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TOPICS OF THE DAY

CANADA'S NATIONAL WEEKLY

4 Shows Daily, at 2.30, 3.45, 7.15 and 8.40.

Wed.—NORMA TALMADGE in "SHE LOVES AND LIES."

Opera House

Eve., 7.15-8.45; Mat. 3.15—Prices, Eve., 35c., 50c.; Mat., 15c, 20c, 30

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Helen Holmes in "The Fatal Fortune"

Bartlett, Smith and Sherry
A three cornered comedy and high class male act—fine singing and galloping fun.

Elliott and West
Humorous dancing—laugh-making steps never seen here before.

Esther Trio
Stunts extraordinary set off with mirth making that's infection.

15 PERFORMERS—ALL STARS!

In Praise of Intemperence

"THE REAL CHOICE OF ARDENT NATURES IS BETWEEN TWO OPPOSITE INTOXICATIONS—DEVILISH OR DIVINE."—THERE IS NO USE IN LEADING A MAN UNLESS OF HIS FREE WILL HE ELECTS TO DRINK IT.

[Dr. W. T. Herridge in Ottawa Journal.]

Every lover of his kind should rejoice that alcohol is losing its hold upon social customs and national life. It is no longer "good form" to finish a dinner by lying under the table. Fifty years ago, our present prohibitory laws would have been impossible of enactment by the people's will. There has been a steady growth of resistance to the menace of the barroom, and even to the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage. The repeated spectacle of lives of brilliant promise, robbed of hope, and hurried, perhaps, to an untimely grave, has broken a long apathy, and made us more regardful also of the man who, though his one talent may always keep him in the background, is still worth saving from the danger of utter ruin.

But even if Canada, throughout its whole length and breadth, should become "bone dry," the greater task still remains—to clothe the bones with strength and loveliness. Reform can never end with negatives. After shutting certain doors that ought to be shut, other doors must be opened wide. Repression is intended to pave the way for expression, and at the same time to make the best forms of expression more welcome to all. There is no use leading a man to water unless, of course, of his own free will, he joyfully elects to drink it.

It is conceivable that we might have been placed in a world where even the most precious things came to us without effort, and life progressed by a kind of automatic necessity involving neither pain nor peril in the working out of it. But such a world would soon strip us of the characteristics which contribute most to the growth of manhood. It is through the friction of adverse circumstance, in the rough hurly-burly on time's thoroughfares that the strength or weakness of human nature asserts itself. If this world were too easy, we might fall into the sloth of the lotus-eaters; if it were too hard, we might be driven to despair. But since a wide range of possibilities is presented before us, the choice among which is determined, to a large extent, by ourselves, there are disciplines for the athlete, and challenges for the adventurous, and to him that overcometh belongs the laurel crown.

Various attempts have been made, from time to time, to escape the full responsibility of living. It is not much to be wondered at that some sensitive natures, beholding the evil around them, and hopeless of its cure, should have withdrawn to a quiet haven where, earth's coarser noises being shut out, they could the better prepare themselves for the pure joy of heaven. There is, at least, something to admire in the ascetic idea with its fastings and igils and renunciations. It has doubtless had its effect in emphasizing the supreme importance of religion, and has been by no means wholly wanting in unselfish service to those less sheltered. Yet, even when practiced with manifest sincerity, it is only the second best solution of the problem of life. That very word, "ascetic," has been narrowed in its true meaning; for literally it suggests the gymnasium in the midst of earth's arena, not the cloister outside of it. It is one thing to triumph over difficulties by getting rid of them and another and much finer thing to triumph over them though they still remain.

This, however, is no argument for the supine acceptance of any conditions, whatever they may be. We are not yet cizilized if we fail to guard the moral sanctities. But while the state should do its utmost to promote the welfare and inspire the loyal service of its citizens, and to remove needless handicaps out of their way, the main issue lies with the individual. Virtue is not manufactured like an industrial commodity which has "cornered" the market. It develops from within. We should be thankful if the setting of our life encourages virtue; for few of us have such superfluous moral strength that we can afford to tease it or brag about it. But no one is good simply because he lacks the opportunities of being bad.

From a prudential point of view, one may go to excess even in the best things. Life has often been shortened by vice; but it has been shortened also by the ardor of research into some hidden truth, by self-forgetting service to others, by devotion to a great cause. If the number of our days on earth were the chief consideration, it would be wise to acquire a timid caution which constantly checked all fine carelessness. Milton puts the emphasis in the right place when he says:

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what
thou liv'st
Live well; how long or short permit
to heaven."

For even though the issue of intemperance looks alike in every case, it makes all the difference between glory and shame what direction the intemperance takes.

In some quarters, enthusiasm is regarded as crude and vulgar. But while it is pathetic to observe how easily some people are stirred, and what a poor thing pleases them, no one who is alive can maintain passivity forever. Some form of self-expression is inevitable; and true human culture aims, not only to develop the power of discriminating between what is of real worth and what is not, but to arouse such an ardor to express the very best that is in us, that its splendid impetus sweeps all petty silliness out of the way.

For this reason, a purely restrictive regimen will always prove inadequate. Too much ethical instruction is confined to telling people what not to do. It bewilders with its bylaws, and bristles with a phalanx of prohibitives. It so cuts down the sphere of thought and action that only a little room is left in which to move about freely. Of course, this kind of teaching has its place. In the preliminary stages of moral education, "thou shalt" may have to wait upon "thou shalt not." That was the form of the Ten Commandments; and the ancient Jews—in this regard, not altogether unlike the modern Gentiles—proved their validity by breaking most of them.

A limp and lackadaisical saint might learn some lessons from an adventurous sinner. For if life is not positive, it is not life at all. Temperance in lower things does its best work when it prepares the way for a fine intemperance in higher things. The problem is, not to narrow the natural scope of personality, but so to ennoble every power belonging to us that we can dare to be ourselves without bane. So far from the "spiritual" being necessarily assured by a gradual evaporation of the material, we are on the road to its enthronement when we learn the noblest truths which the material has to teach us. There are enough ghosts of doubtful character to prove that matter is not the primary seat of evil. In one of his imaginary conversations, Landor makes Bossuet say, 'to love God is to hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies if we would save our souls." Had this celebrated ecclesiastic ever really talked such nonsense, we should feel obliged to think a good deal less of him. Browning puts it differenty:

"Let us not always say
'Spite of this flesh today
I strove, made head, gained ground
upon the whole!'
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, 'All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more,
now, than flesh helps soul.'"

The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, defined virtue, as the mean between two extremes. For instance, benevolence, he said, was a mean between the defect of miserliness and the excess of prodigality; courage a mean between the defect of cowardice and the excess of foolhardiness. Paul, the Christian philosopher, on the contrary, said, in effect, that virtue is an extreme, not a condition of careful equipoise; a glowing goal towards which one rushes with the unrestrained fervor of his whole being. He did not think it needful to weight the exact amount of virtue lest it might shade off, on one side or the other, into a vice. He believed that you cannot have too much of a good thing—nor too little of a—bad thing.

There can be no doubt which of these two views has the greater attractiveness for vigorous manhood. Only trim and sluggish souls are content to be bolstered up by a multitude of external prohibitives. Life is colorless without some stimulus strong enough to sway our whole nature. Even abortive attempts to reach a realm of quickened feeling and intenser action and thought more rich and rare prove the ineradicable instinct to escape from the dull, prosaic self with its absence of zest and exhilaration. Of course, it is a pathetic mistake to suppose that one can "see life" by indulging in foolishness. But the fact remains that the real choice of ardent natures is not so much between sobriety and drunkenness as between two opposite intoxicants—devilish or divine.

When Ulysses passed near the island of the Sirens, he had himself bound to the mast of his vessel with strong cords, so that, while he wanted to go to them, he was unable to do so. When Orpheus made the same voyage, he took up his familiar lute, and on it he wove such a tissue of harmony that, by comparison, the song of the Sirens seemed uninviting and commonplace.

The only sure way to destroy base appetites is by the expulsive power of noble ones. As long as we dwell on earth, we shall be liable to encounter moral disease-germs in some form or other; but health throws them off all the time without being painfully aware of it. "Passion" should not be looked at askance as though it had to be coarse and mischievous. It is the one thing needed if we are ever to reach our highest estate, or do our finest work. Neither as individuals nor as a people can we hope to attain true manliness save by a rough testing in the arena of life. Excess of the right sort will usher in the new day, excess which, instead of wasting strength, continually increases it, because it becomes part of those inexhaustible and undismayed forces which uplift the world.

W. T. HERRIDGE.

NOTICE OF LEGISLATION.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that application will be made at the present session of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick on behalf of Archibald Fraser, of Edmundston, N. B., Manufacturer, Donald Fraser, of Plaster Rock, N. B., Manufacturer, William Matheson, of Edmundston, N. B., Manufacturer, Andrew W. Brebner, of Cabano, Quebec, Manager, and Thomas Matheson, of Estcourt, Quebec, Manager, for the passage of an Act incorporating the applicants and such other persons as may become associated with them, with power to erect, contsruct, maintain and operate a dam at or near the Toblque Narrows in the Parish of Perth in the County of Victoria, for the purpose of generating, developing, selling, distributing, using and disposing of Hydro-Electric power, and with power to erect, construct, maintain and operate pulp and paper mills and other manufactories, and with power to expropriate real property at the site of the proposed dam and for flowage and other rights and with all the usual powers incident to a corporation including the power to issue Bonds, Debentures, Debenture Stock and Share Warrants.

Dated this nineteenth day of March, A. D. 1920.

SLIPP & HANSON,
Solicitor for Applicants.

BRITISH FINANCES FOR THE PAST YEAR

London, April 19.—J. Austen Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Excequer, in introducing the budget in the House of Commons today, said the expenditures for 1920 were approximately £144,000,000 in excess of the budget estimate of last year, but £63,000,000 below the revised estimate he made last October.

Regarding revenue, Mr. Chamberlain declared that the result was not only more favorable than had been an original budget estimate of £1,201,100,000. The actual exchequer receipts were nearly £138,500,000 in excess of this. On the present basis of taxation the Chancellor calculated the revenue for next year at £1,341,650,000.

Boston, April 19.—Leading distance runners of America awaited the starter's gun at noon today for the 24th annual American Marathon conducted by the Boston Athletic Association. Seventy-six athletes had prepared to travel the 25 mile course from Ashland to Boston.

a wife too many

He had only one, it is true, but he basely admitted it was one too many. As a Professor of Science, he married in a moment of abstraction and then forgot all about it. But his wife was human. She resented being an experiment. She desired to be loved. Poor Professor! What could he do? What did he do? Did he find matrimony a delightful experiment after all? Or did the experiment of having a wife prove the Professor's undoing? It's well worth while finding out, both about the story and about men who so carelessly forget. "Hearts Are Trumps," is complete in the April issue of

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