

Christian Visitor



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"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—St. Paul.

Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor.

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The following lines were suggested on hearing a young man exclaim.

"I NEVER PRAYED."

BY MRS. ST. E. F. ALDEN.

What I never prayed to God above,
That holy One whom angels love,
And worship round the throne?
And thou, a child of earthly mould,
What heart so hard, unfeeling cold,
As not thy God to own!

Can it be so— I never prayed
To Him, whom earth's foundation laid,
And call'd the stars by name?
Whose glittering canopy on high
Forbids the thought that man must die,
And gain not heavenly fame!

I never prayed!—a startling sound
Through the heart's cells it doth resound,
And vibrate long and loud
And echo murmurs—never prayed,
In strains so mournful; man is made
To feel what he has vowed!

Sad, solemn thought a child of clay
Refuse an homage thus to pay,
And bow at Heaven's shrine,
And mind so galling can it be
A spark of the great Deity,
Ethereal and sublime

Prof. Stuart on the Wine Question.

No one could be better fitted to do justice to this question than the eminent biblical scholar, whose thoughts are given below; what follows is extracted from a pamphlet which he has recently published.

The author's preparation for writing this pamphlet. He says: "I have, as a preparation for my present discussion, been through every instance in the Old Testament and the new, in which wine or any intoxicating drink, or drink supposed to be intoxicating, is mentioned. I have examined and classified, to the best of my power, every case of this nature with particular scrutiny. I have also scrutinized the etymology of all the different words, designating the drinks in question, both in Hebrew and Greek; and I have joined with this a careful consideration of the context, in order to see what light may come from this source. With these processes, moreover, I have united an examination more extensive than I had made before, of the Greek and Latin writers on the subject of wines. I need not then be timid in saying, to every man who has ever made investigations in this way, that I have obtained, here and there, some light which is new to me in respect to the whole matter; and I would fain hope, that I may have obtained some that will help to satisfy the minds of others."

GENERIC NAMES OF LIQUORS DRANK AMONG THE HEBREWS.

There are, in the Scriptures, but two generic words to designate such drinks as may be of an intoxicating nature when fermented, and which are not so before fermentation.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word (*ya-yin*), in its broadest meaning designates *grape juice*, or the liquid which the fruit of the vine yields—This may be new or old, sweet or sour, fermented or unfermented, intoxicating or intoxicating. The simple idea of *grape-juice* or *vine liquor* is the basis and essence of the word, in whatever connection it may stand.

The other generic word is *shay-cawr*, which is usually translated *strong drink*, in the Old Testament and in the New.

The true original idea of *shay-cawr*, is a liquor obtained from dates, or other fruits, (grapes excepted,) or barley, millet, etc., which were dried or scorched, and a decoction of them was mixed with honey, aromatics, etc. It follows, of course, that the *strong drink* of the Scriptures is in fact less strong than the wine.

In the New Testament, we have merely *oinos* and *sik-erai*, which correspond exactly to the Hebrew *ya-yin* and *shay-cawr*. Indeed, the latter of the two Greek nouns is nothing more nor less than the Hebrew word last named, written according to the Chaldaizing pronunciation of the Hebrew, in the time of Christ and the apostles.

After a critical examination of all the places in the Bible where the term *shay-cawr* (strong drink) occurs, Prof. S. arrives at the following conclusion:—"There was a species of *shay-cawr* which was not fermented, as well as one that was fermented; and of course one that was not intoxicating, as well as one that was. *Shay-cawr* was employed as a drink-offering to God, Num. 28:7. Deut. 14: 26. Was this fermented *shay-cawr*? All leaven, i. e. fermentation, was excluded from offerings to God, Lev. 2: 3 seq.—The great mass of the Jews have ever understood this prohibition as extending to fermented wine or strong drink, as well as to bread. The word is essentially the same, which designates the fermentation of bread and that of liquors.—Hence the Jews the world over, with few exceptions, have kept the passover with unfermented wine."

Pliny, in his natural history, has spoken of a wine "not hurtful to strength, since alone it will not intoxicate." In confirmation of the existence of such a liquid, and as an illustration of its use, Prof. S. has the following statement:—

"Some forty-one years ago, when I was a pastor in New-Haven, in Connecticut, Chief Justice Swift, (the author of a then highly valued Commentary on the laws of Connecticut,) told me of an incident in his life, which interested me very much at the time, and now interests me still more. He had been Secretary to the Embassy sent by our Government to France, at the head of which was that pre-eminent and excellent Jurist and man, O. Ellsworth, the first Chief Justice of the United States. In going to France, they had no choice but a merchant-ship. That was in part dismantled on the voyage, was driven far out of her course by storms, and finally, after being out fifty days, landed as a kind of wreck, on the western coast of Spain. The Chief Justice was grievously afflicted every moment, while on board, with sea-sickness, and when he reached the Spanish shore, he was well nigh irrecoverably exhausted. Of course he was detained for a while, where he landed, before he could move in any direction. Finally he set out for Paris, by slow stages of land-travel. Among the mountains of Spain, through which he was obliged to pass, he and the secretary found wine set upon the table, which was strongly urged upon them. The Chief Justice, being a remarkably temperate man, was afraid to drink it.—Judge Swift first made the experiment on himself; as the people of the inns where they stopped assured them it would not intoxicate. He found that it did not produce any tendency of the kind. To be brief, in the sequel, the Chief Justice and himself used to drink a bottle each with their dinner, and a small bottle at night.—It was found to be a precious balm to the wounded ambassador, and probably saved his life and his valuable services to his country. Judge S. assured me that he never, before or since, tasted of any thing that would bear comparison with the delicacy and exquisite flavor and refreshing effect of the wine, when taken with due preparation of cooling and mixing with water. He expressed his confident belief, that a gallon of it drunk at a time, if any man could swallow down so much, would not effect his head in the least degree. The narration deeply impressed me, as

I have already said, at the time when I heard it, and the remembrance of it now is as vivid as if I had heard it but yesterday."

UNFERMENTED WINE UNATTAINABLE.

"Every body knows what difficulty was alleged to lie in the way of obtaining unfermented wine, a few years since; for use at the sacramental table. It was often and roundly asserted, that there was no possibility of transporting it, without its fermenting and souring. Yet all this was mere guessing. All difficulties are surmounted. It is now brought to us with entire success. If there were market enough for such wine, the great mass of all that is imported would speedily be of the same sort. The vine-growers would easily find, have indeed already found, ways enough to check fermentation.—Then, and not until this shall have been done, we shall know something by experience of the wines of the ancients, which were praised by all men, the sacred writers not excepted."

THE TWO VIEWS OF WINE AND STRONG DRINK IN THE BIBLE.

"The Bible, Old Testament and New, every where, and in the strongest terms, prohibits all intemperance in drinking; Intoxication, whether partial or total, belongs to intemperance. The precept of the Bible, as we now know by abundant physiological research, is founded in the laws of our very nature. Alcohol deranges it, when taken in any form or quantity which gives it opportunity for its appropriate action. He who made our nature knows what has a tendency to preserve it, and what to derange it. Is it not certain, from the character and perfection of the Scriptures, that they are conformed to the laws of our nature in all respects?"

But in these very Scriptures, both wine and what is called strong drink by our translators, i. e. *shay-cawr*, are reckoned among the blessings or comforts of life; are presented in oblation before God; are even commended as precious gifts of his providence on the one hand; while on the other exists a multitude of cautions against them, of commands to abstain from them; and of threats against those who resort to them."

EXPLANATION OF THIS SEEMING DISCREPANCY.

"Whenever I find declarations in the Scriptures respecting any matters, which appear to be at variance with each other, I commence the process of inquiry by asking, Whether these declarations respect the same object in the same circumstances? In some cases we find directly opposite things said of the same object. For example: *Abraham is alive*, and *Abraham is dead*. How do we solve this apparent contradiction?—With all the ease imaginable. Abraham is dead in a physical sense; but he is alive in a psychical one; or, in other words, his body is dead, but his soul is alive. Both these propositions have respect to the same person or individual; yet one applies only to his mortal, the other to his immortal part."

Wine and strong drink are good,—a blessing, a token of divine favor, and to be ranked with corn and oil. The same substances are also an evil; their use is prohibited; and woe is denounced to all who seek for them. Is there a contradiction here,—a paradox incapable of any satisfactory solution? Not at all.

The fermented liquor was pregnant with alcohol, and would occasion inebriation in a greater or less degree, in all ordinary circumstances;—and even where not enough of it was drunk to make this effect perceptible, it would tend to create a factitious appetite for Alcohol, or to injure the delicate tissues of the human body. The unfermented liquor was a delicious, nutritive,

healthful beverage, well, and properly ranked with corn and oil. It might be kept in that state, by due pains, for a long time, and even go on improving by age. Is there any serious difficulty now in acquitting the Scriptures of contradiction in respect to this subject?"

FINAL CONCLUSION.

"My final conclusion is this:—viz., that wherever the Scriptures speak of wine as a comfort, a blessing, or a libation to God, and rank it with such articles as corn and oil, they mean—they can only mean—such wine as contained no alcohol, that could have a mischievous tendency; that wherever they denounce it, prohibit it, and connect it with drunkenness and revelling, they can mean only alcoholic or intoxicating wine."

From the New York Evangelist.

I Prize a Revival.

It sets me to work. Not that I have not always something to do, but it calls forth all my energies in a new and much-wished for sphere. Great things are now to be done, and can be done. Souls are to be converted. Backsliders restored. The church brought to duty, and great glory is to accrue to Christ. The seed, long sown, is springing up; the rain descends; the sun shines; a glorious harvest is to be gathered, and I am employed.

It tries my hope. I have been a professor. I have stood well with the world, and with the church—but do I love the Lord? Am I now willing to labour for him as I never have laboured? (Will I deny myself? Am I anxious for the perishing?—Do I rejoice in the victories of Emmanuel? Or do they disturb, and try, and distress me?)

It draws out my sympathies. When there is no revival, I cannot feel for sinners as I ought. I know they are going to destruction, but I cannot feel for them, I cannot sympathise with Christ in his feelings for them. I wonder why he thus went over Jerusalem. But in a revival, it is all plain to me. My heart is with his heart. And I fall in with all that mighty plan of an infinite God to save the world. I swim in a sea of holy sympathies.

It strengthens me in God. Oh, my weakness, when all is sterile around me! A little maid can almost make me deny my master. Not so when God pours out his spirit. I walk forth like Sampson after breaking the cords. The world is subdued, passion destroyed, infidelity is pitiable. Satan is put under my feet. And I can withstand all things, and do all things, through Christ strengthening me. It brings my dear one into the ark of safety. Oh, as I see one after another awakened, convicted, converted, and hear them sing the song of salvation, it is more than I can bear.

It confirms my doctrinal belief. In the opposition it elicits, I see the workings of depravity. In the excuses, the deceitfulness of sin. In the conversion of one, and not of another, the electing love of God. In the final resistance of the Holy Spirit, judicial blindness. In the continued life of God in the new born soul, the perseverance of saints, and in the final results, both in time and eternity, I see why there is joy in Heaven among the angels over one sinner that repenteth.

It gives me the undoubting assurance of the millennium. The power that produces a single revival, sufficiently extended, converts the world. The whole work is done in one individual that is done in all; and when done in all, I see my Saviour is all in all. And I am as much in a millennium in a powerful revival, as I should be in a millennium in all its glory.

"Convinced of sin, men now begin
To call upon the Lord
Trembling they pray, and mourn the day
In which they sinned his word.
God's chariot rolls, and fights the souls
Of those who hate the truth;
And saints in prayer, cry, 'Lord draw near;
Have mercy on the youth.'
I wonder I can live without one, and cannot—
must not.