

23. Shall we surrender the laws of God for the sake of the revenue? Shall we do this, the state to protect the lives of its citizens, and thus to enrich, flourish, and prosper? Is it right for the state to surrender its duty to protect the lives of its citizens, and thus to enrich, flourish, and prosper? The evidence of this license system proves that the state has the right to act in this matter. Now the result of all past legislation abundantly shows that it is impossible satisfactorily to limit or regulate a system so universally mischievous in its tendencies as the traffic in intoxicants. It is a license that is wrong in itself and injurious to society in every way and a violation of a higher law. What does God's Word say about licensing and legalizing evil? "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee that frameth mischief by a law?" Ps. 94: 20. "He shall repay them their own iniquity." He punishes the nation that legalizes the dangerous traffic by greatly increasing their public burdens for increased expenditures, jails, penitentiaries, poor-houses, lunatic asylums, and so on for widows and orphans; the traffic thus becomes a heavy burden and incalculable loss to the country, whereas the gain to the revenue is small indeed compared with the injury it does to the producing power of the people.

It is a traffic which constantly achieves the often quoted legendary slogan of "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs," for it greatly and ever strictly destroys the productive power of all those brought under its influence. It is like an abscess or running sore in the body politic which drains away the vital powers of the community, and thus prevents all increasing prosperity, wealth, and energy, on which the nation depends for an increasing revenue. Drunkenness, and the traffic that makes drunkards, are sins against God, and crimes against society, and the government must make them right. Government being the ordinance of God, and the people has no right to enact laws for the protection of evil. Solomon made for the restraint of the lawless, who would prey on the innocent and foolish (1 Tim. 1: 9). Society therefore should not regulate, or legalize, but prohibit and suppress it. If it was regulated, it would not cease to be a violation of the higher law of God. The sale of intoxicants was regulated in France, but would anyone say that it was right because legalized? Is not the licensing of the sale of intoxicants essentially immoral as a violation of God's higher law? Should we as well license other evils as gambling, lottery, prostitution, etc.? If the law should regulate murder, robbery, and so on, would it be thought of it? The state does enact laws prohibiting these crimes, and should it not do so in all other cases where the state has authority to act? The well-being of the people is the highest law, and the state has a right to prevent a general evil from becoming a private property. It does so in other cases as houses of prostitution, etc. If the state has authority to act, it should be allowed to regulate the traffic in intoxicants, and thus to protect the lives of its citizens, and thus to enrich, flourish, and prosper.