

port and do not weary even in battling for the latter.

In such circumstances your committee are constrained to record their deep regret that the friends of sobriety, while a great work remains for them to perform, should be found even in appearance divided; but we are compelled to state that the difference between them is one of considerable importance if it even do not touch the very foundation of the temperance movement. Your Committee will be understood to refer to the dissonance of opinion among the friends of temperance as to the relation which the Scriptures sustain to alcoholic drinks. One party holds that it is the kind of liquor used which the scriptures prohibit as sinful and not any extent of use—that the use of all intoxicants to any extent is declared to be morally wrong and the moderate use of non-intoxicants alone permitted. With them the evil resides in the liquor, not in the user. The other party do not allow any such distinction in the wines of Scripture as is here implied. They maintain that Scripture wines are intoxicating, that the moderate use of such is not in itself sinful, and in the words of one, point their arguments thus: "The grand consideration which annihilates the entire grape-juice claim is this: that in all the ancient writings, including the Bible, while drunkenness is constantly spoken of, and temperance and intemperance, abstinence and moderation and excess, constantly treated of, in all the ages, it is never once intimated, you can escape all these evils if you will use the **RIGHT KIND OF WINE!**"

Your committee feel, then, that a more solid and wider basis must be found on which to place and recommend abstinence than an impracticable effort to establish a distinction between Scripture wine as intoxicating and unintoxicating, and add, while admitting as their belief that the wine which good and sober men used in Bible land was inebriating, that it is sinful for Christians not to abstain from wine and every other liquor by the use of which it is well known and freely admitted their brother man "stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak."

There is a class of objects the rightness or wrongness to use which wholly depends on circumstances. They are commonly designated things indifferent. The Scriptures are very full in their exposition of christian action in reference to this class. And as confessedly among us the sin or duty or using spirituous liquors depends on circumstances, your Committee believe that if the teaching of God's word on the proper use and abuse of things indifferent were fully understood by temperance advocates, and properly exhibited by them, many good men who now either oppose the temperance

cause or seem indifferent to the success thereof, would change their views and relations to it; the foundation of this great moral and social reformation be felt to be more secure even in the estimation of its truest friends and efficient aid imparted to it in manifold ways. The field of duty just indicated is one which, it must be admitted, lies directly in the path of the Synod. What remains of this report will be a slight contribution to this object.

Every man, every Christian has a natural right to the use of things indifferent. This the Scriptures abundantly and clearly teach. Rom. 14, 1 Cor. 8, &c. But there is no true liberty which is free from the sphere of authority or entirely overlooks the subordination of the individual to the many. The subject we have cannot exclude the exercise of this important principle. The truth is that the natural right to use things indifferent is modified or limited and may be wholly set aside by the operation of Christian prudence and self-denial, or Christian love. Instead of admitting that Christians are at liberty to use things indifferent, simply because of their natural rights or because they have the power to use them and enjoy them or by a reference to the craving of appetite, Paul holds that that point must be decided by a reference to the advantage or benefit of their use to the user, and whether he may be able to sustain a true mastery over such use. *All things (indifferent) are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any,* proves what has just been advanced. It is clear that the drinking of wine must come under the guidance of these principles. Its use, even in the case of one isolated from human society, we thus see, must depend upon its beneficial tendency, and whether it may not destroy the liberty which claims the right to use it.

In a healthy state of body does the appetite require to be sharpened, sleep induced, or strength sought for labor, by the use of wine? Then your Committee believe that it becomes obligatory by the apostle's rule founded on self advantage to abstain. Again, is the desire for wine so strong that the man must treat that desire to rid himself for a time of its importunity, and thus quiet his nerves and feelings; or has the will lost its power of self-constraint and finds itself able to obey only the behests of appetite? Then the man is brought under 'the power' of this tempter, no longer retains his liberty, but is enslaved, and on the principle of respect is bound to abstain. The duty of Christians in the premises, and their sin in neglecting to discharge it, are thus expressed by Dr. Hodge: "It is of great importance to the moral health of the soul