

NAKED LIGHTS.

THE TYPICAL CRIME OF THE UNIVERSE.

THE HISTORY OF A REFORM THE QUESTION OF IGNORANCE AND SELFISHNESS MORAL SUASION AND LAW THE DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CITIZEN.

Naked Lights is the title of a pamphlet on the liquor traffic, written by Rev. J. C. Aked, one of the ablest English advocates of the prohibition cause, and published by the United Kingdom Alliance. It is a masterly and irresistible a gem that ought to have a very wide circulation.

The following article contains the greater part of it, and will be found full of forcible suggestions making an admirable pulpit or platform reading. Every line of it is worthy of careful consideration.

One hundred men are employed in a colliery. It is immensely to their advantage, so they think, to use naked lights. They can see better by their aid than when they are using the safety-lamp. In hohing, in boring, in getting, they declare that the extra light that they secure is of unquestioned benefit. Travelling along the long galleries the saving in time is considerable. Altogether, the common use of naked lights is to them, on this showing, a manifest gain.

But there are considerations on the other side. The use of naked lights involves risk of explosion from time to time. And explosions take place, and lives are lost. Dependent upon the dead men have been wives and children. Some of the men working in the pit at the time have been badly wounded, not killed. They are cripples for life. The widows and orphans become a charge upon the community of those that are left. So also do the cripples who will never work again. So do the injured during the time that they are in hospital. Those who are living and working must support the bereaved and the helpless. Moreover, before they can get to work again some weeks or days must be spent in repairing the roads and the roof; and their industry is in this way still further taxed. Agreed, say they: we find a gain in the use of naked lights; these things are a set-off against the gain; but on the whole we prefer to run the risk, to take the loss, to carry the burden; we shall go on with our use of naked lights. They are as one man upon the question. There is absolute unanimity. They say, - We decide for the naked lights.

After repeated experiences of this character, one man's eyes are opened to see a little further into things. He begins to see and say, It is all very well for us to deliberately choose to run the risk and to carry the burdens. But it seems to me that we are making other people who have not been consulted run risks and carry burdens, too. What about the women whose husbands have been killed; the men agreed to face the chance of death, I know; and I know, too, they knew at the time what they were doing. But is that right to the wives at home? Have the tears and the pangs and the agonies of the loving wife, whose heart is broken, whose years are buried with her husband's mutilated body, nothing to say? Then there are the children. Have we a right to bring children into the world, and then expose them to the cold mercies of charity? Have we a right to deprive them of a father's care? Have we a right to practice for our own benefit that which will deprive them of their legitimate protectors, and fling them helpless upon the world orphaned of a father's love? These are matters into which I feel bound to dig a little deeper.

Then he further sees and says, - Why there are children not yet born, but soon to be born! And their fathers are dead, and their mothers are broken in health and spirits. Those children will probably be weaker in body and worse in disposition for this sorrow of their mother's during their pre-natal life. And when they are born, they will have to live as paupers upon the bounty of men. I can't get away from the idea that the unborn have some claim on us. What conceivable right

have we to penalize them in mind, body and estate from before the very moment of their birth?

Then the man's thoughts run back to the economics of the little community, and he begins to figure out the cost of the policy which he and his fellows have adopted, and in which they persist. Then he proclaims to as many as will heed, We have been making fools of ourselves. We lose a great deal more than we gain. Whatever gain may result from the use of naked lights, it is perfectly clear to me that, on any fair reckoning the losses are immeasurably greater. Reckon up the cost of maintaining those who are injured, the cost of doctoring them in the hospital, the cost of maintaining the women and children who come on to us when our mates have been killed. Reckon up the time we lose when there has been an accident and the breakdown gangs are at work. Reckon up everything, and you'll be mad with yourselves for making such a blunder.

Then he says, I am not prepared to run the risk of these burdens. I won't do it. I am not going to pay any part of the cost of maintaining widows and orphans and cripples. I am not going to use a naked light myself, and I am not going to have part of my labor exploited by a set of blunderers who go on paying a sovereign for a shilling's worth of pleasure.

But this man is one of the community. He can't get out of it. He is *there*. And there he will have to stay. And whether he likes it or lumps it he will have to take the same risk as the others, and he will be forced to pay his share of the cost of maintaining their system of naked lights.

Will any thinker dare to say that the community has a right to force the individual to run such risks, and to tax his labor in this way?

But the man continues to protest, to plead, to preach, and to pray. He protests that as they are one body they cannot take these chances without involving him in loss; and he protests against being penalized in defiance of his wishes and convictions. He pleads for the women, for the children, for the unborn, for the helpless and dependent. He preaches a larger conception of duty, of patriotism, of humanity. He prays that the spirit of the Living God may give wisdom to those who are sinning against their fellows in ignorance, and grace to those who are continuing in selfishness. He gathers a number of men like-minded with himself, and they swear before God that they will never touch a naked light, and that they will never in any way be a party to their use. They determine to concentrate the remainder of their lives to the task of persuading others to a like resolve. And they cherish the hope of a distant season when the community shall abandon what they themselves now perceive to be a wicked and suicidal policy, and shall prohibit the use of naked lights for evermore.

Will any thinker dare to say that these men are wrong in abstaining, are wrong in their propaganda, are wrong in cherishing the hope and in keeping before their view their great ideal?

The community is run upon democratic, upon self-governing principles. Its life is settled by the vote of the people, and the properly ascertained will of the majority is law. When the earnest few have become the powerful many, when the minority has become the majority, and when the majority declares upon a proper vote the three risks are no longer to be run, that naked lights are no longer to be used, will any thinker dare to say that they have no right to act upon their resolves?

But that is prohibition

Is there a flaw in this reasoning? I submit that there is not. Substitute "intoxicating liquors as beverages" for "naked lights," the nation or the race for this community of colliers, and the case for prohibition is made clear. The case is that the common sale of intoxicating drink does such harm to the whole community, and not merely to those who take the drink, that in its own interests and for its own protection the community has a right to prohibit the sale.

The appeal then, is to fact. Is it or is it not a fact that vice, poverty, crime, insanity, disease, all follow upon the open sale of intoxicating drinks? The evidence that these do follow in appalling and heartrending magnitude is overwhelming. Were a man to say that he did not know that these resulted from such sale, we should know that he was lying. Then is it or is it not a fact that vice, poverty, crime, insanity, disease, all tax the

life-forces of the nation not of the afflicted, the poverty stricken, the criminal only, but of the nation. There is no man living in this country to-day, possessed of sufficient ability to think at all, who does not know that in innumerable calls upon his private charity, in police-rate, in taxes, and in a thousand ways, he is called upon to carry these burdens. I, who do not drink, am called upon to pay heavier rates and taxes because other people do drink! I protest against the compulsion.

The attack upon our pockets is not the phase of the attack which we resent most. We are spending our lives, many of us, in the effort to make the world a little better and brighter for those that shall come after us, to make a little smoother the path upon which the feet of other generations shall tread. We are tired of poverty, of squalor, of ignorance and dullness and stupidity, of the wretchedness of women and the degradation of men. Our hearts bleed when we look upon the misery of child life, cursed from before its birth. We die daily as we look upon "infancy which knows no innocence, youth without modesty or shame, maturity which is mature in nothing but suffering and guilt, and a blasted old age which is a scandal to the name we bear. We want to change all this. We want to open out life and liberty to all the sons of men. We want to make possible for all a life in the world, the good and the beautiful. We want to make men free of the world's best health and wealth, to endow them with the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

And the common sale of intoxicating liquors renders our work a thousand times more difficult, nay, renders it for ever and for ever impossible while the sale goes on. While we are trying to make men happy and to teach them to be good, other men, for their own selfish ends, are changing men into brutes and earth into hell. The bar-room damns ten souls for every one that the churches save. It cannot be right, and nothing can make it right, that all these forces of love and pity and philanthropy, the life forces of any nation, should be perverted and rendered barren by the wanton selfishness of the careless, the ignorant, the indifferent, and the bad.

Consider these further elements of danger to the body politic. We stand committed to democracy, but imagine a democracy in whose veins runs beer - drink-soldien, muddled and fuddled, men dealing with the problems of national life and determining the destinies of a nation. A community whose wealth is absorbed and whose politics are dominated by the liquor traffic. A sovereign people delivered body and soul to be the bond slave of the brewer and the rum seller.

We are thrust into the competition of men and nations. What place are we to hold? Nations whose blood is sluggish with drink, whose brain is alcoholised, whose nerve force and vitality are sapped by dram drinking are doomed to go under in the onrush of a healthier and sober and purer stock.

We are dreaming of combination that will be better than competition. We are talking of the federation of mankind. But the essential condition of combination is that we shall be worth combining with. Strong, pure races will be accorded and will take the lead, to the displacement of races that are lower and weaker in the social, moral and intellectual scale.

In such a view it is not the personal injustice done to the individual which now looms large, it is the danger to the community. The common sale of intoxicating liquors is a crime against the Nation. The license system is treason against the State. It is more: it is the typical crime of the universe - the crime which consists in seeking one's own pleasure or one's own profit with absolute indifference to the cost of the pleasure or profit to other people. Its cost is human suffering. The price of it is the price of blood.

This crime must be stopped. The law, which prohibits the use of naked lights in the coal-pit, can prohibit the common sale of intoxicating drinks.

While we practice and preach total abstinence for the individual, we shall work and pray and vote for total prohibition for the State. If we are true to ourselves and our fellows in this great conflict, we shall win a glorious victory in the redemption of our nation from this foul and fatal bondage. We shall array the mighty power of law in defence of Right, and in hostility to Wrong.

TWO KEGS OF RUM

Late one autumn a whaler on her return voyage brought up in front of a populous village on an island in the northern part of the Behring sea. A lively trade ensued with the natives, who were anxious to make their bar-gains quickly and go in pursuit of the walrus which were now passing, and which every year provided the winter's food supply. But in addition to the legitimate articles of trade a couple of kegs of strong rum were put ashore, and the schooner sailed away for San Francisco with all the wealth of the village.

By the time the natives had finished the rum and got over its effects the walrus had all passed, there was no supply of food put up for the winter, and ice was beginning to drift in the sea. The result was inevitable. The next whaler that called at the island was able to take home an interesting collection of bones and skulls of the Eskimo type to an ethnological institution, but there was no man, woman or child left alive on the rum-stricken island to tell the story of starvation and death. *From "Through the Sub-arctic Forest," by Washington Park.*

CAMPAIGN EQUIPMENT.

The Vanguard, all numbers issued, in neat cloth binding, is the most important Canadian contribution yet made to the literature of the temperance and prohibition reform, containing **over 650 pages** full of invaluable arguments, facts and statistics, all reliable, fresh and good, fully and carefully indexed.

The People vs. The Liquor Traffic, a set of lectures by the late Hon. J. B. Finch, is one of the most forcible and comprehensive arguments for Prohibition ever made. Special Canadian edition, **240 pages**. Fine cloth binding, price 40 cents.

The Camp Fire is a neat four-page monthly campaign journal, specially published for campaign work. It summarizes the latest news about the prohibition reform, and presents an array of live, pithy articles and brief statements of important and helpful facts and incidents. Subscription, 25 cents per year.

The two great books above named will be sent postage pre-paid, and also **THE CAMP FIRE** to December, 1897 inclusive, to any person sending at once **ONE DOLLAR** to F. S. Spence, 51 Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

With these three sources of information, any pulpit, press or platform worker will be *fully equipped* for the great plebiscite campaign.

The number of books available for the purpose named is limited. First come, first served. Don't miss the opportunity.

Newton

&

Treloar

Johnson St.,

Toronto.

Telephone 567.

We Print

Books
Pamphlets
Reports
Society Blanks

And all kinds of

Office Stationery

Tasty Workmanship

Good Stock

Close Prices

Estimates cheerfully
furnished, and mail
orders promptly executed.

GIVE US A TRIAL.