

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 honor and truth of Christ and of the Bible are involved; because every one who advocates prohibition flings an insult in the face of the 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.

With regard to those who from conscientious motives choose to practice the self-denial of total abstinence, either because they find it better for themselves, or because they would set an example to others, I have nothing but feelings of the highest respect and admiration. Only let them remember that self-denial is one thing, denial to others a very different thing. St. Paul appreciated this difference. He says, indeed: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat meat while the world standeth." There is the spirit of self-denial. But St. Paul does *not* say "I will eat no meats, and I will see that nobody else shall, and I will agitate to get laws passed to that effect." No, his language is, "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth." "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." Indeed, he warns us that the "prohibition" spirit will be a sign of the delusion from the Truth: he says that "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith . . . forbidding to marry and *commanding to abstain* from meats." St. Paul himself did not marry; he advised others to abstain from marriage, but he did not "forbid." There are many earnest, saintly men and women devoted to celibacy. There are many clergymen of the English Church who, for the love of God and of His work, have determined never to marry—some who have taken pledges to that effect. I honor and venerate the holy zeal of such men; but if they were ever to attempt to