

With regard to those who from conscientious motives choose to practise the self-denial of total abstinence, either because they find it better for themselves, or because they would set an example to others, I have nothing but feelings of the highest respect and admiration. Only let them remember that self-denial is one thing, denial to others a very different thing. St. Paul appreciated this difference. He says, indeed: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat meat while the world standeth." There is the spirit of self-denial. But St. Paul does *not* say "I will eat no meats, and I will see that nobody else shall, and I will agitate to get laws passed to that effect." No, his language is "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth." "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Indeed, he warns us that the "Prohibition" spirit will be a sign of the declension from the Truth: he says that "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith . . . forbidding to marry and *commanding to abstain* from meats." St. Paul himself did not marry; he advised others to abstain from marriage, but he did not "forbid." There are many earnest, saintly men and women devoted to celibacy. There are many clergymen of the English Church who, for the love of God and of His work, have determined never to marry—some who have taken pledges to that effect. I honour and venerate the holy zeal of such men; but if they were ever to attempt to pass a Canon of Synod—as was done in the Middle Ages—forbidding all clerymen to marry, I think most Churchmen would resist such an act of tyranny unto the death.

If I am asked, "Will not such doctrines encourage the drunkards?" I answer no; for they are the doctrines of Scripture. "Yea, let God be true, though every man a liar." If I am asked "Will you not admit that drunkenness would diminish if not disappear, were the temptation placed out of men's reach?" I