

### Alphabet of Gambling.

It is some times said that no man was ever born a drunkard. He has reached his bad pre-eminence by successive steps of indulgence, beginning perhaps with the smallest and weakest mixtures of intoxicating drink. The same thing may be said of another vice, just now very prevalent, and threatening ruin to thousands. We mean the vice of gambling. And we say, no man was ever born a gambler. He has become one by regular profession, beginning, perhaps, with the game of fox-and-geese in a chimney corner, and ending in Park Place at the faro bank, with the stake of his employer's money.

All experience, testifies that there is a strange fascination, an irresistible seductiveness in the passion for gaming, so that once embarked there seems to be no return, except very rarely. The main, if not the only hope, of avoiding the danger of being swept by the current, is to refuse utterly and invincibly, to take the first step. And what is the first step? What is the alphabet of gambling? We shall not pronounce dogmatically that playing a game of checkers or backgammon always predisposes to something more exciting. We shall not affirm that in every case the man who plays a game of cards in the parlor of a friend with a sixpence for a forfeit will by and by play in fierce earnest for hundreds at a gambling house. But this we will say, that he who refuses to play for a sixpence with a friend, by way of amusement, will be in little danger of contracting the insidious and dangerous appetite for gaming. We believe the alphabet of gambling is learned in these supposed harmless indulgences.

Now suppose we are wrong, or over-strict in our notion. Will any one say we are not on safe ground? Would not thousands of young men in New York, if they spoke their real sentiments, tell you that they would give all they possess if they could come back and take our ground?

At any rate, we find the facts to be that gambling is prevailing to a fearful extent at the present time, and thousands of once promising men are falling, or have fallen its victims. Bands of experienced, watchful, unprincipled blacklegs are lying in wait to decoy unpracticed, unsuspecting young men into their toils to pluck them, not of their substance only, but of their parents' and employers property. The chances are ten thousand to one, that any young man with the least relish for gaming will be taken in and ruined in means and reputation. In these circumstances we say it is best not even to understand any of the common games. Ignorance of them will injure no one; a knowledge of them will probably beget a taste for them, and where will that end? We would treat the whole subject as we do the vice of intemperance, and maintain that the only safety is in total abstinence.—*N. Y. Organ.*

### Suppression of Drunkenness by the General Assembly of 1646, and the Covenanters.

To the Editor of the Greenock Advertiser.

SIR,—The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in its best and undivided days, enacted (on the 13th June, 1646,) "That ministers, in all sorts of companies, labour to be fruitful as the salt of the earth, seasoning them they meet with, not only forbearing to drink healths (Satan's snare, leading to excess), but reproving it in others." The inferior church courts were enjoined to see this obeyed.

Whisky was then unknown, or very rare in Scotland. The prevailing drinks were beer and French wine, liquors which some now speak of as if their use would cure excess, instead "of leading to" it. But a great proportion of all the drinking arose then, as it still does, from healths, and the other drinking courtesies and customs which were, and are, practically compulsory, except to abstainers. Mr. Durham,

a great divine of that period, says (on the commandments), "There is drinking of healths—by this means forcing, or tempting, or occasioning, drinking in others, although it be willingly done by them. This is one of the highest provocations to drunkenness, and a dreadful perverting of the end for which God hath given meat and drink, neither health nor necessity calling to it." It was a notable saying of a great man, solicited to drink the king's health, "By your leave I will pray for the king's health, and drink for my own."

The result of the act showed what wisdom then guided the church. The country soon became a garden of God, and the old historian made that remark so familiar to us all—"Nobody complained more of our church government than the taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was, that their trade was broke, people were becoming so sober." The specific remedy applied had produced the specific effect intended.

Such an act, with its reason inserted in it by such men, should not be allowed longer to lie dormant but unrepealed. Its framers are daily and justly lauded, and held up as patterns by the very persons who scoff at those acting in its spirit as introducing novelties.

If it ought not to be repealed it ought to be observed. Its strict observance by ministers, office-bearers, and others making a Christian profession, would greatly further the objects and facilitate the operations, not only of the abstinence societies, but of the society for the Suppression of Drunkenness.—I am, &c., JOHN M. DOUGLAS.

Cupar-Fife, 27th February, 1851.

### The People of the United States to Intemperance Dr.

1—To 56,000,000 gallons of liquor, at 50 cts. per gallon,	\$28,000,000
2—To 1,344,000,000 hours of time wasted by drunkards, at 4 cents per hour,	53,750,000
3—To the support of 150,000 paupers,	7,600,000
4—To losses by depravity of 45,000 criminals, unknown but immense.	
5—To the disgrace and misery of 1,000,000 persons, (relatives of drunkards), incalculable!	
6 and 7—To the ruin of at least 30,000, and probably 40,000 souls annually—infinite!	
8—To loss by the premature death of 30,000 persons in the prime of life,	30,000,000
9—To losses from the carelessness and mismanagement of intemperate seamen, agents, &c., &c.—Unknown but very great.	
Certain pecuniary loss, (in round numbers,)	120,000,000
To which add 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 9th items.	

Thus it appears that independently of items which cannot be estimated, our country pays out losses at the rate of 120,000,000 dollars per annum by intemperance! This sum is five times as large as the revenue of the United States—it would pay off our national debt in six months—it would support a navy four times as large as that of Great Britain—build twelve such canals as the Grand Erie and Hudson canal every year—it is sixty times as much as the aggregate income of all the principal religious charitable societies in Europe and America—would supply every family on earth with a Bible in eight months—would support a missionary or teacher among every two thousand souls on the globe! Does not the community sustain a great loss by the recognition of an evil that brings such enormous misery and expense upon the State as this? And does not an institution which has for its object the subversion of such an evil, possess claims upon the sympathy and co-operation of society?—*Crystal Fount.*