

are no doubt talking over how pleasantly the day has been spent, and laying plans for the next day, as to who will carry the basket, who will build the fire, and who will catch and cook the fish for the picnic.

During our sojourn our pleasure was increased by a visit from the pastor of Cooke's Church, Kingston, and the Rev. Mr. Gracey, who looks closely after Presbyterian visitors. K.

### CHURCH AND STATE.

FIRST PART OF SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT.

(Continued.)

MR. EDITOR,— It might be urged that the conscience of the General Assembly forced them to protest against the action of the Senate. But these clergymen voluntarily became members of a church whose rules and standards they solemnly vowed to adhere to and maintain, and the standards did prohibit and do prohibit their meddling in civil jurisdiction. If they wish to discuss civil affairs they must withdraw from the Church or break their ordination vows. Their only resource is to assert that the Scott Act is a spiritual matter and not a secular matter, and while conceding to the civil power the right to determine what are civil matters, to claim the right of the Church to determine what are spiritual. As there is no recognized State Church, their claim could not result in any action, for all churches are not unanimous on this subject. Besides, the first temperance movement was commenced on the Continent as far back as 1517, and on this Continent in 1808, in both of which movements the Church took no part. During all these years the Church has never asserted that enforced abstinence or prohibition is consistent with the Scriptures, and if she assert it now it is a sudden discovery. And as far as the civil and spiritual matter is concerned, if there be a doubt we must take not what we should wish to be the present, but what is now the standing of the case. We know that the regulating of the liquor business has always belonged to the State, and that the Scott Act emanated from the Legislature. Is it not rather late for the Church to put forward a claim to intermeddle in the subject?

Let us now consider whether the Scott Act is in accordance with Scripture, and whether it is not the worst of all tyrannies, because under the form of law. The Protestant Church claims that the very absence from Scripture of the dogma of infallibility is an argument against it, and by parity of reasoning, the very absence from Scripture of the dogma of total abstinence is an argument against it. I start with the assertion that while there is nothing in the Scriptures to justify the State or Church in enforcing total abstinence, there is much in them to commend the use of wine in moderation.

The twenty four generations from the creation of Adam to the death of Moses were guided by God's unwritten law, a law written on the heart. The great patriarchs, whose lives overlapped so many generations, preserved from degeneracy or forgetfulness the traditional precepts that guided their simple lives; but nothing has been handed down from these years imposing total abstinence. This traditional law, a rule of righteousness for the earliest times, was afterwards embodied in the tablets delivered to Moses. This is the moral law. The last six commandments contain our duty to man. But there is nothing in them which imposes total abstinence. And there is nothing in any of the commandments which justifies the Scott Act. But God gave to Israel ceremonial laws, as well as the moral law. Under these laws, wine accompanied the daily sacrifice, "and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering," and on the presentation of the first-fruits, "and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine," and also at other offerings "wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice for one lamb." Would wine, if it be an evil thing, have been offered to the Lord, or to the priest who was chosen from the tribes to minister in the name of the Lord? "And this shall be the priest's due from the people . . . the first-fruits of thy corn, of thy wine and of thine oil." With the laws against theft, trespass and idolatry, came in one protecting the vineyard. Being a lawful industry, it received the protection of the law.

Wine was used on occasions of ordinary hospitality, as when Melchizedek, King of Salem, "brought forth bread and wine." When David brought the ark into Zion he offered burnt offerings and peace offerings

and blessed the people and distributed wine— to every one a flagon of wine. Was this a time to offer a thing of evil? We are told that it was indeed a blessing. "Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor and out of thy wine-press; of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him."

At the feast of Ahasuerus, perfect liberty as to partaking or not was given. "And they gave them drink in vessels of gold (the vessels being diverse one from another), and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure." In the halcyon days predicted by Micah, when the nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree. Surely the vine here is significant of joy and peace and cannot be a thing of evil. The wise and good have used it through all time, and the wicked declare it evil. "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine." Solomon speaks of the wine prepared by the bride: "I would cause thee to drink of the spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate." It was a source of strength and pleasure as we see time and again in the Scriptures: "And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their hearts shall rejoice as through wine." We see, then, that wine was used in religious ceremonies and social duties under the Mosaic economy.

But Christ came, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances," and abrogating all ceremonial laws. The moral law thereafter was the law, for Christ confirmed it—"one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled." The equitable principles of the Mosaic economy are embodied in the Christian economy and should be incorporated in our own laws. The Christians in the Apostles' time had the same rule as we ourselves. They had the Old Testament and personal teaching of the Apostles. We have the Old Testament and the teachings of the Apostles in writing. The Bible is the only divine rule. Let us now consider whether there is anything in the teaching of the Apostles that imposes total abstinence.

When certain men from Judæa taught circumcision after the custom of the old law, a dispute arose, and Paul and Barnabas were appointed to go to Jerusalem to the Apostles and Elders about the question. They simply received the answer to "abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which, if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you." Here, then, is the decision of the Apostles after "much questioning," and we see that they did not limit social liberty with regard to meats and drinks. St Paul said to the Romans: "One man hath faith to eat all things; but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at naught him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth. . . . Let each man be fully assured in his own mind." And again he said: "I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself; save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

It is true he said to the Corinthians: "If meat maketh my brother to stumble I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I make not my brother to stumble," this was a warning word of sympathy for the "weak" brethren as the "if" plainly shows. Had Paul wished to preach total abstinence from flesh he would have said so and would have been an abstainer from flesh himself. Every man must be his own judge whether he is leading others into temptation. The sympathetic word had scarcely been uttered when he said: "My defence to them that examine me is this: Have we no right to eat and to drink?" "And every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things." He preached simply the moderation and toleration that are opposed to the intemperate men of to-day, known generally as Prohibitionists, saying: "If I by grace partake, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?" and that it was by the manifestation of the truth he commended himself to every man's conscience. These words were in defence of his own practice, and his counsel to others was: "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink." Those who ignore this must surely forget that he who uttered it also said: "If an angel from heaven should preach

unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema."

But they tell us that the Scott Act does not prevent the use of liquor as a drink, and that he who needs it can get it from a doctor. The doctor is to judge whether I require it or not. Why should I be judged by his conscience any more than he should be judged by mine? Or why should the law, in such a matter, hand me over to the judgment of another? Is it not written: "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink?" Is it not written that God's creation is good and "nothing is to be rejected"? "In the latter times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it be received with thanksgiving." The temperance people assert that the Scott Act is not a rejection of a good creation of God; first, because it is not absolute prohibition, and secondly, because liquor is not good, but evil. The first plea becomes invalid, because they admit their ultimate aim to be prohibition, and it is the intent that constitutes the sin. And be assured those who wink at their schemes are not guiltless. They assert, in support of the second plea, that because man's hand put the grapes into the wine-press the wine is not a creation of God. They might as well assert that bread, which is manipulated from wheat by man, or that a house built from bricks, made by man, are not good creatures of God. "Every house is builded by someone; but He that built all things is God." If nothing is to be rejected why should we not take all the good we can gather from grapes, barley and hops? "He that plougheth ought to plough in hope, and he that thresheth to thresh in hope of partaking." Carping hypocrites said that John the Baptist had a devil because he came eating no bread and drinking no wine, and they called Christ a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber because He did. But our Saviour, who was a Prophet, Priest and King, knew the secrets of all hearts from the beginning and through all succeeding ages, and it was not necessary that any should inform Him of man's nature, "for He knew well what was in man." He therefore understood the needs of to-day as well as those of His own days on earth.

Paul, who affectionately addressed Timothy as "my true child in faith," told him to be sober in all things and be "no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." He who is imprisoned in a gaol, although unable to get drunk, is not necessarily a temperate man. The injunction which says "be sober" carries with it the power of not being sober or it has no meaning. St. Paul was a zealous upholder of the law against the ungodly but inveighed against those who wished to take away the natural rights of man and said "the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." "Why is my liberty judged by another conscience? If I by grace partake, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?" We read in Matthew x. 42: "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only," etc., showing that water was not highly esteemed as a drink in a wine-drinking country. In reviewing the Scriptures from the time of Adam until the death of the Apostles we can find no law imposing total abstinence. The highest development is only consistent with the largest liberty, for when physical power supercedes moral power, man becomes demoralized since by instinct he looks to the highest agency. "The eyes of the handmaid look perpetually towards the mistress." If it were wise to shackle a man with law so that he cannot get intoxicated it were wise to shackle him so that he cannot steal. Justice only punishes the transgressor.

WILLIAM T. TASSIE.

(To be continued.)

THE English Wesleyans are much concerned about the persecutions to which their members are subjected at the hands of State Church landlords and clergymen in the rural villages. At the recent Wesleyan Conference in London, the subject was warmly discussed. This treatment is not experienced in large towns, where Wesleyans are allies, but in country districts, where they are regarded as ecclesiastical poachers, and made to feel that they are under a ban.