



Temperance Department.

WORDS FOR THE HOUR ON TEMPERANCE.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

The approach of the holiday season furnishes not only a fitting occasion for a fresh protest against offering intoxicants upon New Year's Day, but for a bird's eye glance at some of the present aspects of the temperance reform. The pernicious custom of setting out wine, punch, etc., before visitors on the birthday of the year deserves no quarter from pulpit or press. It is a flagrant sin against social morality, and without a shadow of excuse. Hospitality does not require intoxicating beverages, as long as ample supplies of coffee, lemonade, and other harmless drinks can be so easily provided. Many a young man takes his fatal first glass of wine on New Year's Day. Many another has had his incipient appetite for alcoholics confirmed by the temptations held out by female hands. It is not too strong an affirmation to say that the woman who deliberately offers an intoxicating glass to a man deserves to suffer the woes of a drunkard's wife or a drunkard's mother. Nor is it too much to say that no one has a right to ask God's blessing on his home while he makes that home a place of perilous temptation to unwary feet and to those which easily "stumble."

During the year now closing a considerable discussion has arisen over the question whether spiritual conversion can take away entirely the physical appetite for strong drink. The position that a change of heart does often produce this physical effect has been stoutly affirmed at some of Mr. Moody's temperance meetings and elsewhere. That sporadic cases of this kind have never occurred we are not prepared to deny; but surely they cannot be frequent enough to establish such an extraordinary hypothesis. The appetite for alcoholic stimulants is a bodily craving, often amounting to a confirmed disease. Sometimes it is hereditary; sometimes it is produced and deeply-seated by long indulgence in stimulants. Certain bodily tissues become affected by drink, and so affected that they inevitably thirst for more drink. Now that the supernatural grace of God may give a man the power to resist the cravings of a physical appetite is in accordance with the Bible and with human experience. The enemy is not obliterated. He is conquered and kept under. This is the glory of divine grace that it "giveth us the victory," not over foes which have no existence, but over those which have a terrible vitality. When Paul struck hard blows to "keep under" his physical appetites he was not fighting a man of straw. John B. Gough—in a late address in Lafayette-avenue Church, Brooklyn—affirmed most distinctly his utter disbelief in the new theory that a spiritual conversion has any such physical effect as to obliterate the appetite for liquor. There is no better authority than his, after thirty-five years of wide observation and severe personal experience. His own appetite for drink is only a tiger chained up by vigilance and the Divine strength.

Every theory is a dangerous one which leads people into the delusion that they can safely tamper with intoxicants. The worst thing about alcohol is its infernal subtlety. It can deceive the very elect. Thousands of Christians have fallen by its sorcery. I knew an otherwise excellent churchmember who was often so overcome by his wine-bottle that he could not conduct his family worship intelligibly. A man who had been apparently converted from inebriety has often exhorted and prayed in my own church-meetings, and has then been tracked to the dram-shop, on his way home from the service! A very large number of those who have signed the total abstinence pledge in Mr. Murphy's mass-meetings have already gone back to their cups. All such facts—and we could multiply them indefinitely—only confirm the Bible truth that strong drink "is a mocker," and whosoever once puts himself under its power discovers that it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. We do not deny that many inebriates have been soundly converted; we have the names of such on our church-roll to-day. But every such man should write on the palm of his hand: "I cannot trust God too much, and I cannot trust myself too little. The vast majority of persons, male or female, who ever become drunkards, go down at last to the drunkard's den. This is one of the most overwhelming and unanswerable arguments in favor of entire abstinence from the ensnaring glass." It is not about time to stop quarrelling

about disputed Bible texts, and to rest this moral reform upon the basis of common sense and Christian philanthropy? I dare not drink for my own sake. I ought not to drink for my neighbor's sake. This is a total abstinence platform strong enough and broad enough for all to stand upon.

3. Female inebriety is on the increase. When women are once enslaved by liquor or opium they are even more difficult cases to reform than men. Among the occupants of tenement-houses and in the by-streets female drunkenness is appalling. Baillie Lewis testifies before a parliamentary commission that in Edinburgh the principal factor of intemperance among females is the licensed grocer's shop. What is true of Edinburgh and Glasgow is equally true of New York and Brooklyn. The great mass of drinking women (with the exception of prostitutes) procure their drams at the grocery. This fact gives fresh emphasis to the wisdom of the efforts now being made by Dr. Crosby's Society, by the State League, and by the Brooklyn "Brotherhood" to break up the corner drinking-dens. And the further we push this matter the more hideously illogical and suicidal it seems for the civil authorities to license a tipping-house of any kind or under any circumstances. But the refusal to license or to allow tipping-houses of all grades means practical "prohibition." So that Dr. Crosby and his co-workers will soon find themselves confronted with the question: Are we ready for that?

The last twelve-month has witnessed a decided progress of agitation and discussion among the thoughtful classes in Great Britain. The "Church of England Temperance Society" numbers among its supporters the bishops of Oxford, Exeter, and several more of its influential leaders. The brilliant Canon Farrar (author of the "Life of Christ") is delivering radical teetotal sermons in Westminster Abbey? Basil Wilberforce is agitating Britain with as much eloquence for total abstinence as his celebrated grandfather did for Negro emancipation. These two clergymen are the most popular orators in the Established Church. The British reformers are far more thorough, scientific, and statistical in their philanthropic movements than we are. They have great faith in parliamentary commissions.

Before the present "Committee of the House of Lords" a very interesting series of answers has lately been rendered by Sir William Gull, the eminent physician of Guy's Hospital. Sir William agrees with Dr. Richardson and Sir Henry Thompson in denouncing the too free use of alcoholic medicines. He testifies that he treats fever patients without alcoholic stimulants; that the use of wine, ale, and brandy by overworked people is useless and dangerous; and that in regard to intellectual labor all such drinks are positively hurtful! Even the moderate use of alcoholic drinks he pronounces to be injurious to the nerve tissues and deleterious to health. In reply to the question of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Penrhyn, he boldly said that "there is a great deal of injury done to health by the habitual use of wines even in so-called moderate quantities." This is rather radical doctrine to be heard in aristocratic quarters. He denies that alcoholic beverages either improve the intellect, or impart strength, or add nourishment, or supply warmth to the body. He makes a proper distinction between "heat and the feeling of heat." Sir William closed by advocating the immediate abandonment of intoxicating beverages on the same principle that he would the prompt abandonment of poisons.

When such wholesome teachings are heard from such influential quarters, it is time that American physicians began to reconsider their practice of freely using and recommending alcoholic tonics. Some of them do give the weight of their influence in opposition to such tonics; but it is still an undeniable fact that an immense amount of drunkenness is produced by the use of wines and Bourbon as restoratives. Alcohol covers up a great deal; but it cures very little. In medicine, as in the social circle, "wine is a mocker. Whoso is deceived thereby is not wise." A "Happy New Year" would it be if it banished the decanter from every house in our land.—N. Y. Independent.

"I WILL FOLLOW THE CHURCH, AND NOT THE STATE, NOW, MOTHER."

BY REV. H. W. CONANT.

The influence of Christians should be safe to follow. Officials in the Church of Jesus Christ have always been held in the eyes of the world as specially entrusted with moral influences, and in a peculiar sense amenable for their actions. An apostle said that "a bishop should not be given to wine;" and we incline to the rendering of a Hebrew and Greek scholar who says it should be read, "should not get near wine." Now as wine was the only intoxicant known at that time, we judge that the injunction applies with equal force to all intoxicants.

During the past season, at a centennial celebration dinner, there sat among others at the table a young man with his Christian mother, the governor of the State, and a well-known Bishop.

When lager beer was served, the governor refused it; but the bishop drank it. The young man said, "Mother, I will follow the Church this time rather than the State," and drank his lager.

Two men were sitting near the bishop, and when one of them took his beer the other said, "How is this? I thought you were a temperance man!" "Well," replied his friend, "the bishop drinks it."

It is not our purpose in penning these lines to judge the bishop; to his Church and his God we leave that; but we do ask which was safe for the young man to follow? Was it the Church or the State?

Rev. Dr. Crosby and others inseparably connect Christianity and the wine-cup, if they are to be taken as its true representatives. So when this same bishop sat at the head of the table, on another occasion, with a lighted cigar in one hand, and a glass of wine in the other, he was taken as a representative Christian!

The Boeddhas, Mohammed, and even that apostate church which disgraces the name of religion as well as our civilization—the Mormon—condemn the use of wine. Is Christianity so far below these religious systems that it teaches the use of that of which God's Word says "it is a mocker," and commands us not to "look upon when it is red?" Nay, verily, the apostle says, it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby a brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

If the Church is not as safe to follow as the State, who is responsible? Can the State be expected to excel the Church in moral example? Must it always be hurled in the face of Christians that "the Church is always behind in reforms?" Let all "professors" think of this!—Zion's Herald (Boston).

BOYS—AND THE BOTTLE.

BY THE REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

Nothing from the pen of Dickens or Thackeray goes nearer to the fount of tears than many a scene in child-life which is occurring every day. Not long ago I came upon a staggering father who was being led home by his own little boy. When the helpless tot reeled over and was likely to fall the lad dexterously steadied him up again, as if he had acquired the knack of it from a long experience. The expression of shame and grief on the poor child's face haunted me for hours. I shuddered to think that the accursed appetite might descend as an hereditary bane, and be reproduced in that child in future years. One of the most hopeless cases of drunkenness I ever knew was the case of a church member whose father and grandfather were confirmed toppers. That the lust for strong drink is hereditary has been often proved; but what father has a right to bequeath such a legacy of damnation to his offspring?

A few days ago an interesting lad called at my door with a request from his mother for me to visit her. "What is the matter, my lad?" His countenance clouded over as he said tearfully—"It's about papa." The old, old story. I knew it too well. "Papa" had broken loose again, and the seven evil spirits which had been cast out had come back again, and the last state of the man became worse than before. Such visits are among the saddest which a pastor can ever be called to make: to me—after my long observation of the clutch which drunkenness fastens on its victim—they are among the most desperate. There is a bare possibility that the father may be saved; but what an example to his boy!

A friend gave me lately the experience of a skillful professional man in about the following words: "My early practice," said the doctor, "was successful, and I soon attained an enviable position. I married a lovely girl; two children were born to us, and my domestic happiness was complete. But I was invited often to social parties where wine was freely circulated, so I soon became a slave to its power. Before I was aware of it I was a drunkard. My noble wife never forsook me, never taunted me with a bitter word, never ceased to pray for my reformation. We became wretchedly poor, so that my family were pinched for daily bread.

"One beautiful Sabbath my wife went to church, and left me lying on a lounge, sleeping off my previous night's debauch. I was aroused by hearing something fall heavily on the floor. I opened my eyes and saw my little boy of six years old, tumbling on the carpet. His older brother said to him—'Now get up and fall again. That's the way papa does; let's play we are drunk!' I watched the child as he personated my beastly movements in a way that would have done credit to an actor! I arose and left the house, groaning in agony and remorse. I walked off miles into the country—thinking over my

abominable sin and the example I was setting before my children. I solemnly resolved that with God's help I would quit my cups, and I did. No lecture I ever heard from Mr. Gough moved my soul like the spectacle of my own sweet boys 'playing drunk as papa does.' I never pass a day without thanking my God for giving me a praying wife, and bestowing grace sufficient to conquer my detestable sin of the bottle. Madam! If you have a son, keep him, if you can, from ever touching a glass of wine."

The narrator of the above touching story may never see it in these columns; but if he does, I know he will pardon its publication. It may be a timely warning to more than one father who is by no means a toper and yet is putting a wine-glass right before his own children. It is the ready excuse of many a young lad for taking a glass of champagne—"We always have it at home." The decanter at home kindles the appetite which soon seeks the drinking saloon. The thoughtless or reckless parent gives the fatal push which sends the boys to destruction.

Long labor in the temperance reform has convinced me that the most effectual place to promote it is at home. There is the spot where the mischief too often is done. There is the spot to enact a "prohibitory law." Let it be written upon the walls of every house—Wherever there is a boy, there should never be a bottle.—Evangelist.

OPIUM IN CHINA.

We recently saw the statement of a traveller in China, to the effect that the use of opium in that country had either greatly diminished or had been previously overstated. It was only another illustration of how some men, ever intelligent men, may travel through a country and notice little of what is going on it. The testimony of those who have resided in China for years, and who have the best opportunities for being informed on the subject, is that the opium traffic is becoming more and more the curse of the land. A letter which we recently received from a missionary who has been for many years in that country says:

"The missionaries in China are constantly made to realize what a mighty obstacle in the way of the gospel this opium trade is. The habit of opium-smoking is becoming more and more prevalent. The Chinese seem to be fascinated by the vice, and sometimes it seems as if it must be their utter destruction."

At the late General Conference of Protestant missionaries, held at Shanghai, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

1. That opium-smoking is a vice highly injurious, physically, morally and socially.
2. That the opium trade, though now no longer contraband, is deeply injurious, not only to China, but also to India, to Great Britain, and to the other countries engaged in it; and especially that both from its present history and its present enormous extent, producing suspicion and dislike in the minds of the Chinese, it is a most formidable obstacle to the cause of Christianity; and it is the earnest desire of this Conference that the trade may be speedily suppressed, except so far as it is necessary to supply the strictly medicinal use of the drug.
3. That while fully aware of the serious commercial and financial difficulties in the way of abolishing the trade, and not venturing to give any opinion as to the means by which these may be obviated, it is the solemn conviction of this Conference that in this case as always, "nothing which is morally wrong can be politically right."
4. That in addition to the dissemination of strictly accurate information, the Conference believes that the labors of those in Great Britain opposed to the opium trade may at present be most practically and beneficially directed towards the effort to sever the direct connection of the Indian Government with the growth, manufacture and sale of opium; and to oppose any attempt to obstruct the action of the Chinese government in all lawful endeavors to regulate, restrict or suppress opium-smoking and the opium trade in China.
5. Finally, this Conference urgently appeals to all the churches of Christendom to pray fervently to God that He may prosper the means used, so that this great evil may speedily come to an end, and to make their voices heard in clear and earnest tones, so as to reach the ear and awaken the conscience of England, and of all other Christian people and governments.—N. Y. Observer.

Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.