates of High License, first that High License yields more money for the public treasury. This he looks upon as a specious argument. "To advocate High License because it puts money into the public treasury, that pays the cost of the open saloon, would be like saying with regard to those people whom I read about in your evening paper in this city of Brooklyn who are suffering with the smallpox, that we should advocate the continuance of smallpox, providing simply we could sell sufficient vaccine to pay the doctors' bills. It is a matter of no consequence that the poor victims of the disease suffer and die; it is a matter of no consequence that the revenue from vaccine matter does not pay the undertaker; it is a matter of no consequence that it does not meet all the other expenses. Such a policy is at once set down as a process of bribery with relation to every voter who is concerned in the rate of taxation."

A strong point of difference between the address of Gen. Eaton and Professor Dickie, is that the former, whilst presenting certainly a very able paper, confines himself almost entirely to theorizing, to speculating on what should be the results. The latter deals very largely in facts; he simply gives the history of High License at many points, and the written and expressed opinions of those whose position is such as to enable them to speak positively on a question of this kind. And, after all, what argument is strong enough to stand up against history? It is all very well for us to have our pet opinions, and for us to theorize about this, that, and the other thing, and to think that things should be so and so, but when they are not, and when history demonstrates that they will not be, further speculation is simply rhetorical amusement.

Professor Dickie takes up the case of the city of Chicago, from which point he had just come, and whilst there had obtained for himself the official figures. "In the year 1882 there were 3,849 saloons in Chicago, paying a license fee of \$62. The next year the license was double, and the saloons dropped off from 3,849 to 3,682. The next year the license fee was \$500, and in the number of saloons there was a slight decrease,—from 3,682 to 3,336. The following year the tax remaining uniform, the number of saloons rose to 3,584. The next year the number was 3,587, and the last year, 1887, it had risen to 4,003, a larger number of saloons in the city of Chicago during 1887 than during any one of the preceding five years."

He goes further and says—"I asked a prominent official this question, 'Has High License closed any of the grog shops of Chicago?' 'Certainly it has,' was the answer. 'What class of saloons did High License close?' His answer was substantially that it closed the least injurious class of saloons, it closed the class of liquor dealers who were doing business in a small way out in the suburbs of the city, in connection with a grocery trade. It closed those having the smallest patronage, and who really were doing the least damage. When asked if it had closed any of those dens of vice, 'where an evil that here to-night shall be nameless, is coupled with the saloon system,' he said, 'Not one, not one.' I asked him did it close any of those lower dens and dives that the people of the city had been in the habit of calling the Black Hole of Chicago. Said the gentleman, 'Not one.' 'Every house of questionable repute in connection with the liquor saloon, every low dive where a man's life is scarcely safe after dark, every

one of them is going on in the city of Chicago under High License just the same as before."

"There being so much force in facts of this kind," Mr. Dickie said, "I wanted to satisfy myself quite fully on this point, and so I sent out a trusty young man, a shorthand reporter, whom I secured from one of the newspaper offices. He went about the city and interviewed prominent liquor men. He asked them their opinions as to the relative merits of High License, Low License and Prohibition. Hannah & Hogg own about a dozen saloons. They said, 'We are in favor of \$1,000 license instead of \$500 as at present. We have done more business under the \$500 license than we did when the fee was \$250.' The wholesale and retail dealer says 'I prefer a \$1,000 license.' Mike Cochrane, a politician and saloon-keeper, says: 'The Prohibitionists are raising the devil with us. We have more saloons with high license than we had with low license. The only difference is that when we had the low license, every Tom, Dick and Harry could start a saloon, and now the brewers and distillers pay the high license fee, and compel the saloon-keepers to buy their liquors.'"

Nebraska is next taken up, and the facts in connection with it are just as damaging as those from Chicago. "In 1881 Nebraska had one liquor dealer for every four hundred and forty-one people under the \$1,000 license it had one for every three hundred and nineteen people. When the law went into effect in Omaha the number of saloons under low license was one hundred and forty. Omaha has doubled her population and has come within a very few of doubling her saloons, the number being two hundred and seventy-six." Reading from a letter from a prominent Nebraska citizen, Prof. Dickie said, "All the devices of gambling and the revolting horrors of prostitution, every conceivable trap to ensnare and destroy, is worked under High License, and the vast local revenue is pointed to as an excuse for the 'hell turned loose' that mocks all effort at restraint." The Chicago Tribune says "High License is a bar and protection to the liquor dealer against prohibition." The Omaha distiller says: "High License has not hurt our business, but, on the contrary, has been a great benefit to it as well as to the people generally." And opinions like these are multiplied, one after the other, by this able champion of prohibition.

As a prohibitionist Prof. Dickie, of course, cannot view the license business as other than decidedly wrong. With him it is "No compromise." He does not believe it is right to license a wrong. He says, "I must that to tax a saloon, or to license a saloon, is to recognize its legal right to continue, and so long as high tax or high license prevails, it serves as a perfectly safe bar against the operation of the legal authority of the people in the line of suppressing the trade."

In favor of High License Mr. Dickie was followed by Mr. John Brooks Leviatt, of the Church of England Temperance Society, and the debate was closed by a rejoinder again from Professor Dickie. We would only be too pleased if the CITIZEN could give space to print in full the verbatim reports of these speeches that it has been the pleasure of the writer to study. An honest effort, however, has been made here to summarize both the views pro and con. I am free to confess that the more fully I look into this subject, the weaker becomes the cause of those advocating High License. In theory it may seem plausible enough to say that the placing of a high license fee on the saloons will reduce the drinking habits, and consequently the evils that flow from them, but such is not the case. Let us take history as it reads; let us learn the lessons of experience; and then when the fight does come no one will be blinded by any of the false arguments of High License. History is entirely against it. Experience, in plain terms, says it is a humbug; and the more thoroughly its fallacies are exposed, the more quickly will we all get to recognize the fact that there is but one panacea for this evil, and that is absolutely to banish it. Prohibition.

JAS. MARION HARRLAN.

How it Came to be. "WHEN I entered college," said a distinguished New York citizen, "my father talked seriously to me of the peculiar temptations of student-life, and in a strain that surprised me somewhat. No part of the talk was more unexpected than the confession that if he had his life to live over, he would never touch wine or ardent spirits of any kind. I answered, 'It would be foolish in me not to profit

by your experience. I give you my voluntary pledge not to drink intoxicating liquors until after Commencement Day.'

"I kept my word. The frank statement, 'I have promised my father not to drink, bore me safely through suppers and spreads and larks. It is a mistake to believe that such a confession will subject one to ridicule. The wildest fellows respected it, and more than once my example helped the timid. When I returned home, I had other and sadder reasons for continuing abstinence. My poor father was 'a free liver,' and could not give up his favorite wines. He suffered terribly from gout and inflammatory rheumatism, and the physicians told him plainly what the end must be unless he altered his manner of life. He died of apoplexy at fifty. Conscious that hereditary predisposition might lurk in my constitution—for the love of liquor runs surely and hotly in blood—I dared not trust myself to indulge even moderately. I am forty years old, a lawyer in active practice, and a politician. I have had no difficulty in public and in private life in steering clear of the rock that wrecked my father. Never having formed the habit of drinking, I have not felt the need of stimulants."

Said a laboring man of fifty-three to me last July, leaning on his scythe in the "noon-spell": "Not a drop of any kind of spirits—not even beer or cider—has ever passed my lips. When I was six years old I helped my mother undress my father 'n put him to bed, dead drunk. I'd seen him beat her oftentimes, 'n caught many a whack myself when he was in his cups. That night he had fallen down 'n cut his head. I held the basin while she washed off the blood 'n dirt, 'n cut away the hair, 'n drew the edges o' the wound together 'n fastened them with stickin' plaster. When he was safe in bed, she stood lookin' at him a munit, 'n then she gripped my shoulder till her fingers dug into my flesh, 'n says she, kinder wild 'n gaspin' like: 'If I thought you'd ever take to drinkin' liquor, I'd cut your throat now, while there's a chance o' you goin' to Heaven! With that she dropped on her knees, an how she did cry! I kneeled right down by her there, 'n 'm, a cryin' 'n hard 's she did, and promised her I'd never take a drop while I lived. What comes o' 'er skin' was burned into me that early. No 'm, 'n! I've never hankered after it. You've got to do it before you'll want to do it, you see. That's about the way the thing works, 's I take it. I wouldn't dare begin now, with so much 's a thimbleful a day for fear the taste for it might be in the blood. It's a devilish deceitful kind o' pison. Gunpowder's quiet as sand so long 's you don't bring fire nigh it."

The whole subject of habitual indulgence in stimulating beverages is covered by that one homely phrase, "You've got to do it before you'll want to do it!"

Even when, as in both the cases I have cited, the magazine of hereditary proclivity waits in "quiet," the touch of the spark, the cost of the first step here may be estimated by millions of money and seas of tears. The man who boasts truthfully that no habit takes hold of him—who can lay aside cigar, wine-glass and coffee cup at will, without suffering and without regret—may transmit like strength to his offspring—and he may not. Heredity takes long aim. It is one of the chosen mills of the gods, grinding slow, but exceeding small. The truth that the vast majority of human kind are creatures of habit, borrows dreadful emphasis from the nature of this appetite. All other tastes, if we except the greed of the opium eater, are, in comparison, as a taper flicker to the blaze of a burning city. The Apostle's terse characterization of the ungodly tongue comes to the gentleman lips when this vice is commented upon, "Set on fire of hell!"

The word "vice" slips easily from the pen. Where does the pleasant practice, graceful, popular, honored of men and of time, the favorite theme of verse—begin to be that? What gauge has our boy, allowed to drain his father's champagne glass at dinner, and, later, to toss off his own at college suppers and evening receptions, to warn him of the stage at which liking grows into fondness, and appetite into raging desire?

Said a sensible woman who was not superior to a fondness for a comfortable cup of tea: "I have not let my children use tea or coffee. Not that I have positive scruples on the score of the practice, but there are inconveniences enough in life without deliberately manufacturing others. If I do not get a cup of good, hot tea at breakfast-time, I have an all day headache. I wish to shield my daughters from the like pain and annoyance."

The principle is just and humane. Upon this stable foundation of common sense humanity we base our plea for the exclusion of intoxicating liquors from family use. It is like leaving matches within reach of baby fingers, or encouraging servants to kindle the morning fire with kerosene, to teach the young to partake of and enjoy even the best wines, to initiate them into the delights of claret-cup and the fragrant mysteries of sherry-cobbler. So far as simple titillation of the palate goes, a boy may as well like vinegar and water as Sauterne, may as reasonably become addicted to lemonade as to champagne. To imagine him, as youth or man, keeping a private bottle of cider-vinegar in his room for hourly or tri-daily imbibation, or to picture a lemonade saloon on every corner, would be a reduction of the question to an absurdity. It will be answered that vinegar, as a beverage, injures the stomach coats and causes emaciation and chalkiness of skin; that too much lemonade drinking creates colic, flatulence and general disorder of the digestive functions. Furthermore (and this impatiently) nobody wants to be continually pilled with such drinks, any more to be gorged with beef and potatoes between meals.

To repeat what we all know—what the whole world is getting to know better every day—the demand for beverages which, it is but too evident, are "wanted," arises from the awful fact that their use kindles a fire which heats the system into perpetual thirst—a maddening longing for that which has created it. Wine men tell us that drunkenness is a disease. It is, and more—blood poison of a virulent type, a flame that licks up physical and mental, moral and spiritual life.

This, then, explains why liquor-saloons, on an average of two to each block of our thoroughfares, tempt to headache, thirst, nausea and ruin—why the mother of sons trembles at the click of the latch-key in the small hours succeeding the fashionable revel. As if we had not this clue, let us look calmly at the way the horror comes to be. In the beginning, the taste of the light, smoothest dry wines is not pleasant to one child in ten thousand. To the untasted, hop tea would be as palatable as ale, and weak ink, sugared, as refreshing as Madeira, with its blended astringent and cockroach-like flavor. Many medicaments affirm that they do not like the odor and bite of that which they cannot hve. "Who says I love the taste of liquor hee!" said one poor wretch. "But the spirit of it I do admire!"

"A devilish, deceitful kind of poison!" said our haymaker. Even to those who love it most. By what strange reversal of wit and folly is this distaste resolutely fought with until bitter is put for sweet, and sweet for bitter, evil for good, and good for evil? It is knowing and manly to "take and stand treat," to swallow liquid fire "without winking," to smack the lips in critical relish over a rare old vintage, to appreciate bouquet and to detect fraud. The water drinker is hly-livered and weak of head, a prig, a soft, a muff. Even the girl of the period thinks it chic to hold her steady own against the fumes rising to her brain from the leads that move themselves aright in the slender glass in her pretty hand. The Spartan device of disgusting boys with drunkenness by exhibiting a reeling, slaving Helot, is too realistic for our refined age. Our boy, trained to overcome natural repugnance; failing to discern in his acquired liking for what used to be disagreeable, proof that he is succumbing to the deadly deceit of the poison, rashly confident in his own ability to "pull up in time," finally, "set on fire of hell" in every organ and sense, is incontinently expelled from polite society by the hands that lured him on to destruction. For the most monstrous absurdity is that the drunkard is no more respectable here and now than in Sparta's rudest age. We loathe and ban the thing we have made and—go on making others.

A man ought to know his weak points, and how far he can go. But who does, in any case or event? Who is the medical examiner who can give a certificate of soundness here? the engineer who can indicate the precise dip of the safe grade? Of all the mad gaming where men's souls are at stake, this useless habit of social tipping is the cruelest. Useless, because, as we have kept in mind throughout this talk, the taste must be created in order to gratify it, and, from first to last, the subject of the unnatural experiment is better off without the habit than with it, in the most favorable circumstances.

Where the spreading curse will be stayed, Heaven only knows. The beginning, in every instance, is here! To say that he who never takes the first glass will not fill a drunkard's grave, is trite to puerility. Nevertheless, it is to the practical application of this truth, wherein one would think a fool could not err, that we must look for hope and possible cure.—Union Signal

A Good Name for It.

BARBARIAN sometimes have a candor in their methods of expression which might well be emulated by more civilized people. We doctor up our vilest liquors, call them by some fancy names, profess for them some special medicinal virtue, and gull the public into swallowing very bad whiskey adulterated with strychnine and other deadly drugs under the belief that they are taking some wonderfully wholesome "bitters." How different this is from the outspokenness of the savages referred to in the following extract from the London Daily News:

"The Rev. Horace Waller, formerly associated with Dr. Livingstone in African travel, is responsible for some startling statements regarding the trade in intoxicating liquor in Africa. This liquor, he says, is now chiefly exported to Africa from Bremen and Hamburg, but it is largely carried in English ships. It is a poisonous distillation from the potato, the cost of which does not exceed 2s. 4d. a dozen, bottles. The chemists assure, Mr. Waller says, that there is more poisonous fusel oil in it than in any other known spirit. The natives have christened this spirit with the appropriate name of "Death."

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