

**TEMPERANCE COLUMN.**

**ALCOHOL AND MORALITY.**

Dr. T. L. Wright, in the course of a remarkably thoughtful paper in the July "Alienist and Neurologist," points out most forcibly the deadly effects of liquor on the moral element of man's nature. This, though one of the most serious aspects of the liquor curse, is rarely dwelt upon by teachers and writers on temperance in the manner it merits. Not only does liquor wreck the physical constitution and impair the powers of the brain, but it most insidiously undermines the moral nature. This last is its gravest effect, for when the moral integrity gives way, the foundation of good citizenship is destroyed. In discussing this phrase of the question, Dr. Wright says:

It is proper to consider the nature of its impressions upon the moral constitution.

The manners of men as they relate to questions of duty, obligation, sympathy, and the movements of personality, either for good or evil, are usually known as morals. Men are much involved with considerations of incentive, motive design, intent, and purpose, and they are thereby materially colored and modified. The influence of alcohol on morals is immediate. It is perceptible to observation quickly after alcohol is taken into the system; but it varies greatly, both in kind and intensity, with the stage of drinking.

In general terms, it may be said that no instance has been recorded where the influence of alcohol upon a good man, when carried to its full extent, has failed to taint his moral nature. Nor has an instance ever been known of a character so base, so bestial and inhuman, that alcohol could not sink it still lower. It seems, in fact, true, as far as the world's experience extends, that the depths of depravity into which alcohol may plunge the human soul have never yet been sounded. In its position as a wrecker of good morals, alcohol stands 'proudly eminent.' Few things are so bad, as to have no good in them; but, aside from certain properties available in theapeutics, alcohol seems, in its impressions on the human organism to be singularly bad. In all its long and dreary history, it has never been known to add anything whatever to a man's real character for piety, or sympathy or love to his family, or kindness to his fellowman.

Alcohol deadens the conscience of anyone who partakes of it, let his motives in drinking be what they may. The casual drinker often partakes of alcohol without any clearly defined purpose, certainly without the slightest intent of committing an unlawful act. Yet, the poison affects him as it does others; it paralyzes his conscience, the acuteness of his sensibilities is blunted, and he is peculiarly liable to be led into improper and unlawful conduct. The drinker is deprived of intellectual soundness as well as of moral capacity; and yet the law says, 'Drunkenness is no excuse for crime.'

Shakspeare knew the deadly spell that alcohol casts on morality:

'If I can fasten but one cup on him With that which he hath drunk to-night already, He'll be as full of quarrel and offence As my young mistress dog' said honest Iago.

It appears to be a potential quality of drunkenness to depress the moral capacities and thus foster the assaults of temptation whether it comes in the guise of folly or of criminality. The corruption of the moral system may be observed in the small vices of drunkenness as well as in the surprising turpitude of its conspicuous outrages. The crimes of drunkenness are not commonly the outcome of premeditation and brooding malevolence. The natural defence against their exhibition and activity, the nervous basis of the moral constitution, is disabled. While this nerve defect in drunkenness may, to some extent, be inconsistent with premeditation and malice in the commission of crime, yet the very defect is the more dangerous to society, from the fact that it is withdrawn from the supervision of the rational mind.

A person intoxicated will commit offences in thought, in speech, and in conduct, which in his sober moods he would view with abhorrence. The tendency of drunkenness is inevitably toward crime.

And yet it must be remembered that the State licenses the gin mills which destroy good citizenship, fill prisons, turn home into Hades, and starve wives, mothers and children. Truly we are a civilized people!—*American Spectator.*

—o—o—  
"I LIKE TO HELP PEOPLE."

A woman was walking along a street one windy day, when the rain began to come down. She had an umbrella, but her hands were full of parcels, and it was difficult for her to raise it in that wind.

'Let me, ma'am; let me, please,' said a bright faced boy, taking the umbrella in his hands.

The astonished woman looked on with satisfaction, while he managed to raise the rather obstinate umbrella. Then taking but one of these ever-handy strings which boys carry, he tied all the parcels snugly into one bundle and politely handed it back to her.

'Thank you very much,' she said. 'You are very polite to do so much for a stranger.'

'Oh, it's no trouble, ma'am,' he said with a smile; 'I like to help people.'

Both went their ways with a happy feeling in the heart; for such little deeds of kindness are like sweet smelling roses blossoming along the path of life.

We all have our chances day by day, and shall one day be asked how we have improved them.—*Old Jonathan.*

—o—o—  
Men often go up to a temptation, from which they should fly, in a self confident way; and they often fly when they should stand and fight.

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