

A BITTER COMPLAINT IN LOVE AGAINST THE MINISTERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH;

For having caused the Drunkenness of the People by falsely representing and giving to them Intoxicating
Liquor as the Emblem of the Blood of our Redeemer in the

Sacrament contrary to the law of that Ordinance.

Whatever is used at the Lord's table receives, because of its use there, the highest recommendation that anything on earth can have. This is a self-evident truth, and needs no argument to prove it.

The law of the Passover, at which feast our Lord instituted his supper, forbade all leaven under pain of death. Christ kept the feast in the spirit and in the letter; and the Apostle Paul instructs the Christian Church to "keep the feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice or wickedness." He gives directions here both as regards the state of the heart and the materials of the feast. Were he speaking only of the state of the heart, he would have said—not with old leaven, the leaven of malice or wickedness.

With unleavened or unfermented things at the least he could say—the cup of blessing which we bless; intimating that the cup was in itself a blessing, being perfect in its nature and beneficial in its effects. Had he used, as the Christian Church has used throughout nearly its whole history, the fermented or corrupted and corrupting things, he should have said to be correct—the cursed cup which we bless; but that is the cup he calls the cup of devils.

The Church, then, has departed from the positive instructions both of the Old and New Testament, and given the highest recommendation that anything on earth can have to the thing that is the most fruitful cause of disease, crime, and misery.

All the evils caused by this departure from Christ's ordinance can never be ascertained in this life; only very few of them can. The strong aversion to alcoholic liquors in the inveterate appetite had first to be overcome; this could only be done by representing it as a holy thing. The simply fermented liquor being weak was best adapted for removing this natural dislike, and prepared mankind for receiving the strong spirit when it was distilled. This sacred use of the poisonous spirit has caused it to be made the pledge, proof, and test of friendship throughout Christendom, and its effect was considered an earnest and foretaste of the happiness of heaven. This belief in its excellence of nature and effect caused the spirit when first produced—about the tenth century—to receive the name of "Water of Life," and that is its name in several languages yet. Latin *Agua Vitae*, French *Eau de vie*, Gaelic *Uisge-baugh*—this name is derived from the Word of God, and the high estimation in which the spirit and its effects were held sent the Church there for that name. No other words could equal in force the recommendation that this name gives to the liquor.

The error that this was the appropriate name for the liquor produced another delusion—viz. that the world was coming to an end immediately, because the river of the water of life was discovered, and men on their death-beds gave their lands to the Church for the salvation of their souls, the deeds commencing with the words—seeing the world is so soon to be at an end." The error also caused it to be used as a medicine, a universal medicine, a constant beverage, and as indispensable to the human body as the Grace of God, its great antitype, is to the soul. It was believed to be a great help to devotion, and was used to remove despondency and fear and to give boldness and confidence in God. Hence the wild and frantic devotions recorded in biography and history.

The liquor has the sacred place in the affections of the people yet. Healths are drunk; the drinking of a health is a prayer ejaculated to God by friends, for the welfare and happiness of one another, the expressions used are but slightly altered since the time when men said they pledged themselves in the Blood of our Lord. In drinking the liquor to this day, the pious Scotch Highlanders are known to ask a blessing over each succeeding glass, and what wonder when in their language its name is Water of life. But the strongest proof that the liquor has the sacred place in the affections of christians, is the fact, that the Temperance people in their efforts to substitute cordials for the intoxicating liquor, as the pledge of friendship, felt they were doing an impropriety, because the cordials had no sacred association.

Let us never forget that people are indeed to encourage the drinking of alcoholic liquors for friendship's sake, and let us also remember that for the same reason, it is continued until it has created a craving appetite for itself, and the poor besotted drunkard receives his glass from his seeming friend as the greatest kindness he can do him.

The Temperance pledge itself is a monument leaving no room for doubting what I have here established; the first part of the pledge forbids the drinking of the liquor—this only because for two reasons, either because it is an evil thing, or because it is too holy for common use, neither of which appear in the first part, but the second part explains the reason. It proclaims the wine a holy thing. A person unacquainted with the Temperance movement, and with drunkenness, could find no other reason in the document itself for the prohibition.

The Free Presbyterian Church of Canada, at its last meeting in 1858, decided that the agitation of this question, (sacramental wine) does not tend to edification, showing that the liquor has the same hold on the Ministers of the Gospel at the present day, that it had in the dark ages, their recommendation to procure the purest wine within their reach, notwithstanding, for they have not described what pure wine is.

Another difficulty arose at the same Meeting of Synod, as to the admission of members to the Communion, who were engaged in the liquor traffic; they could not be debarred because of this sacred hold the liquor has in the minds of all. The Churches would have to go to these same dealers for the wine for the Sacrament, for it is them that supply it, and therefore it would be a great injustice to keep them from the Ordinance; for gross vice they could be debarred, but the first step astray, they cannot see it their duty to prevent, and their use of intoxicating liquor at the Ordinance, is the only thing that keeps them from seeing their way clearly. It also made the Synod decide that the agitation of this question, (sacramental wine,) does not tend to edification. It prevents them too from seeing the necessity of making thorough total abstinence, a term of Communion; true, their last document says that the Synod feel that the evils of the traffic in some of its most common forms, are so great and manifest, that it is difficult to realize how a true Christian can feel at liberty to engage in such forms or being engaged, can continue in them. This really goes for nothing in practice, for from the first deviation from the path of safety to the ruinous end of the downward course, mankind are under a delusion that cannot be removed until they are shown which was their first step astray.

John Wesley commenced his societies with the total abstinence pledge, as a term of membership, but his successors had to set it aside, because of the wine they used at the Sacrament.

When it was proposed in the Church of England Synod last year, to do something for the suppression of drunkenness, the idea was ridiculed: Why? they believe it a sacred duty to drink, and drink abundantly.

The use of fermented wine in the Sacrament, is the only thing that has prevented the Christian Church from seeing it to be a SIN to touch, taste, or handle the accursed thing.

THE CAUSE BEING ONCE ASCERTAINED, WE NEED SEARCH NO FURTHER FOR THE REMEDY,
AND MAY GOD IN HIS MERCY SPEEDILY BANISH THIS ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE
FROM THE HOLY PLACE.

JAMES MILLER.