

Exercise your manliness, your self-control, in dependence on the grace of God." The other religious system, Mohammedanism, said: "Wine and strong drink are an unmitigated curse; I prohibit their use. No follower of mine can buy, or sell, or manufacture, or consume, intoxicating drink. My religion is an improvement upon that of Jesus Christ. If He had lived to-day He would do as I do."

We know from history how this last-named religion, in the flush of its first enthusiasm of Prohibition, seemed likely to wipe out Christianity from the face of the earth. But, after the lapse of a thousand years, what are the relative positions, morally and intellectually, of those two religious systems to-day? Who was right in the end, Christ or Mohammed? Apart from all consideration of the religious aspect of the question—for we are now addressing ourselves to the infidel argument—let me ask: Would you not rather, a thousand times, be a descendant of four hundred generations of the "drunken" English, or the "drunken" Irish, or the "drunken" Scotch, or the "drunken" Germans, than of four hundred generations of the total abstaining but unspeakable Turk?

I speak thus strongly, because I feel that in this question the honour and truth of Christ and of the Bible are involved; because every one who advocates Prohibition flings an insult in the face of his Lord: every such advocate declares that the religion of Christ is insufficient and needs supplementing. And because I feel that this whole Prohibition movement is a retrograde step in our civilization, our religion, our liberty. It is a returning to "the weak and beggarly elements of the law"; it is destructive of "the right of private judgment"; it is just another species of "priestcraft and popery." I no more want to be told what articles of food are prohibited than I want to be told what books are placed on the "prohibition list" of the Index Expurgatorius. I do not want to belong to a nation of slaves. I do not want a new Gospel.