

THE LIQUOR EVIL.

Is Prohibition the Proper Remedy—The Use of Strong Drink Soberly Considered From a Scriptural Standpoint—The Moral Responsibilities of Manhood and Womanhood.

to the Editor of The Daily Item:

Truly there is a right and wrong side to the prohibition question, and it is a good thing to be able to know, rather than to think we know, that we are on the right side. Now I would like to know by what authority your Smithville correspondent calls intoxicating liquors "accursed stuff." The scriptures teach that God gave intoxicating liquor as a blessing, and in them is found a promise to his people to bless their wine. This promise has been abundantly fulfilled. How then can Christians call it accursed? And why does he call so devoutly on all Christians to pray to the God of heaven, without ceasing, for His help to remove that which He has seen fit to bestow upon mankind as a blessing, then ignore the wisdom of God and the eloquence of His word and wish for the wisdom and eloquence of a heathen philosopher that he might go forth and plead with the people to do a thing which does not agree with the teachings of the Bible? Suppose that it is the whiskey that drags men and boys down to perdition; how does it distinguish between the men and boys and the women and girls, and why does it drag the one down and leave the other. Let the friends of a respectable young man of a good family find him helplessly drunk on the street, they would take him up and take care of him, the liquor, and the liquor dealer would be blamed more than he and it he never did so any more some people would look upon him as being quite a hero. If his sister were to be found in such a condition it would bring overwhelming shame upon herself and her whole family. She will not indulge her appetite for intoxicating liquors no matter how much she may like the taste of them.

The working man may leave his home in the morning, well and able to do his work, and be brought back in the evening helpless with drink and he will be put to bed, coffee made to kill the effect of the liquor and everything done that can be to relieve him, and this or the like of this may be repeated time and again until there is no coffee to make, no bed to put him in, and no home to carry him to, and he will not be blamed so much. It is the liquor or the liquor dealer that does it. But just let this same man go out to his work in the morning, and leave his wife well and able to attend to all her household duties and return in the evening to find his house in disorder, his meal unprepared, his children neglected and his wife unconscious with drink, what would be the consequence? Don't tell me that in every case it is because she can't get the liquor or don't like the taste of it that she does not get drunk. She don't dare to do it. If her husband would allow it she would not bring upon herself such overwhelming ruin. If the poor, "weak-minded" women can escape the grasp of the "accursed stuff" by the exercise of will power and self-control, why can't the men and boys escape by the same means? God does not require impossibilities of men, and that St. Paul wrote, "be not drunk with wine," is sufficient proof that it is a matter of a man's own choice, whether he is a drunkard or not. And that those who teach total abstinence piece together the words of Scripture to make such sayings as "Touch not, taste not, handle not, the accursed stuff" or "the unclean thing," is proof that there is nothing in the Scriptures to support their doctrine. Like those doctrines of the Jews about the washing of pots and cups and eating with unwashed hands it is a doctrine of men. Prohibition looks much like rejecting the commandment of God, to punish the drunkard, that we may keep this commandment of men. Unclean and accursed are words often found in the Scriptures, but not once is either one used there with the least reference to wine or strong drink. "Touch not, taste not, handle not" is from the second chapter of the epistle to the Colossians. Instead of teaching total abstinence this chapter teaches how, through the sustaining power of Christ, we may overcome the flesh, and be free from such ordinances as, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." It also warns us to beware of the doctrines of men. Those interested should read and see what is said in it about drink. The Israelites were required to give wine with nearly all their offerings, and the strong wine was poured to the Lord in the Holy Place every morning and evening. Would an unclean thing have been poured there as an emblem of the blood that must be poured out for the remission of sins? St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke all tell us that when Jesus took the cup he gave thanks. For what? a thing accursed? He also told the disciples that he would drink no more of the fruit of the vine until he drank it new with them in the Kingdom of God. Shall we find any-

thing unclean or accursed or anything that may be compared to a thing unclean or accursed in that place where "anything that defileth" or "worketh abomination," "shall in no wise enter?" In the law given to Moses God commanded that the parents of a stubborn and rebellious son, who would not obey their voice, but was a glutton and a drunkard, bring him out to the elders of his city, testify against him and have him put to death, and said "so shalt thou put evil away from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear." The wicked man who should secretly bless himself saying, "I shall have peace though I walk in the imaginations of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst," is denounced and condemned to the most dreadful punishment. By this we see that God ascribes drunkenness to stubbornness, rebelliousness, disobedience and wicked imaginations of the heart. The Prophet Isaiah says, "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!" St. Paul forbids us to keep company with one who is called a brother if he is a drunkard, and in his epistle to the Galatians he says drunkenness is a lust, a work of the flesh, and declares those guilty of it shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Would a wise and just God thus denounce and condemn his creatures if they were innocent victims of drink. St. James says that, "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." It is certain that if men did not like the taste and effect of liquor the most subtle dealer could make but few drunkards. They do not spend their money so freely for what they do not want, and the "poor drunkard" knows that he never felt the impulse of an "accursed craving" until after he had many times broken God's command by over-indulging a natural appetite. Those who accuse others of making them drunk confess that they have broken three of God's commands, by being drunk, keeping bad company and yielding to the enticement of sinners. Those who claim that in some cases drunkards are the victims of physicians' prescriptions should remember that the Scripture says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." They are deceived not because of the power of the wine or strong drink, but because of their own foolishness, and Christ mentioned foolishness, as one of the things that come out of the heart and defile the man. At the same time he said, "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him." The doctor knows well enough how to prescribe liquor without harming his patients, if his instructions are carefully obeyed, and he is immediately informed if any symptoms of intoxication appear, but those who think that all that is necessary is to take enough, take it often enough and that they may keep on taking it until they feel like quitting, are very apt to find themselves obeying the impulse of the drunkard's craving. Instead of teaching total abstinence we should teach temperance, obedience, self-control and that manhood or womanhood which dares at all times to do right. Even if the prohibition law could be effectually enforced it would benefit the morals of the drunkard no more than locks and keys benefit the morals of thieves. It is the demand of the drunkards for liquor that keeps Christian men out of the business, and it is left almost entirely in the hands of a class of men who do not care for the evils of excessive drinking, and among them must be some of the most selfish, greedy and unscrupulous men that ever lived. Dr. James Atkins told in The Children's Visitor several years ago of one liquor dealer who, in an address to his association, declared that the business depended largely on creating appetite for drink, and that the open field for creating this appetite was among the boys. Is it any wonder if the curse of God should follow and overtake men who will, for the sake of money, make drunkards of their neighbors' sons while they are yet boys? God does not forget or overlook them, and they shall in no wise escape punishment. Certainly they should be put out of the liquor business, and the most effectual way to do so is to put a stop to so much drunkenness by punishing those who indulge in it, and making them feel the shame of their crime. The liquor dealers of all men are in a position to know, and one of them told the truth for once, when he said that their business depended largely in creating appetite for drink. If a law were about to be made which they believed would prevent men from creating appetite their addresses to their association would sound much like the address of Demetrius the Ephesian silversmith to his association, and they might try with the help of the drunkards and office-seeking politicians to raise an uproar that would last several years.

We read of no executions under the law which required parents who could not bring up their children

temperate, sober and obedient, to bring them out and have them put to death, and I suppose such occurrences were very rare, if they ever happened at all, but no doubt, the law served a good purpose by preventing parents from being negligent. They were not anxious to excuse themselves by saying "I can't."

Common sense ought to teach that the drunkards are what the light of the Bible shows them to be, selfish criminals, instead of unfortunate victims of drink, and that it is upon themselves and not the liquor, they bring the curse. When they appear before the great judge who knows the secrets of all hearts, such excuses as, "The accursed stuff which thou gavest us deceived me," or "The dramseller beguiled me, and I did drink," will not save them from the inevitable punishment that awaits them. There is nothing like punishing the drunkards that will also punish the wicked dealer and the careless parent with so little harm or injustice to any one else, therefore by all means let us punish the drunkard so shall we put much evil away from among us, and even the ignorant and youthful "shall hear and fear."

As to the sin of putting the bottle to the neighbor's mouth about which the Smithville correspondent asked some time ago, if he will read carefully he will see that what is said in the Scripture about it has no special reference to either the liquor dealer or the drunkard, but to anyone who will make his neighbor drunk that he may take some undue advantage of the drunken condition, and the words used apply to any case, either literally or in a figurative sense, for those who will allow themselves to be made drunk permit faults of mind and character to be exposed of which they should be ashamed. From what is said in the same chapter about transgressing by wine, covetousness, building towns with blood and establishing cities by iniquity, we know that the prophet had in mind offenders against society in general as well as offenders against individuals. In fact, the whole chapter seems to apply to certain politicians of the present day who worship the things of this world instead of their Creator, especially, those who seek by means of the bottle to take advantage of ignorance and vice and thus assume a power at the ballot box similar to that of the president in congress or the governor in the legislature. They are the greatest insult to democracy that I can think of. How democrats can tolerate them for a moment I don't know, but I do know that it was done right here in this county at the primary election last year. I heard a farmer say that when he went to the election he was met by a stranger who took him aside and offered to give him a drink of liquor. This being declined, he offered to help him fix his ticket. To this the farmer did not object until the man with the bottle stroked his pencil through the name of one of two candidates for a certain county office. He thought that was the right name to stroke, but the voter didn't think so, and that ticket had to be thrown away, and the same name was stroked on the second ticket by "mistake." He "forgot" and stroked it again on the third ticket.

By this time the voter decided he didn't want to put a "fixed" ticket in the box, and insisted on voting without help. If he had taken a drink from that bottle he might not have been able to see which name was stroked with the pencil. However, the candidate for whom he voted was beaten by a small majority. Now did the bottle man succeed in making up this majority by "fixing" tickets and buying votes with a drink of liquor and thus decide himself who should have the office, or did he influence more than enough and thereby silence the voice of the majority? Was he there for some selfish purpose of his own, defaming the name of a good man, or was the candidate the real bottle man? Just think what a difference it would make if he succeeded in "fixing" and buying only five votes at three places, three at five and one or two at a few other places. I have been told that the friends of both candidates might have had a bottle, but I don't know. I hope not. Just suppose they did, then what was the election? Merely a bottle contest in which the man with the better filled or more skillfully manipulated bottle was the winner. A drunk man should never be allowed to vote, and such things as "fixing" tickets and selling or buying votes for a drink of liquor or anything else is a shame on our civilization.

Our government is a democracy, therefore, if a majority of the citizens of the county who have a legal right to vote, want to try what virtue there is in a prohibition law, they should have it, and all democrats should make it their business to see that no man with his bottle cheats them out of it, and change the government into what, I suppose, might be called a bottleocracy.

SOBER.
Sumter, S. C., R. F. D. No. 4, Aug. 3, 1909.

HAT BURNS ON GIRL'S HEAD.

Fire on Peach Basket Causes General Disorganization of Things in Atlanta Depot.

Atlanta, Aug. 3.—A fire upon the roof garden of a pretty girl's hat at the union station this afternoon called out tow fire companies, a hose car a score of willing amateur firemen, delayed a fast train and destroyed about \$30 worth of finery upon the peach basket aforesaid.

The young woman, enroute to New York, rushed into the station for a bite to eat. In paying her check she swung the confection too close to a cigar lighter. In an instant the orchard which adorned it was a mass of very smelly flames. A dark skinned waiter turned in a fire alarm and every available male guest tried to rescue the affair, thereby convincing the wearer, who knew naught of the conflagration that she had blundered into an insane asylum.

The train was held a few minutes until the victim recovered from an attack of near hysterics, when she graciously permitted it to proceed, giving vent to a few personal opinions of cigar lighters in general and this one in particular.

TO HELP WEAK SCHOOLS.

\$20,000 Has Been Appropriated by The Legislature.

Columbia, Aug. 4.—Within the past two weeks the State superintendent of education, Mr. Swearingen, has received applications from weak schools for aid to the amount of about \$2,000. The legislature appropriated this year \$20,000 to aid the weak schools of the State. Only \$7,000 of this amount has been taken up this year as the appropriation was not available until late in the school year, however, the remaining \$13,000 will be distributed during the coming fall. At a recent conference of the county superintendents held in Spartanburg a resolution was passed urging the legislature to increase this amount. A similar resolution was passed at a meeting of the school trustees of Spartanburg County held several days ago.

An Appeal for the Y. M. C. A.

Mr. Editor:
Please allow me space in your columns to express my appreciation of the articles which have already been written concerning the Y. M. C. A. I heartily agree with all of them, but feel that enough has not been said.

Sumter has always been called the game cock city, and why? Because every good request that has been made of her, not only in her sporting and commercial life, but for the moral and spiritual uplift she has always been ready to lend a helping hand. The writer has been a resident of this city going on two years, and while a young man he can truthfully say with pleasure, that the moral and spiritual life of the young men of this city is far above the average. What the business people of this world are calling for today are young men of good moral character, men whose influence is for good, which means success.

The call is now for a Y. M. C. A. for Sumter, and we believe the good business men, Christian fathers and mothers will not leave a stone unturned until Sumter has one of the best Y. M. C. A.'s in South Carolina.

The time is near at hand when probably the dispensary will be done away with, and as we read in Saturday's Item that the clubs would then grow, we say that if the Christian men and women of this city will cooperate in this great, and good movement of the Y. M. C. A. and throw good influence around our boys that we should, that instead of these clubs increasing they will diminish. Fathers and mothers, preachers and laymen, this is a grand step which the young men of your city are taking. Come out tonight and help us in this good work. Come and help us make the attractions of a Y. M. C. A. greater than the clubs can possibly make their attractions, and if we do this God's smiles will be upon us and we will be the means of saving many a young man—probably your boy. We can overcome evil with good, so let us have the Opera House full tonight, and let all take an active part.

W. D. S.

Through Attorney H. P. Burbage, J. Fred Lanham, first baseman and catcher for the Spartanburg team has instituted suit in the Common Pleas Court in Spartanburg for \$1,000 against the Greenville Electric Railway Company. He alleges that he was thrown from a street car in that city July 6 and that he suffered injuries from which he will not permanently recover.

I know a man who says, "Thought, persisted in, will bring you success—thought alone!" But he is still selling a patent window-fastener as a side line.

In view of the tariff proceedings, why not write it "Senate?"

CONFEREES CONFER AGAIN.

Hide and Leather Question Causes Hitch in Tariff Legislation.

Washington, August 2.—Tariff legislation has been delayed again by the hide and leather question, and as a result the conferees were again called together today.

The session was for the purpose of enticing into the open a certain "ebony-hued person" reported by Western senators to be lurking in the "wood pile."

These senators said the leather schedule, as arranged by the conferees with the approval of the president, was unfair to the States interested in protected hides. It was agreed today they must be conciliated if the conference report is to be adopted.

Soon after the senate met today the senate leader and his assistants learned of the charge that there was a "joker" in the compromised hide and leather schedule.

The difficulty appeared to be a lack of understanding between the conferees, the president and the Western senators concerning the condition under which the latter consented to hides being placed on the free list. The Westerners said they had been led to believe all boots and shoes of leather were to be dutiable at 10 per cent and all harness at 20 per cent. When the conference report was issued it appeared the reductions applied only to articles manufactured in chief part of the class of hides which were to be made free of duty.

Finding the Westerners not amenable to argument, some of the senate leaders, dissatisfied members, hurried to the White House. There all were informed that the president had not been fooled. He was reported to have told his callers that he fully understood the character of the compromise.

It was declared by the conferees, in defence of their action, that the course pursued was necessary from a parliamentary standpoint. To have reduced all boots and shoes, they said, would have compelled the re-submission of the question to the house.

Senator Aldrich, as soon as he returned from the White House to the Capitol, called the conferees together and a number of Western senators were given an audience before the committee.

Senators Brown and Borah both had letters from the president bearing upon the alleged "joker," which were read to the conferees. The president asserted that the leather and hide schedule, as adopted, was just as he had understood it. He said that his understanding was that the reduction on leather goods should be made on those manufactures of hitherto dutiable hides, and should not include manufactures of hitherto free hides.

It was practically conceded that in order to insure the passage of the conference report, the low rates on boots and shoes and harness would have to be applied to calf skin products as well as to leather from a class of hides that are now dutiable, but made free by the conference report.

No programme has been reached positively as to the course of procedure to be followed in accomplishing this result.

Congress will have to send out a bookcase with the Congressional Record this year.

Twenty-one counties in South Carolina now realize the situation of the other twenty-one.

Chicago has some street-cars that are forty-five feet long and very heavy. Their size is perhaps designed not necessarily to give more accommodations to passengers, but to successfully combat the heavy automobiles.

Georgia passes a law making it a misdemeanor to speak ill of a woman, and then passes another law prohibiting trading stamps. Consistency is only a Barrious gem in Georgia.

Everybody Will Wear Specs Some Day.

Present statistics show that there is a wonderful increase in the number of people who depend on glasses for good vision. Take enlightened Boston, "The Hub," for instance. There are more people wearing specs there than in any other city of its size. Where learning and progress are, you will find the most people wearing glasses. Are you going to stay behind till you have to have them and then maybe find you have waited too long, that some small trouble has grown on till glasses won't remedy it?

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