

bility, therefore, to denounce those who follow the business as special offenders. For one, the writer has ceased to do so. In the eye of the law they are public servants as truly as the President of the United States. So much for the origin and nature of the business.

Our next position is that the business is morally wrong. That this is true needs no argument or proof before the enlightened moral sentiment of the country. It is an easy way of making money, without regard to equity, conscience, or consequences. Hence, all the leading Christian denominations of the land condemn it as sinful, and make it a bar to membership. If it is not sinful, why should not any man who chooses, any minister of the Gospel, for example, follow it? The better the man the less the harm certainly. On the theory of its innocence and its assumed necessity for the public good, Dr. Rainsford is undoubtedly right. The Church herself should take hold of it. She certainly could and would run it more decently and less harmfully than the present public servants do. Why not try it? Because it is criminal and shameful. License in any form can never make it right, nor can the people legalizing it be guiltless. We revolt at the idea of licensing other social evils, and yet here is a legalized system that, in the extent and sweep of its dire consequences, equals if it does not surpass the whole of them combined! Let us not strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

So much for the principles involved. Now for the practical results. The system has been on trial from the earliest times, under all possible conditions and modifications. And what has it accomplished? The general, and doubtless the correct impression is that the evils of the traffic are constantly increasing, notwithstanding all the so-called restrictions imposed. Statistics show that, per capita, there is more drunkenness and crime and greater consumption of intoxicants to-day than ever before in our land. High license may diminish the number of gin-mills, but the very

claim for the existence of the system is "to accommodate the public;" and so long as this is done it matters little whether there be many or few places of retail. A leading brewer in Omaha says, "I do not think high license lessens the quantity of liquor used, but places it in fewer and better hands." Its great benefit, he adds, is "that it acts as a bar to prohibition, especially so in this State" (Nebraska), "as the tax goes toward supporting the schools." Noble use of blood money! Philadelphia and other places tell the same story. Facts are numerous and incontestable if there were room to present them. Chicago is trying high license, and under it there is to-day a saloon for every 187 people, women and children included. Under a thousand-dollar license in Philadelphia the number of licenses granted last year was 244 more than the preceding year. And there were 1758 applicants refused who were willing to pay the thousand dollars! To think of killing the business by giving it license to live, or to denounce men for doing what they are thus authorized to do, are absurdities which one would think no sensible people could or would accept. Yet such is the monstrosity of our license system. We sell to men the privilege of fattening on public health and morals—unscrupulous men, too, for the most part, as we very well know—and then lift up holy hands, as though we had no part in the matter. To get at the root of the business we must strike at the license system. Here lies the Gibraltar of the traffic. The rumsellers know it if others do not. So long as they have law they are safe. License is their creator, their preserver, and their bountiful benefactor. Well may they glory in it and work it against prohibition, to which we now turn.

A definition of the term need scarcely be given. It means the suppression by law of the traffic in intoxicating liquors as beverages. Their use in medicine, arts, and mechanical ways of course is not hindered. Nor is a man's right to