

The Philosophy of Drinking and Drunkenness.

The Temperance movement has two great objects. To reclaim the intemperate and to prevent intemperance. Universal abstinence from intoxicating drinks will insure both objects. The temperance reformation, therefore, adapts all its means to attain that end. If there is no drinking there can be no drunkenness, but the people are slow to believe that moderate drinking has anything to do with drunkenness, and therefore they believe the remedy of total abstinence to be too severe for the disease. It is believed to be possible to measure moderation, and to keep it under subjection. The promoters of the temperance movement, on the other hand, consider that all intoxicating drinks are dangerous in the proportion in which they contain alcohol, and that the effect of alcohol upon the brain is to disturb its action at the very time it is necessary to put a restraint upon the quantity. Some men can and do continue to drink moderately, but others cannot do this. If the temperament is a certain quality, alcohol has an effect which renders the craving for stimulants uncontrollable. And for this reason the appetite for drink is unlike any other appetite. It differs in degree even from the appetite for opium and tobacco. It is unlike the appetite for food. A man may have a strong desire for certain kinds of food, and may put himself to inconvenience to get the dish he prefers, but in its absence he is content to take another article to relieve his hunger. But his appetite for alcohol is not only the craving of the stomach or the palate. In some cases it is neither, but it is the craving of the nerves for stimulants. The effect of alcoholic drinks upon the nerves and the brain is the cause of their all but universal use. The effect wanted is not to fill the stomach or to give moisture to the body; but to carry the feelings beyond what is natural, to give sensations like pleasant dreams, to drown care, to bring forgetfulness, and to raise the feelings to a higher elevation.

Intoxicating drinks are so called because they intoxicate. Intoxication is a state of the nerves which makes the man foot out of himself—above himself—beyond himself. At first it gives a pleasing sensation, a sense of relief from the cares of life, and to attain the quieting sense—this ecstasitic feeling is the desire of all who drink. It may not be to themselves always apparent, but nevertheless it is the exciting motive to drink. It is produced by an unnatural action of the nerves, which uses up in a short time the surplus power laying dormant, a provision for the healthy action of the system. This action has, therefore, always a corresponding reaction. For example, if it is supposed that the nerve power was held in a tube of 20 inches, each inch being marked like a thermometer, and the normal or healthy state was at 10, a glass of spirit might raise the nervous state to 11, when the great enjoyment sought would be attained for a short time. The reaction would cause the fall to go below 10. It would fall down to 9—it must do so—as the alcohol does not impart nerve power, nor does it create it. It only calls that which we possess into action; the reaction must, therefore, be always in exact ratio to the action excited.

If taken, therefore, for daily health, the action must be a daily waste of power—a daily using of the surplus power provided by a bountiful Providence for the emergencies of life—and a waste to be mourned when an accident happens or an epidemic rages in the neighborhood, then the accident will not be so easily managed without the reserve nerve power, and the want of it may make the user of strong drink the more susceptible to the poison of the epidemic. In both cases much of the recuperative power of nature has been used up by daily nerve excitement. If taken for more than this—for the enjoyment of intoxication—how dangerous is the process. The man raises himself in the scale (keeping in mind the tube of 20 inches) to 11—it may be he goes higher, to 15,—which may represent him as the poet, the orator, or the jovial companion, or to 17, which we may suppose to represent forgetfulness and reckless drunkenness. From this state how low he must fall; during night he has kept himself up, whenever the flagging of energy took place another dram brought it up again, and his night of enjoyment has been bought at the morning's price. He is now down to 5,—to 3,—it may be to the bottom of the tube; if so, God pity him. He is now in that state when the nerve power is exhausted, when alcohol ceases to touch the springs of volition. He wills, but has no power to command. He is now in the agony of delirium tremens. Alcohol, be it then observed, causes increased action without adding the power to sustain the system at the stipulated point; consequently reaction must follow. This reaction demands more stimulant; if given, more reaction follows, to be succeeded by a stronger desire for the stimulant, until a seeming absolute necessity for the drink is created. In the moderate drinker this feeling is represented by a feeling of sinking, of discomfort, which is often difficult to overcome; but in the drunkard it exists as a disease before which all restraint seems powerless, and he will do anything and suffer anything rather than the anguish springing from the desire for alcohol which is beyond his control. At this stage, taste, as far as the palate is concerned, has little to do with his thirst. It is the craving of the man for more nerve excitement. He will sacrifice his all for deliverance for a few moments from the absolute depression which he feels.

The man of even temperament whom nothing ruffles, offends, or puts about, may continue to drink and drink moderately all his life, without seeming danger, but even he, when some sharp calamity overtakes him, may seek short-lived forgetfulness in the bottle, and may in a

short time astonish all his friends by the swiftness of his fall. Under circumstances to which all are liable the naturally well-balanced mind may succumb; but the dory nature, the impulsive, the open hearted, and the generous are as the gun cotton which needs but the pressure or the spark to become uncontrollable, and demand more drink with all the agony of unstrung nerves. These are they who become drunkards all at once. They stand an astonishment to their friends and to themselves. In vain may you plead with them. No picture can present to them in greater horror the agony which they themselves feel. What the man now wants is a way of escape. This the temperance movement offers him. The drunkard may be punished or frightened with punishments without any effect; but he will be influenced by the kind word, if based upon a knowledge of his position.

This being the action of alcohol, it shows plainly that total abstinence is the only remedy for drunkenness, and it also shows how important it is to keep the young from using alcohol at all. The evil is in the drink. The evil is so great, that in every circle where it is used it finds victims. It will injure just in proportion to the fineness of the nerve power to be acted upon. He whose brain is easily excited will be the best loved in society, but if in that society the wine-circulates, his danger is great. The man of a cold temperament may stand unharmed while he is slain. It may be urged however, that only a few fall and many have the enjoyment. This argument might hold if the question was one of secondary importance; but it is a question of more than life and death to those who fall, and the enjoyment would be dearly purchased if it involved but the loss of one in ten thousand. But the drinking customs now involve one in every circle, it may be in nearly every home. The danger is also so imperceptible in its approach that no man can confidently say that he or his may escape its consequences. What may therefore be argued about as an effect upon others, take a new form when it comes home to ourselves and those dearer to us than life. Total abstinence has been, in all cases where persistently applied, eminently successful. Its chief merit lies in its demand that the man shall help himself. The man must be of his own free will. The pledge shows him how he may help himself—how he may remove from himself his great temptation; not by trusting to himself—but in the instrumentality which, while it shows him his own weakness, carries him to Him who is willing and ready to save.

It is said that when one of our great explorers had found a huge monument deeply imbedded in the sand of Egypt, and unsuccessfully tried by main strength to drag it out of its tomb, that strength only dragged it through, not out of the sand. An engineer of the party suggested a plan whereby the very sand, whose want of resistance caused all the disappointment, could be made to raise the figure to the surface. The mass of stone was raised on one side a little, the sand ran into the vacant place. A pull the contrary way, and the sand again ran in. The figure having thus been raised in proportion to the body of the sand which had got below it, each pull on one side, with its reverse pull on the other, brought the figure nearer and nearer the surface, until it stood before the explorer and his party in its ancient stateliness and grandeur.

The poor victim of intemperance is passive under the influence of punishments and warnings. He disappoints the hopes of his friends and all his own hopes also. But the temperance man is ready to take him by the hand to give him a knowledge of himself—to show him how he can, by his own agency, bring under himself the means of his deliverance. Here he stands alone. He looks at his enemy—he looks forward, he sees his own weakness; but he feels the struggle must be his—where can he get help? Instinctively, like the prodigal of old, he says, "I will arise and go to my father." Every struggle, now that he has gained greater strength than his own, gives new energy and more foundation for the rescue, and little by little a drunkard is saved from ruin and a soul from perishing.

Vanderbilt's Temperance Views.

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT is one of the uncompromising total abstinence men in New York. A row of stores is to be built this summer on a site opposite the Grand Central Depot. Of course the situation makes the place desirable for restaurants to catch travelers, but no rum is to be sold there, and young Vanderbilt has provided in the deeds for perpetual prohibition of the liquor traffic so far as that 200 feet of the street front is concerned. "If there is one spot where there ought not to be any saloons," he said, in answer to an enquiry, "it is within eight of a railroad station. I have observed that men waiting for a train, especially in a strange city, are pretty sure to wander into a grocery if they see one from the station. If I had my way about it I would prohibit by law the sale of intoxicants within an eighth of a mile of a railroad station."—Baptist Weekly.

Supreme Court Decision.

The National Temperance Society has in press and will soon publish the full text of the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Kansas case, affirming the constitutionality of the prohibitory laws, and denying the plea for compensation based on the Fourteenth Amendment. This decision is so able and far-reaching and decisive that it should be in the hands of every friend of the cause. Send for it to J. N. STRAENS, Publishing agent, 58 Reade Street, New York, or THE CITIZEN PUBLISHING CO., Toronto.

The Canada Temperance Act.

RESULTS OF THE VOTING SO FAR:

Table with columns: PLACE, VOTES POLLED (For, Against), MAJORITIES (For, Against), DATE OF ELECTION. Lists results for various locations like Fredericton, N.B., York, N.B., Prince, P.E.I., etc.

N.B.—In the preceding table a place that has voted more than once has the different votes indicated by the figures (1), (2), (3) after the name of place. Figures printed in italics are for first or second votes in places in which a later vote has been taken than that so printed. Names in heavy faced type are of cities, others of counties.

SUMMARY. Nova Scotia has eighteen counties and one city, of which thirteen counties have adopted the Act. New Brunswick has fourteen counties and two cities, of which ten counties and two cities have adopted the Act. Manitoba has five counties and one city, of which two counties have adopted the Act. Prince Edward Island has three counties and one city, all of which have adopted the Act. Ontario has thirty-eight counties and union of counties and eleven cities, of which twenty-five counties and two cities have adopted the Act. Quebec has fifty-six counties and four cities, five counties of which have adopted the Act. British Columbia has five parliamentary constituencies, none of which have adopted the Act. In all, up to the present time, 81 cities and counties have voted upon the Scott Act, and 63 have adopted it. Nine counties and cities voted twice and 3 times, making an aggregate of 93 contests, out of which we have been victorious in 71. The aggregate votes cast in all the contests have been: For the Scott Act 161719, Against 111764. Net Scott Act majority 49955. If we omit all voting but the last, in those places which have voted more than once we get the following as the latest vote: For the Scott Act 147373, Against 102659. 44633. It is more than eight years since the Scott Act was first voted upon and adopted in different localities, and NO COUNTY OR CITY HAS YET REPEALED IT, although many votes have taken place on the question of repeal. PRESERVE THIS PAPER. YOU WILL NEED OUR TABLE FOR REFERENCE.

Lord, What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?

ACTS IN 6. A WORD TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

It seems incredible, but it is an authenticated fact, that the consumption of intoxicating drinks and tobacco (which paid duty) in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland for the year 1868, cost £100,243,044, considerably more than the whole national expenditure, including the interest of the national debt. Three pounds, six shillings per head for the entire population, men, women, and children, or more than £13 per annum (or per week) for every adult male in the kingdom.

And what does this enormous expenditure do for us? It makes the people poor—it breaks human hearts—it desolates happy homes—it ruins the souls of men!

And shall it continue? No! must surely be the answer of all who love their country and their race.

But if it is to be stopped, who is to stop it? We reply at once in the words of G. W. McCree, "The Christian Church." Let Christian men arise against this tremendous evil, and it will not last a day.

There is no doubt at all that, if this great work is done, Christians must do it, and the object of this paper is to urge upon Christians their solemn responsibility in the matter.

But it involves a sacrifice. What? A paltry article of diet, a little creaturely indulgence? Shall we count such a sacrifice anything but a privilege? Let Christians cease to drink, and we should speedily see a better, and a very blessed state of things. Let Christians go on drinking, and we see no remedy.

In reply to this, we are told that we have no gospel for total abstinence.

We answer, the whole gospel is on our side. It is sacrifice—self-denial from beginning to end. The greatest sacrifice the world ever saw—the moment of deepest interest in the world's history was that in which the King of Glory died—"The Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

Let, then, "the same mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus," even the spirit of Him "who bore our sins in His own body on the tree." Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John iii. 16.)

Were the thing good in itself, in what is termed moderation, did it lengthen life and promote health, we might, in the true martyr spirit, joyfully lay it down, seeing the balance on the side of evil is so tremendous. But now that it is proved from twenty-nine years' experience of the Provident Temperance Association that human life is considerably shortened by the so-called moderate use of these drinks, we are left without excuse if we support by our example a custom, which does assuredly cause our brother "to stumble, to be offended, and made weak."

The first concern of the child of God, himself a partaker of liberty, is the present and eternal welfare of others; and he goes forth to labor in the world around him, but is at once met by an instrumentality working against him in every direction, and in every form of evil—drink. He rejoices in the self-denying efforts put forth by men and women to benefit their fellow-creatures, but he sees that these efforts are very much directed to mitigating the effects of this one cause, without touching the cause itself. He finds all workers pleading for money, while the sums spent for drink by Christians alone would go far to supply every claim. He discovers that in one of the London penal prisons thirteen ministers of the gospel were committed as convicts in nine years, and not one total abstainer of any trade or profession. And he feels that while "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," it is presumptuous to plead its blessed protection, as if we go needlessly into temptation, as is the case with those who drink. And he prays, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The reply is, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother's unbelief." As Christians, abstain, and then as citizens you may consistently legislate. Come out, and with one heart and one soul, testify, as we do against negro slavery, which is binding in chains of darkness and of death, and consigning to a drunkard's grave, so much of the best blood of our country—so many of the noblest of our sons, and, alas! the fairest of our daughters—which is causing the cry of the widow and the wail of the orphan to rise up against us unto the ears of the Most High.—Jonathan Orin.

"Well, old fellow, it's all settled. I am going to be married in two months. You will be one of the witnesses, I hope?" "Count upon me. I never desert a friend in misfortune."

Vick's Floral Guide.

A silver lining to every cloud! With the short dull days of early winter come the cheery holidays and Vick's beautiful annual, and to spring already appears not far distant. We can almost see the green grass and the blooming flowers. In the way of Catalogue, Vick's Floral Guide is unequalled in artistic appearance, and the edition of each year that appears is more perfect, is surpassed by none. New and beautiful engravings, and three colored plates of flowers, vegetables, and grain, are features for the issue for 1888. Its lavender tinted cover, with original designs of most pleasing effect, will ensure it a prominent place in the household and library. It is itself a treatise on horticulture, and is adapted to the wants of all who are interested in the garden or house plants. It describes the best flowers and the choicest vegetables, if you want to know anything about the garden, see Vick's Floral Guide, price only 10 cents, including a Certificate good for 10 cents worth of seeds. Published by James Vick, Rochester, N. Y.