

intended so much to swell the coffers of the state as to prevent the evil which an indiscriminate traffic would occasion.

The pecuniary element, of course, comes in, in part, still the principal reason why licenses are made out is to regulate and restrain what is admitted to be a great and growing evil. The public authorities confess the business to be bad, they therefore take it under their fostering care. They cannot rid themselves of the conviction that it is disreputable; they must therefore entrust it to a select company of good moral character. They whitewash the sepulchre, with spots the blackness of which it would be impossible to deepen. "O consistency thou art a jewel!" From all such inconsistency this law is entirely free. Profession and practice correspond. What is judged to be bad is treated accordingly.

III. This law is *impartial* as well as thorough and consistent. To limit this traffic to a certain class merely because they happen to have a greater number of dollars, and consequently the power of doing more mischief than others, is not fair. *If it be right*; then throw it open to *all*; if it be wrong, why *permit it to any?* It should be one of the very last charges brought against the Maine Law that it is at variance with civil liberty and equal rights. The reverse holds true. To this very charge the present system lies open. This law makes no exceptions. It puts all on a par. It deals out equal justice; its motto, in the truest sense, is "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

IV. Another beauty of this law is its *simplicity*. It is simple in its principles and provisions, and it is simple in the mode of its execution. There is no going about the bush. There are no tedious circumlocutions. The sum and substance of it is: "No intoxicating drink made or sold here." A child can understand that.

V. The best feature of this law is its *success*. It is no longer an experiment, it has been fairly tried, and not found wanting. The Maine Law came into force on the 2nd June, 1851. During the nine months previous there were in Portland, the chief city of Maine, between 300 and 400 rum shops; in the alms house 252, in the jail 279, in the watch house 431. Nine months after the passage of the law, not a single rum shop was open. Instead of 252 in the alms house there were 146; instead of 279 in jail there were 135; instead of 431 in the watch house there were 180. And what is the testimony of one of its most distinguished citizens. "In the year during which this law has been in existence, its effects have been more decisive and salutary than the warmest friends had anticipated. The wholesale traffic in strong drink has been entirely annihilated throughout the State. The quantity of spirits now sold in the State cannot be more than *one-tenth* part so great as it was before the enactment of the law, so that the saving to the State is already one million eight hundred thousand dollars a year at least. The result of this can be seen in the improved habits and circumstances of our people. Many men, formerly miserable drunkards, are now perfectly sober, because temptations are removed out of their way. Many families, before miserable or dependent on the public, are now comfortably clothed and lodged. The inmates of our alms houses are greatly diminished. Our jails are almost tenantless. The Father and Founder of the Maine Law (Gen. Neal Dow) testified: "In one street in Portland, there were four saloons nearly side by side. Two of them are now clothing stores; one is a temperance grocery store, and one is a store for the sale of clocks in all their variety, thus illustrating the truth that as men cease to spend their money for rum, they will buy more and better clothes and food, and will have the means to make all purchases necessary to the comfort of themselves and families."

But it may be said that it was a mere spasm, and it has spent itself long ago. Tell us of the living present, not of the dead twenty years since. Is it not notorious that the Maine Law has proved a failure, that it is not kept, that liquor can be got by any who desire it, and that in point of fact, a large quantity is consumed?