

Temperance and Prohibition.

Back to the Jaws of Death—Back to the Mouth of Hell.

Those who take a deep interest in saving men and women from the habit of getting drunk when they feel like it, and when they do not, can appreciate the meaning of the words of the caption of this article when they see their efforts fail; or, at least, almost fail.

How often men, who for a time get tired of getting drunk, express their pleasure at enjoying a few sober days and vow that never again will they touch or taste the unclean thing. And how too often they do forget their vows, return to the wallowing, and go back to the jaws of death, back to the mouth of hell.

Such persons are to be pitied, and at the same time should be sternly and lovingly rebuked.

Out of that Valley of Death should be an experience never to be indulged in but once; after that it should be one constant struggle to keep out of the valley and live on the high and safe ground of total abstinence.

Escape from the mouth of hell should have the effect of making the escape one more than careful never to be found in the Devil's park of moderate drinking. The mouth of hell is no place for a sensible person to roam around, for no one knows when living under such conditions when the hour will come in which temptation will draw him into the mouth that is ever ready to swallow him up.

I have good reason for writing this article, knowing well the exposed condition of scores of men who are striving in their own strength to fight against the troops of King Alcohol. To them every day, and often every hour, means a fight against appetite and devilish disposition to do what they know they should not do.

"Cannon to right of them, cannon to left of them, cannon in front of them," "stormed at with shot and shell," no wonder so many fall down victims to the liquor traffic, and are plunged "into the jaws of death," into the mouth of hell." And often all that is left of them in a community in less than "six hundred."

There always will be honor given to those who died while engaged in the noted charge of the Light Brigade; but of those who perish in battle against the appetite for intoxicants the prevailing opinion is that the less said the better.

That man who goes back to his cups takes a sip of the waters of hell that will burn him when he is awake and when he is asleep. "A little for the stomach's sake" will prove too much for him. It will sting him even if he hates to be stung.

How many men have I known who, to the joy of their families, signed the pledge in their own strength and resolved to keep it for ever and ever. But soon after they could be seen walking back to the jaws of death and getting nearer and nearer to the mouth of hell. While they were smiling their wives and children were crying. "Shattered and sundered" are the only proper words to use regarding such men, women and children.

What a feast death has had, while swallowing up those who have drunk

enough to become drunkards. About half of my old acquaintances in business have been made meat for such terrible feasts. I can count them by the scores without the aid of paper and pencil. I never joke or exaggerate while writing about the terrors of the liquor traffic.

In the month of March, 1852, I saw a young man go into a saloon in Fulton Street, Brooklyn, one Sabbath day, and before that year ended I sat at the head of his coffin as one of the mourners. King Alcohol had slain him, and had not wasted any time in doing the job.

The mouth of hell is large; the victims of the liquor traffic are many.

Have you ever sat down with a victim of the traffic and had a quiet talk with him? I had such an one to-day (August 13, 1903). If you have not a heart of stone you will feel more like crying than laughing. So near the jaws of death, so close to the mouth of hell that you cannot help shuddering as you think of the impending crisis.

That silent prayer that comes from your heart for the unfortunate one is one of the evidences that a still, small voice has whispered in your ears his approaching fate. You falter in your speech—what to say and how best to say it is a problem you hardly know how to settle. The thought of the open jaws of death and the mouth of hell ready to capture your friend rattles you. It takes nerve as well as wisdom to talk to the man or woman almost ready to be engulfed in the sea of intemperance. He may appear to enjoy the waves of beer as they roll into his mouth and may grin as the smaller billows of strong liquids pass his lips; but to you the situation is something awful. It is sad to look on and see one of God's children commit slow suicide! You take the peep into the looking-glass of the near future and behold a corpse in a coffin, a coffin in a grave; and, worse than all, no hope lights up the future beyond the grave.

In the village of Flushing a young drunkard asked me if I could see his future. The only reply I made was: "Blindfold me, for I do not want to!" That was years ago. Perhaps there are young men in the same suburb now travelling the same path. If so, "Turn! turn! for why will ye die?"

The pathway from the jaws of death and mouth of hell is lighted up by the lanterns of the Old and New Testament. The Holy Spirit draws the drunkard from his terrible fate. Drunkard, let the Spirit keep on drawing you from the saloon. Grieve not the Spirit, but let your language be, Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove, and keep up the efforts to save even me.

Did you ever converse with a drunkard who has lost all hope of ever being again a sober man? If you have you have looked upon a live, walking edition of Paradise Lost, bound in shackles of bondage, stamped with shame, and broken to pieces with fear.

God save the hopeless drunkard, for he is beyond the help of man.

You have no doubt but that this is a temperance article, and neither have I. It is written for the express purpose of shaking the dry bones of good men and women who seem to sleep while the devil is wide awake.

Don't you hear the wails of those suffering for the effects of the liquor traffic. Those who have ears let them hear and do more for the Master's cause. Stand by those who are firing shot and shell into the ranks of those who are working night and day for King Alcohol. If you cannot stand straight up in the front ranks, be willing to do the best you can in the rear. Get covered somehow with the smoke and smell of the battle for God and against the devil.

Do good yourselves. Not a smile for those who stand with one foot on a church and the other on a saloon. Don't be a straddler! Make up your mind which is the Lord's side; then get on that side and stick! You will find the Lord there seven times in the week and every week in the year. — George R. Scott, in *N. Y. Weekly Witness*.



LOCUSTS AND WILD HONEY.

It is rather a repulsive subject, but any light of experience on the nature of John's food in the desert must be allowed to shine. A missionary contributor to the *Christian Advocate* says:

"When a Bible student reads about the food of John the Baptist, he is not often impressed with the desirability of such a diet. However, it was very likely with John as it is with the people of east tropical Africa, who are especially fond of both kinds of food mentioned by the Baptist's historian, namely, locusts and wild honey. The Kaffirs are at a banquet when they have these two kinds of food. They enjoy both, and put forth extra efforts to come into possession of either.

"It is interesting to observe how the natives get the honey. Sometimes they make hives for the bees by hollowing out short logs. These are then placed in a stone pile or some other place where the bees are likely to make a home. Bees are not slow to accept these kind overtures, and soon set about to reward this kindness by filling the log with honey. More frequently, however, the natives make hives by stripping off the bark of trees and fastening the cylindrical productions among the branches. After a time they are filled with honey, which is ruthlessly taken by the Kaffirs.

"The natives are not particular as to the kind of honey they eat. The writer has seen them eat with a relish manifested by smacking lips the honeycomb filled with larvæ—fat, juicy worms! Two pounds of this at one meal is nothing unusual.

"Locusts also make a favorite food for the Kaffirs. When an east wind brings clouds of locusts into the neighborhood it strikes consternation to the hearts of the formers, but the natives show their delight by shouts of joy. It is, indeed, an ill wind that blows nobody good. To one who has no crops to be destroyed or who has not cultivated the taste for this kind of food, the sight of the flight of locusts is inspiring. They arouse the same emotions as a blinding snowstorm.

"Early in the morning, when the wings of the locusts are heavy with dew, the natives are out gathering in their supply. Later the women and children are hard at work tearing off the wings and legs of the locusts. This is all done while the unfortunate captives are yet alive. They are then spread out on the rocks in the sun to die and to dry. When dried they are ready for eating. A little salt adds to the taste, but salt is not always at hand. Sometimes the

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natives cook the locusts—wings, legs and all—and then dress them one at a time as they eat them with mush or other food. The writer has eaten them—not many—in all these different ways, but those that suited his taste the best were prepared after the manner of parched corn."



Of all the know-nothing people in the world commend us to the man who has never known a day's illness. He is a moral dunce, one who has lost the greatest lesson of life; who has skipped the finest lecture in that great lecture school of humanity, the sick-room. — Hood.

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise; and he that shutteth his lips is counted a man of understanding. Prov. 17:28.

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