

Temperance Column

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging. Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 1:20.

NO DEFENSE

While the eighteenth amendment was in force we heard a lot from the advocates of repeal. They claimed that the repeal of the prohibition amendment would reduce crime to a minimum, do away with bootlegging, put millions of people to work and thereby solve the unemployment problem; and that there would be less drinking, with the sale of liquor legalized, than there was under prohibition.

Four years has almost passed since the amendment was repealed and surely that should be sufficient time for the results of repeal to become evident. Not one of the claims made has proven true. Crime has reached a new high, there are more bootleggers than before, just as many, or more, people are unemployed and the consumption of hard liquor is at a higher rate per capita than at any time in the history of the country. Do you wonder if these predictions, which failed to come true, were made in good faith? One indication of good faith is for the party who made the mistake to acknowledge his error when it becomes apparent that a mistake has been made. There have been no such admissions from these people—quite the reverse.

The measure of their sincerity is shown by the fact that, while they predicted less drinking, immediately following repeal, the liquor interests began an advertising campaign of unprecedented magnitude with a view of increasing the number of drinkers and the quantity they consumed.

We do not believe that there was any honesty or sincerity in the predictions the liquor advocates made just before repeal. Their common sense must have told them that alcohol causes its users to become irresponsible and that irresponsible people quickly become law-breakers.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Liquor has many defenders but no defense." That is true today as it was in 1865. There has never been, and there never will be, a real defense of liquor presented. It has no defense. Lincoln was correct in his statement, and was also correct when he said, "The good of society demands the suppression of the liquor traffic."—Christian Witness.

THE NOXIOUS WEED

The infatuation of the first European tobacco smokers was regarded as a mania, if not something worse; for it is on record that the relatives of Catherine de Medici ascribed her fondness for the fumes of the trans-Atlantic weed to a penchant for magic and poison-mongery. Sultan Amurah IV refused the terms of a speculator who offered an enormous sum for the privilege of selling tobacco in the harbors of Asia Minor, and for half a century the Turkish officers enforced the law which sentenced a smoker to having his pipe thrust crosswise through his nose, probably as an emblematic punishment for his sins of offending the noses of his fellow-men. In Novgorod, Russia, as late as 1623, a party of smokers were caught in flagranti, and by order of the magistrate were forced to swallow a bagful of the weed after having their pipes broken over their heads. Pope Innocent XI refused to sanction the promotion of any priest who had acquired the filthy habit, which King James I, in his "Counterblast to Tobacco," describes as "a custom, loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in its black, stinking fumes nearest

resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."—Selected.

DRINK

The following was composed some years ago and given to the press by Curtis Johnson, a prisoner in Jeffersonville, Ind., who attributed his downfall to the social glass, as he forged a cheque while under the influence of liquor.

A Bar to Heaven! A Door to Hell,—
Whoever named it, named it well.
A bar to manliness and wealth,
A door to want, and broken health.
A bar to honor, pride and fame,
A door to sin, and grief, and shame.
A bar to hope, a bar to prayer,
A door to darkness and despair.
A bar to honest, useful life,
A door to brawling, senseless strife.
A bar to all that's true and brave,
A door to every drunkard's grave.
A bar to joy that home imparts,
A door to tears and breaking hearts.
A bar to heaven,—a door to hell,—
Whoever named it, named it well. —Sel.

A PREACHER DESCRIBED

Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones of Detroit, the new president of the Federal Council of Church, gave his picture of an ideal minister: "He should get religion like a Methodist; experience it like a Baptist; be sure of it like a Disciple; stick to it like a Lutheran; pay for it like a Presbyterian; conciliate it like a Congregationalist; glorify it like a Jew; propagate it like a Roman Catholic; work it like a Salvation Army lass; enjoy it like a colored man."

So says an exchange. What is so good for the minister should also be good for the layman.

—Selected.

ABANA AND PHARPAR

When Elisha told Namaan, the Syrian leper, to go wash in Jordan seven times, that proud captain was greatly insulted. He "went away in a rage." He said, "Are not Albana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?"

Well, those Damascus rivers may be very fine, even more attractive to the eye than the muddy Jordan, but the cure is promised by the Jordan route.

The Naaman tribe has not died out. The Lord has appointed a way for them to take. They complain about it. Some go away, but when they grasp the idea that it is obedience or leprosy, as Naaman finally understood, they do the humiliating thing—wash and come out clean. Others grumble about the way they know they ought to go, find fault with those who take that way, and go back to Abana and Pharpar, uncured and disappointed.

Jordan may be muddy, but leprosy is worse.—Free Methodist.

GOD'S PURPOSE

A young man was trying to establish himself as a peach grower. He had worked for years, and invested his all in a peach orchard, which at last bloomed bounteously—and then came a frost. He didn't go to church the next Sunday, nor the next, nor the next. His minister went to hunt him up, and inquired the reason. The discouraged young fellow exclaimed: "No, and

what is more, I'm not coming any more. Do you think I can worship God who loves me so little that He will let a frost kill all my peaches?"

The old minister looked at him a moment in silence, and then replied kindly: "Young man, God loves you better than he does your peaches. He knows that, while peaches do better without frosts, it is impossible to grow the best men without frosts. His object is to grow men, not peaches."—Selected.

AWAKENING CHRISTIAN FERVOR.

People out in the cold often do not know how cold they are till they come in to a fire. So a Christian living in a community where coldness and formality prevail does not realize his own condition till he gets among those whose affections are warm for Christ and His disciples. Their fervor contrasts strangely with his coldness and he sees what he has lost. If he is honest he will confess how he has drifted and seek again the joy of salvation. If he allows pride and self conceit to gain the mastery he will resist conviction and endeavor to reason himself into the belief that those with whom he once had fellowship are too strait and perhaps fanatical. This is a dangerous state. One in this condition is apt to sink lower, until the light that was in him becomes darkness. When this takes place how great is that darkness!—B. T. Roberts.

HIT THE MARK

If you would hit a mark, you must know where it is. Some people aim at Christian perfection; but mistaking it for angelic perfection they shoot above the mark, miss it, and then peevishly give up their hopes. Others place the mark as much too low; hence it is that you hear men profess to have attained Christian perfection when they have not so much as attained the mental serenity of a philosopher, or the candor of a good-natured conscientious heathen.—Rev. John Fletcher.

LET BAAL PLEAD FOR HIMSELF

Gideon had destroyed the altar of Baal. The people of the city were indignant. They demanded of Joash, the father of the reformer and rising judge of Israel, "Bring out thy son, that he may die." So they would defend the false god from his detractors. But Joash said, "Will ye plead for Baal? wll ye save him? . . . let him plead for himself." Here were people who should have been followers of the true God and enemies of every false religion, pleading for Baal!

Well, the situation is not so different today. There are preachers who dare not take a position against popular sins—the sins of their congregations—Sabbath desecration, cards, dancing, movies, tobacco, secret societies and the rest,—but they will take a position against holiness! Not so much afraid of sin, they are very much afraid of keeping the commands to be holy.

Would it not be a good thing to leave to the devil, the venders of beer and tobacco, the dancing masters, and the teachers of bridge the pleas for sin? Is it not time for the church, and especially all its leaders, to take up a plea for holiness?

The Lord has promised, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." How He would bless that return!—Free Methodist.

Talent, lying in the understanding, is often inherent; genius, being the action of reason and imagination, rarely or never.