

Temperance Column.

The following PASTORAL on Temperance was used by the Bishop of Western Michigan, Dr. Gillespie, to be read by his Clergy on the 21st Sunday after Trinity. We commend it to our readers and to Temperance workers.—Ed.:

Dear Brethren of the Clergy and Laity:

I take the opportunity of the above appeal of the Presiding Bishop, signed by all the Bishops, to address you on the fearful evils of drinking habits, and what is our part and duty in the matter of reform.

Only those who have given special attention to the drinking habits that prevail about us, are impressed with the extent of the evil, and what it portends to the country and the Church. I can refer to only a few facts:

"In the United States the consumption of wine has increased since 1840 four hundred per cent., and of ardent spirits over 200 per cent. The people of this country used four gallons of intoxicating drinks per caput in 1840, and 12 gallons per caput in 1883. During the five years preceding 1884, while the population increased 15 per ct. the consumption of distilled spirits increased 14.5 per cent. In the eleven mountain states and territories the average in 1880 was one saloon to every 43 voters. East of the Mississippi, one saloon to every 107.7 voters. According to the report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue for 1883, there were then in the U.S. 206,970 liquor dealers and manufacturers. Their saloons allowing twenty feet front to each, would reach in an unbroken line from Chicago to New York. During the past twenty years the temperance reform has made wonderful progress, and the proportion of teetotalers is much greater today than ever before, and yet the manufacture of intoxicants has rapidly increased, and there is much more liquor used per caput than formerly." (Our country; its possible future and its present crisis.)

The evil is by no means one that attaches merely to classes of society which are away from our social life. "The roll written within and without, lamentations, and mourning and woe." (Ezekiel 2: 10), has entered the homes in which we dwell, and with which we are familiar. Many a home of comfort and even elegance, is overshadowed by the dissipation of a parent or husband—the sorrow, the greater because it may be the only weakness of character. Many a head is prematurely bowed by the bitter anguish with which the sad career of a son is filling their life. And often "the seraph sister band" have the joy of their youth clouded by a fond brother going down into the depths of drunkenness. Where is the family whose name is not tarnished by the drunkard in its line—and a person whose affections are not wounded by the settled habit of drinking of relative or friend?

This is not simply a question of

charity and rescue, for the ignorant, weaker classes of society. It is a question of the thrift and happiness all around us, of the well-being of the all sorts and conditions of men, for whom we pray.

My brothers and sisters, can we stand still and say, Yes, the evil is fearful, but we cannot reach it? Can we permit grog-shops (no name is too low), to line our streets, alluring every class, boldly overstepping even the moderate restraints of law, and care no more than were they places of honest, needed traffic? Can we see our politics dominated by the liquor interest—the facts are ready if they are wanted—and not be roused to indignation as American citizens?

The person who does not seriously think on these things, must live strangely apart from the things that are, or be past feeling. And the Christian man or woman who is not moved to the most earnest, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do," may well be asked, What think you of Christ, and know you of Him who "came to seek and to save that which is lost."

Men and brethren! What shall we do?

First—Study the terrible recital of figures and facts, until our minds are intelligent, and we can speak because we know, and our hearts are in the matter of reformation.

Second—In our personal and social habits, let us denounce the demon of drink. We know not what weakness and appetite within us, the cup in our hand may address. We know not what is the danger of any guest, man or woman, at our board. Let the old customs of drinking the health, of proffering the bottle, of having wine at the wedding feast, die out. However it may have been in the past, they are full of danger to-day. If society was once safe with them, she is so no longer.

Third—To the extent that our intelligence and our conscience approve—and let us beware that no fear of man nor interest of business or companionship governs either—let us co-operate earnestly and liberally, in every effort to suppress the present trade in and use of intoxicating liquors.

Fourth—Let it be on our minds and hearts, to reach individual cases of exposure and fall, and to protect and purge our community and country.

To my dear brethren of the Clergy I say, Preach often and pointedly on this subject.

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