

inating and dividing issue in politics—other questions, however important, to take, for the time being, subordinate places; for the country settles only one great question at a time; and it is the dominating issue, not the subordinate ones, which, in a breaking-up of parties, exerts the determining influence in the recrystallization of voters. Other questions which have divided parties, as that of the National Bank and that of tariff, are, in comparison with the liquor question, of little moment; even the question of slavery, which crystallized the voters into two great opposing parties in 1856 and 1860, is dwarfed by this question. Drink is now reducing millions of negroes and whites to a far worse slavery than that which Lincoln's proclamation ended. Says Canon Farrar: "Important as great questions in English politics may be, such as the franchise and the land laws, they are matters absolutely infinitesimal compared with the urgency of the necessity of controlling and limiting with a strong hand this drink question."

2. The methods employed to stay this evil have proved insufficient. These methods have failed not only to bring this *monstrum horrendum* under control, but have proven wholly inadequate during these past thirty years, to prevent its constant and rapid increase, until now it has attained most alarming proportions, often defeating and electing candidates in municipal, state and national elections, and dictating political policies to both parties. Effort to turn back or even check the incoming tide of public opinion in favor of a National Prohibition party is labor lost, unless he who undertakes it clearly sets forth a remedy which will be manifestly adequate to meet the portentous and imminent danger against which this party is organized. It is to be regretted that the Rev. Dr. Spear, in his paper, did not think it worth while to suggest an adequate substitute for the one proposed by political prohibitionists.

3. License, low or high, is not an adequate substitute. License is greatly responsible for the present immense proportions of this evil. With the masses the knowledge that an evil is under the ban of the law is restraining and educative in a very high degree. Whatever may be the subtleties of our theories touching license, and the explanations which justify it with metaphysicians and philosophic statesmen, with the masses it comes within the scope of this logic: *that which the law permits is right, that which the law forbids is wrong.* Rev. Dr. Curry says license is "partial prohibition;" with the masses it is *partial permission*. As indulgences in the middle ages, license has debauched the public conscience. Houses of ill-fame are licensed in Paris, and bastards are nearly as numerous as children born in wedlock, nearly fifty per cent. of all births being bastards.\* Dr. Herriek Johnson, after witnessing the effects of the high license law in Chicago, denounces the law as "a sham and a delusion," and Hon. John

\* Von Oettingen's "Moral Statistik," 3rd ed., 1882. Bibliotheca Sacra for Jan. 1885.