

their ground, but would die in their homes or flee from them. Death in the tree is their life, and its life is their death. So after a similar fashion the only way to keep men and communities from becoming the prey of such evils as drunkenness, is to maintain in them a strong, healthy, spiritual life. But this can only be done through union and communion with Christ. Christ is, in His sacrifice, in His intercession, in His spiritual influences, in His vital union with His people,—the source, spring, sustenance of their spiritual life as really as the sap is the life of the tree. "I am the vine," said Christ, making use of this very analogy of the tree and its sap, "ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." If deadly weeds, and loathsome worms are invading the social tree, it is because the spiritual life is waning in these parts. To remedy the evil it is not so much washes and outward remedies that are needed as a more vigorous inner life, in other words, closer union and communion with Christ the fountain of all spiritual life in this world. Missionaries to the heathen find it so; they never make any progress in reforming their hearers while they preach mere morality. The heathen *know* all these things, it is *power* to do the things they know to be right that is wanting. Faith in Christ, implying in it vital union with Him, supplies the needed power, and then a work of reformation begins that many waters, yes, and many fires cannot quench. Dr. Chalmers found it so at Kilmany, as he tells us himself. For years he preached against drunkenness and his parish was as drunken as ever; but when he found Christ in the solitude of his sick room, and when he came to his pulpit like one that had risen from the dead hold-

ing aloft the cross and inviting sinners to behold Christ, the whole country was moved from centre to circumference, and a reformation began which has continued there till this day.

"Talk of morality, Thou bleeding Lamb,
The great morality is love of Thee."

While it should never be forgotten that the great remedy for all our social evils is thus the Christianization of the people, bringing them into union and communion with the source of all spiritual life and health, still we ought not to overlook the fact, clearly taught in the Bible, that the civil rulers of a land have a duty to discharge towards such social evils. Some governments have called drunkenness a crime, and punish drunkards as they do thieves and incendiaries, and make drunkenness an aggravation rather than an extenuation of other crimes. In our laws, jealous almost to a fault of personal rights, no attempt of this kind would succeed, but there is a loud demand, even in Britain, and still louder now in Canada, that our Government should take cognizance of the liquor traffic, and do something at least to diminish its injurious consequences.

There are three positions a Government may occupy towards traffic in strong drink. It may refuse to know anything of the business and allow its citizens to carry on the traffic without molestation or regulation or license, as they do with the traffic in bread and broadcloth. This plan has been tried in some of the neighbouring States, but not with such success as can encourage others to try the experiment. It is found that the more the sellers multiply, the more the buyers increase, and that it is better to allow a few to enjoy the dangerous monopoly, although it enriches them at the expense of others, than to spread the evil over a wide surface.

But a Government may recognize the trade and legislate in the way of licens-