

Ribbon of Blue, or Temperance Notes.



SHOULD it be tolerated? What? Why, one of the most accused and accursing businesses under the heavens. The process of wine-making and the drunkenness in connection therewith brought upon and into a good man's family an awful curse. Noah's is not the only name coupled with the curse and shame of intoxicating drinks.

The pages of history, sacred and profane, are stained with records of bloodshed, filthiness, wretchedness, misery, and poverty, and all to be traced to the pleasureable madness, or rather, the idiotic lebauchery and imbecility produced by tarrying long at the wine cup. More have been destroyed by mixed wines, and the curning concoctions of strong drink than human calculation can ever tell. Why is it men make such fortunes in the manufacture and vending of intoxicating drink? Why are men so anxious to get and pay for a license to sell ails, whines and biers? Pardon me if I have given too liberal an interpretation of the signs of the trade. Why is it provincial governments and corporations seem so eager and willing to grant "License to sell, and to be drunk on the premises," and off the premises, so long as the drink is paid for and the public peace is not outrageously interfered with?

Then the law comes down upon the poor drunken fool, who, after pouring down ales, wines, beers or spirituous liquors as his purse, taste or inclination allows until he is a maddened, senseless similitude of a man. Then after a night's lodging the law generally demands a fine of five dollars and costs. What for? Why? Is it to prove that the love of money is the root of all evil? We fear if the truth is told, it must be confessed. Men sacrifice their honor and better feelings as Judas did his master, because they are greedy and have the bag. But alas, long ere this, experience should have taught all concerned in this business, and we would not exclude any who have aught to do in aiding or abetting the traffic, that when we give our vote for Barabbas, it is useless for us to wash our hands as Pilate did, and declare we will have nothing to do with the result and responsibility. Who will try to answer the above suggested thoughts and questions? Herod did not desire the beheading of John the Baptist, but he set the machinery in operation, and to-day both Pilate and Herod stand in the list of men guilty of shedding innocent blood. "Tell me," said a gentleman to a poor drunkard, when urging him to give up the intoxicating cup, "where it was you took your first steps in this intemperate course." "At my father's table," replied the unhappy young man. "Before I left home to become a clerk, I had learned to love the drink that has ruined me. The first drop I ever tasted was handed me by my now broken-hearted mother."

The infidelity of working-men, says Rev. Charles Garrett, in nine cases out of ten comes out of the public-house.

Why not vote and work for Prohibition. Is not the blood-money poured into our municipal and national treasuries more than counterbalanced? First, by the crime, wretchedness and waste bred and created thereby, not only in the slums and brothels of our larger cities, but by the gross sin, gauntness and miserableness in almost every conceivable form which is known

to exist almost everywhere where a LICENSE TO SELL is in force. The unhappiness is often veiled and hidden. The day must come when those who are responsible will reap, with groans and tears, some of the torments of hell, which they poured out on earth. The fire of intemperance which burned up so much of domestic happiness, and destroyed in so many homes and places the fair bloom of love, will, with the evil of the spirit horribly intensified, prove that their unhallowed gain was lost! Eternal soul loss! Secondly, it could easily be shown, and it has been shown in figures, that this creation of the nation's revenue and wealth is a veritable bubble. Yea, worse, a positive source of loss and waste, both of life and gold. Yet in spite of living evidences in our crowded tenements, hospitals, poor-houses, asylums, prisons and penitentiaries, the makers and sellers of intoxicating drink will push the sale and temptation of that which intoxicates.

He'll tell you you want it, the climate is damp,
If you would be healthy, to keep out the cold;
To make you feel murr, to keep out the cramp;
Because you are young, or because you are old.

But the truth is, he wants all to take it, for he is greedy of gold.

Mr. Wm. Bell, in his remarkable lecture on "The Cities of the Black River," has wrought out figures which speak most eloquently. He depicted the river of alcohol coming down in its three tributaries of wine, beer, and spirits. Last year the English people actually swallowed 29,000,000 gallons of wine, 965,000,000 gallons of beer, and 36,000,000 gallons of spirits, the whole being sufficient to form a lake 15ft. deep, 120ft. wide, and ten mile. In spending £125,000,000 upon this the country had created the "city of reeling men," with one million of inhabitants and 190,000 licensed houses to increase their number; "the city of the blood-stained hand," with its 700,000 criminal inhabitants; "the city of the iron doors," with its 30,000 human beings confined in prisons; "the city of the men in blue," with its 51,000 policemen required mainly through drink, and costing more than £3,000,000 every year, when Saltaire, in York-shire, with its 4,000 people and no public-house, could do without a single policeman; "the city of the pale cheek," requiring 18,000 doctors in the United Kingdom, when 4,000 would be sufficient but for alcohol; "the city of the restless foot," with its roving army of 50,000 vagabonds, and not a dozen teetotallers amongst them; the city of the fireless grate," and all the misery which helped to rise the bitter cry of outcast London; and "the sad city of the midnight street," with its 400,000 ruined girls; "the city of starving poor," with its million of paupers; and "the city of the drink-slain dead," with its daily average of 330 victims.

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