

Temperance Column.

WHY DO I ADVOCATE TEMPERANCE?

(From The Church of England Temperance Chronicle, London, Eng.)

A short time ago the weekly meetings of one Branch of the C. E. T. S. were aroused to new interest by the president offering a prize for the best speech on temperance. Each speaker was not to exceed five minutes, and the company were to elect four persons from amongst themselves to assist the president and secretary in awarding the prize. Considerable excitement prevailed amongst some of the younger men who had been given to speaking, and who loved to fancy that they, now and then at least, showed some oratorical power. But how to condense the whole of their eloquence into one short five minutes! That was not an easy matter. However, to win the gift of their beloved president they were willing to do much, and as several at once set to work to prepare a speech, which for force, eloquence, wit, and brevity, should stand first, if it were possible by diligent perseverance to achieve it, in the two weeks allowed for preparation. A wish was expressed that ladies would also join in the competition.

A lady at once rose and craved permission to say a few words. "I cannot," she said, "presume to enter your competition list, and to make a speech a fortnight hence, but I should like to say something on the art of condensing now. In speaking in public we too often forget what it is we wish to say, and are anxious by flowery language to make an impression, and by here and there inserting a striking quotation from some learned writer, to show the extent of our acquaintance with literature. Then our very anxiety to make an impression leads us to be nervous, and wonder if we are doing so, and this gives rise to those painful 'hums,' 'ha's,' 'as I was saying,' etc., which is so excruciating to the listener, and it is almost sure to hide the point of the speech out of sight. You see my handkerchief," she said, taking it and spreading it out upon her dress. "I make an impression by extending it thus to its utmost capabilities, and you see a large white surface. I may wish to give it to a friend, but I lift it, it falls down at my feet, and refuses to be sent, but if I condense it thus," rolling the handkerchief up into a small tight ball, "then I can send it direct and with force where I will, and it does not fall meaningless at my own feet. After you have made your speeches, try to roll them up into a condensed ball, that their object and purpose may not fail, when you try to send them direct to the minds of your hearers."

We append one short speech:—
"You ask me why I advocate temperance? I look around me, and see on almost every side sickness, suffering, and unhappiness. Fair faces lined with care, and

young mothers left struggling widows. Then in the poorer streets I see poverty and dirt, idleness and crime. I see homes that are not homes at all, and I see faces that are marred and spoiled, from which all semblance of beauty, or even of comeliness, has departed. Then I remember those words that are written, 'And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good.' All that He made was beautiful and good. From whence, then, comes all this pain and suffering, these diseased bodies, these crippled forms, these desolate homes, and starving children? All of it, every form of suffering, comes as the sure and inevitable result of wrong doing. Every act of sin brings some evil in its train either upon ourselves or upon others. God intended us to be happy and bright, free from all pain. How, then, is it that there is so much misery? Has it ever struck you that our hospitals, our cripples' homes, or orphanages, of which we are so proud, ought to be considered a disgrace to our country? They ought not to be needed. Allowing that suffering comes from evil doing, yet drink is only one amongst many evils. This is so, but yet what do I find? I go into a hospital with its 300 beds always full, and the doctors tell me nine out of every ten cases are from drink. I go to the chaplain of a prison, and he tells me the same—it is drink that fosters and encourages crime, that destroys the moral sense of right and wrong. I trace the history of this and that poor cripple, and after a long series of questions I find that A.'s mother let her fall as a baby, one night when she had been drinking. B. has a leg all twisted and useless, and the mother says: 'He never seems to have been right since my husband came in one night, just a little muddled (he never drinks, you know), he didn't see him, and sat upon him. I go to an orphanage and find that drink directly or indirectly caused the ruin and early death of the greater number of the parents. Or else I find the parents died of consumption, and that this consumption arose because their parents indulged too freely in intoxicants. This, then, is why I advocate temperance. I feel such sorrow for the poverty around me, such sympathy for all the many who lie suffering such terrible pain in our hospitals and infirmaries, for whom we can do so little, and I know that almost all this pain, comes from drink. Let us try to win everyone wherever we can to temperance, to lead pure and sober lives, and nearly all our hospitals our surgical aid societies, and our homes for incurables, would be unneeded. To fight the battle of temperance is to strike at the root of the evil, is to attack this river of sufferings at its source; and if we go to the battle carrying the Gospel message with us, we hope to win a victory. Why have we not more enthusiastic temperance workers, and more funds to make the work prosper? Is it not a contradiction and a false charity to raise £20,000 for our hospitals, while we can scarcely raise £200

for temperance work, the work that if rightly prosecuted would bring again the joy and the beauty into our lives that God intended us to have? He made all beautiful and good. Let us ever remember that, and try to do something to restore that beauty and goodness and peace amongst us."

Q. Q.

The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect, to all men, charity.—Miss Balfour.



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