

that Britons have the idea that nothing is done well unless it is associated with strong drink, and it is so. If we marry, we must drink; if we baptise our children, we must drink; if we bury our dead, we must drink; if we receive friends, we must drink; if we mourn, we must drink; if we rejoice, we must drink; if we part with friends, we must drink; if we do business, we must drink; if we show hospitality, we must drink; if we manifest our loyalty, we must drink; if we prove our devotion, we must drink. As George Cruickshank has so graphically shown in his wonderfully natural picture, "The Bottle"—drink meets us at the cradle, and follows us to the grave.

Such a widespread, and minute, agency as this, cannot exist without exerting an immense influence on us; and I want to show you that, bad as that influence is on our social life, and business habits, it is still more injurious in its bearings on the Christian Church.

In order to see this, we must look at the work which the Church has to perform; and I know not that I can better describe this work than in the words of the late Dr. Arnold: "It is her mission to make earth like heaven, and every man like God." She is to be the sworn enemy of all that is evil, and the earnest friend of all that is good.

With this work the drinking customs seriously interfere.

First, these customs greatly limit the Church's pecuniary resources. The Church's wealth, like all her other talents, is entrusted to her to be employed according to her Master's will. She is but a steward, and it is expected of stewards that they be found faithful. Every Christian, therefore, should form habits of economy and generosity—economy in his expenditure on himself, and generosity in the service of God. Now the drinking customs involve a large expenditure, and develop and strengthen habits of extravagance; and under their influence the decanter and barrel are often kept full, while the treasury of God is allowed