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ARTICLE I.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFICE OF DEACON.

The particular topic to which we shall direct attention is *the Importance of the Office of Deacon*. But before proceeding to its immediate discussion, we shall offer some preliminary remarks in regard to the timeliness and desirableness of considering the whole subject of the diaconate.

1. It has not unfrequently been said, that the age in which we live is peculiarly called upon, in the providence of God, to take up Church-questions and subject them to a careful examination. There is truth in this remark, if it be received with necessary qualification. No doubt, it is the duty of every age to study the whole counsel of God as revealed in his inspired word. But there are peculiar circumstances connected with the Church, at particular times, which compel her attention to certain articles of faith and principles of order. Conflicts arise in consequence of the propagation of error, which necessitate a thorough investigation of the truth which is challenged, and a sharp and definite statement of true in contrast with false doctrine. And as every error is not circulated in every age, but particular heresies prevail at particular seasons, the result is that the special form of truth which is related to the prevalent type of false opinion, requires to be precisely fixed. It is in this way that the theology

exactly in proportion to the number of facts which are first rejected must be the paucity of those which are left on which to construct a new system.”<sup>1</sup>

It is our firm conviction, therefore, that the Christian scheme taxes credulity far less than unbelief. J. S. GRASTY.

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ARTICLE III.

THE CHURCH AND TEMPERANCE.

The world moves; and while there is reason to believe that its general course is upward, to one viewing its progress from the standpoint of temperance, and embracing in his view the movement through centuries, it appears to be travelling on an incline towards the bottomless pit. Dr. Benjamin W. Richardson says:

“The discovery of distillation of wine has been attributed to Albucasis, or Casa, an Arabian chemist of the eleventh century: but many centuries elapsed before the process of distillation was applied to produce those stronger drinks which, under the name of ‘spirits,’ are now in such common use in daily life. Brandy is a late term in European literature. Gin was unknown two hundred years ago. Rum is an American term, applied to an American invention. Whiskey, a Celtic word meaning ‘water,’ has not been Anglicized more than a century and a half. Neither rum, nor brandy, nor gin, nor whiskey, nor any alcoholic drink of similar destructive power, has been in common use until comparatively recent modern times.”

It appears from this that during vastly the greater part of the earth’s history, the curse of intemperance has been slight compared with what it is now. “Drunkenness,” says the *Westminster Review*, “is the curse of England—a curse so great that it far eclipses every other calamity under which we suffer. It is impossible to exaggerate the evils of drunkenness.” When we read this statement, and know that what the writer says of England is true of every country where distilled liquors are used, we find

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<sup>1</sup> Morell Spec. Philos., p. 192.

some relief in the reflection that it is only in the last few centuries that this king of evils has been exercising such cruel tyranny over miserable mortals. "The strong man" which now binds so many, never discovered the vast resources of his strength until "comparatively recent modern times." The warfare he has ever waged against the race, at least since the days of Noah, was formerly, like all ancient warfare, carried on with very imperfect weapons. He knew only the use of bow and arrow, wooden pike and sling; powder and ball and the dread artillery belong to a modern day. It is hard to conceive to what extent intemperance would be robbed of its destructive power, if every drink stronger than wine could be abolished. But even then we should not be as free from the curse as the ancients, for the reason that nearly all our wines are adulterated, and their intoxicating quality greatly increased by the addition of distilled liquors. The same eminent writer from whom we have quoted says that a "*bona fide* wine, derived from the fermentation of grapes purely, cannot contain more than 17 per cent. of alcohol. Yet our staple wines by an artificial process of fortifying and brandying, which means the adding of spirits, are brought up in Sherries to 20, and in Ports to even 25 per cent." Manifestly our ancestors of a distant day were compelled by their ignorance of distillation to be much better off than we would be, if robbed of every other means of making ourselves miserable than our "spiked" wines. But more than this, those strange old people put themselves under the voluntary restraint of a custom which required them to make their wines weaker instead of stronger. The learned Dr. Keith says, after speaking of the way in which they diluted their wines, "In general it was regarded as a mark of intemperance to drink pure wine, and characteristic of the Scythians and other 'Barbarians,' but unbecoming civilised men." People in those days could get drunk, and many did get drunk, but necessity was laid upon them to go through a very tedious and gradual process in order to reach the low level of beastly intoxication which can now be reached in a few moments. They could not step into a bar-room and get insanely drunk before breakfast. On the day of Pentecost when the apostles began to

create a great sensation by speaking with new tongues, their enemies charged them with being drunk. Peter's reply was, in substance, that the accusation was preposterous, seeing it was but 9 o'clock in the morning. What would be thought of such an argument to rebut the charges of drunkenness in our day? With our modern appliances, a man could begin after late breakfast, and reach the horizontal stage long before 9 o'clock; nor would it be necessary for experts to tell the crowd that he was drunk—it would be perfectly patent to the most unsophisticated. Progress is emphasised as one of the striking characteristics of this age. We are often called upon to conceive the astonishment which would overwhelm our ancestors of a few generations back should they arise from their graves and look on the wonders of modern improvement. When they should see our railroads, telegraphs, telephones, phonographs, stenographs, *et alia similia*, they would think certainly an age of miracles had intervened since they fell asleep. Doubtless their astonishment would reach its climax when they saw how the means of drunkenness had been multiplied and intensified, and learned that 80,000,000 gallons of spirits flow annually down the throats of the people of the United States. Probably the conclusion would be that however much progress may have been made, the devil is leading the van. The *New York Tribune* in 1867 contained an editorial supposed to have been from the pen of Mr. Greely, in which it was stated that the "whole cost of liquors annually made and sold in the United States is about \$500,000,000. In the consumption of this liquor 60,000 lives are yearly lost, 100,000 men and women are sent to prison, and 200,000 children are bequeathed to poor-houses and charitable institutions."

In the light of these unpleasant facts, it becomes manifest that the Church of God which is placed as a bulwark across the world's great currents of evil is now compelled to sustain a stronger pressure from the side of intemperance than ever before. The tide in this channel has swollen to alarming proportions, and seriously threatens to break over all barriers, and create a scene of wild desolation even within the pale of the Church. Many are the wrecks, from among the professed children of God, seen floating

out on this current into the whirlpools of ruin, beyond the hope of human redemption. It is cause for gratitude that the Church is becoming more and more aroused to a sense of her responsibility. Both in this country and Europe, she is putting forth strenuous efforts of resistance; and has recently been making perceptible progress against the tide. There is, however, a conviction in the mind of the writer, that the Church's attitude on the subject of temperance is not as clearly defined as it should be. Neither the outside world, nor the inside membership can tell exactly what the Church, in her functions of government, recognises as sins of intemperance. The prevailing sentiment in many sections of the Church is manifestly in favor of total abstinence, and regards moderate drinking, whether by official or private Christian, whether habitually or only occasionally, as sinful. But in no branch of the Church has total abstinence been made a requisite to membership. It is recognised that Church authority, while recommending total abstinence on the ground of Christian expediency, cannot require it on the ground of scriptural obligation. All that the Church can do, in reference to moderate drinking, is to exercise her didactic function. She can "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine"; but she cannot say, "Thou shalt not," for the reason that the Bible has nowhere said, either expressly or by implication, "Thou shalt not." It is not a sin *per se*, and while it may be, in most cases, the first step in a career of sinful dissipation, and may also, in most cases, "tempt others to sin", and should, therefore, be earnestly discouraged by Church teaching; yet it is possible that neither one of these sinful consequences shall follow, and therefore Church authority cannot absolutely forbid it. If disciplinable at all, it must become so by attendant circumstances, or subsequent results.

There is also a sentiment widely prevalent which condemns the traffic in spirituous liquors. By "traffic in spirituous liquors" is meant the sale of them, whether by wholesale or retail, as of ordinary articles of merchandise, without reference to whether or not the buyer will likely make an improper use of his purchase.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The reader will please bear in mind that in the following pages the word "traffic" is always used in the sense here defined.

Perhaps the moral sentiment of every Christian, whose piety is in a vigorous and healthy state, is shocked at the idea of a man's dealing out to his fellow-men indiscriminately and unreservedly that which he knows to be so generally the source of misery and ruin. But hitherto the Church has only expressed its disapproval in the same "didactic, advisory, and monitory" terms which she is accustomed to use in the case of moderate drinking. Judging from the attitude of the Church, the traffic and the moderate use are supposed to stand in the same relation to the sin of drunkenness; that while there is great danger that each will promote drunkenness, it is yet possible that neither may. We think the supposition involves an error. The relation between moderate drinking and drunkenness is very close, but not invariable, for drunkenness does not always follow moderate drinking. It is otherwise in respect to the traffic. The relation between it and the sin of drunkenness is as constant as that between sunlight and day. It is absolutely impossible to separate between the two. The writer has it on the confession of two intelligent, honest, and otherwise consistent members of the Church, who are engaged in the sale of whiskey in a community where habits of dissipation prevail to a great extent, that if they had full control of the business, and were to conduct it on the most approved methods, the quantity drunk in the community would probably not be diminished. They profess to use every precaution that sellers can to prevent the evil effects of their sales; they allow no liquor to be drunk on their premises; they refuse to sell to notorious drunkards and to minors; and yet they cannot, on their own confession, without quitting the business altogether, cut off the supply of a single man, woman, or child in the whole community. This does not prove that the sale of the whiskey and the drunkenness of the buyer are related as cause and effect. But it does prove that the sale of the whiskey is the invariable and known occasion, as well as the essential condition, of the drunkenness of the buyer, and this is enough to make the seller *particeps criminis*. "Woe to the man by whom the offence cometh." It is not a sufficient reply to say that the buyer is a free agent, and is not forced by the seller to make an improper use of his

purchase. The hired assassin is a free agent, but the instinct of justice as expressed in civil law, demands that he who offered the inducement by which his free agency was influenced shall share equally with the assassin in the penalty against murder. This principle is brought out in several of our laws, notably in those against the publication and sale of obscene literature. No person is bound to buy or read these bad books. The author does not force any one to make an improper use of the fruits of his labor. But the laws of the land, vindicating our sense of right, say to the author, "You shall not put the temptation in the way of your depraved fellow-men." The reasonableness of this restriction is due to the fact that it is infallibly certain that if the temptation is offered, the depraved appetency to which it appeals will yield. But it is equally certain that in any community where the traffic in liquors may be prosecuted, there will be found many who cannot resist the temptation to drink even to the extent of drunkenness. We do not ignore the difference between obscene literature and whiskey, in that one is altogether bad, while the other has its legitimate uses. Whiskey may properly be used for medicinal and mechanical purposes. The only logical consequence is that it may properly be sold for medicinal and mechanical purposes. We may go further, and admit the possibility of its being properly used in small quantities as a beverage. Even this does not draw with it the conclusion that it may properly be sold to promiscuous multitudes, as must needs be the case if the business is made profitable, when it is mathematically certain that an improper use of it will be the rule and the proper use the exception. It cannot be right to sell ten gallons simply because one of the ten will be used beneficially, or as least harmlessly, while there is every reason to believe that the other nine will be used to the injury of the buyer and others. Certainly opium can be applied to excellent uses. It is far more useful as a medicine than whiskey. But would this fact justify a Christian man in engaging in the opium traffic over in China, where it, like whiskey here, is used nine times out of ten, for its exhilarating, and not for its medicinal properties? Let an answer be given to this question in the language of a placard, affixed to one of the foreign houses

in Shanghai; "How absurd that these strangers come to Shanghai, and think to gain the people by their preaching. Twenty years ago they might have succeeded; but now opium, the real cause of all the evil, has perverted the hearts of the people." It is to the everlasting disgrace of the English government that it forced this traffic on those timid people at the point of the bayonet. As cowardly as is that heathen nation, it could not endure the unutterable evils of the opium traffic, until it had twice measured its strength in arms with the mightiest nation on the globe. They submit to it only as the fettered prisoner submits to the gloomy horrors of the dungeon. Does the fact that opium is a valuable drug justify a man in selling it as an ordinary article of merchandise in a community where its exceptional use is as a medicine, and its general use as a stimulant which destroys soul and body forever? The conscience of the heathen is not so perverted as to answer in the affirmative. Precisely the same reasoning applies to whiskey. The merchant cannot afford to pay license and sell it only for legitimate uses. He must make his profit from whiskey, which everybody knows, and no one better than the merchant himself, is used to gratify the craving of those who abuse it to their own eternal destruction. He quiets his conscience by the flimsy sophistry that while the State authorises the sale of it, there will certainly be enough sold to satisfy the demand, and so by his sales he is adding nothing to the quantity that would be sold even if he should refrain from selling. While the civil law remains as it is, "it must needs be that offences come." That is as true as gospel. But it is also as true as gospel, "woe be to that man by whom the offence cometh." The State by making this traffic legal, does not make it right. Civil law is not, and never was designed to be, the standard of morals among a Christian people. The great end of civil law is to prevent and punish outbreaking crimes against the peace of society. The State Legislature is not the fountain of that law which teaches us how to please God—the law by which we shall be judged in the great day. But the very fact that the State does legalise the traffic, and that many persons, even among those who have vowed allegiance to a higher power than the State, can pursue with an



easy conscience any calling sanctioned by the State, makes it the more imperative on the Church to assume a clear, positive, and unmistakably hostile attitude towards this business. She ought to take a decided step in advance of her present position, and array against it not only her didactic, but also her diacritic power. Where moral suasion proves ineffectual, she ought to apply legal repression. To every one under her jurisdiction, the Church should say plainly and firmly, "Thou shalt not." If asked for scriptural authority, let her point to the second table of the Decalogue. The trafficker furnishes to his customers an incitement to the perpetration of every crime that mars the welfare of society. His relation to these crimes is the more criminal because he knows with a certainty reached through experimental proof that they are the unfailing and inevitable resultants of his business. The argument by which we convict him is short, but we think conclusive. It may be thrown into the form of a syllogism thus: Whatever promotes the sin of drunkenness is itself sinful. The whiskey traffic invariably promotes the sin of drunkenness—*ergo*, it is invariably sinful.

In addition to the reasons already submitted in support of the minor premise, it may not be amiss to state a few pertinent facts gleaned from the history of State prohibition.

In February, 1869, a committee of the Lower House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury reported 1,475 parishes where prohibition prevails, and say: "Few it may be believed are cognisant of the fact, which has been elicited by the present inquiry, that there are at this time, within the Province of Canterbury, upwards of one thousand parishes in which there is neither public house nor beer shop, and where, in consequence of the absence of these inducements to crime and pauperism, according to the evidence now before the committee, the intelligence, morality, and comfort of the people, are such as the friends of temperance would have anticipated."

Bessbrook, a town in Ireland, of 4,000 inhabitants, has no liquor shop, and whiskey and strong drink are strictly prohibited. There is no poor house, pawn shop or police station. The town is entirely free from strife, discord, or disturbance.

Tyrone County, Ireland, has 10,000 inhabitants. Right Hon. Lord Claude Hamilton said in 1870: "At present there is not a single policeman in that district. The poor rates are half what they were before the liquor traffic was suppressed, and the magistrates testify to the great absence of crime."<sup>1</sup>

A few years ago the people of Maine concluded that the use of intoxicating liquors was destructive of the wealth, health, happiness, and morality of society. They rose up in the majesty of their might to put a stop to it. What measure did the united wisdom of the large majority of that people devise for this purpose? Did they say to the drinker, "You must stop drinking"? No, they knew that as a general rule he was in fatal bondage to a habit that made it impossible for him to stop. They said to the seller, "You shall stop selling. We cannot allow you to grow fat on the miseries of our people, while we pay taxes to support poor houses, and insane asylums, and houses of correction, to repair as far as possible the wrong you are doing, and to protect society from the maddened victims of your traffic." Did the result justify the wisdom of their course? We copy an answer by Rev. Cyrus Hamlin, D. D., from the pages of this Review, (Vol. 29, No. 3.) In summing up the effects of their prohibitory law, he says: "The second surprising effect was in the diminution of crime. Some of the county jails became absolutely empty. This was signally true of Oxford County, one of the largest counties in the State. It was also true of Penobscot, Kennebec, Franklin, and York. Their jails were entirely empty. In Cumberland County, the most populous county in the State, there were but five prisoners four months after the passage of the law, and three of these were liquor dealers who were imprisoned for violation of the prohibitory law. This jail had been usually overcrowded. In many places pauperism has entirely ceased, and all the work-houses and alms-houses have been greatly lightened of their heavy burdens." Ex-Governor Dingley, of Maine, recently gave the following answer to our question: "In 1855 there were 10,000 persons (one out of every forty-five of the population) accustomed

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<sup>1</sup>Prohibitionists' Text Book—New York: National Temperance Society and Publication House, 58 Reade street, 1878. Pp. 34, 35.

to get beastly drunk ; there were 200 deaths from delirium tremens annually ; there were 1,500 paupers made thus by drink ; there were 300 convicts in the State prison and jails ; and intemperance was destroying a large proportion of the homes throughout the State. Now not one in 300 of the population is a drunkard—not one-sixth as many ; the deaths from delirium tremens annually are not 50 ; and criminals and paupers (not including rum-sellers) are largely reduced, notwithstanding the great influx of foreigners and tramps.” Could the law be strictly enforced, the results would be even more wonderful ; but as it is they make this point certain, that just to the extent to which the sale of intoxicating liquors is suppressed, just to that extent are drunkenness and its concomitant vices diminished.

This is strikingly illustrated by the course of events in Massachusetts. In 1867 that State had a prohibitory law, which was repealed in 1868. The inspectors of the State prison reported to the Legislature in 1869 as follows : “The general fact is undeniable that a very large proportion of offences against law which bring men to prison for punishment are committed through the agency of intoxicating liquors, and that their increased public sale adds to the number of crimes committed, and the number of persons convicted.” In proof of this they submitted, among other things, this statement : “Total number of prisoners committed to the State prison during eight months of the year 1867, sixty-five ; number committed during the corresponding eight months of 1868, one hundred and thirty-six. The commitments were more than doubled when prohibition was taken off the liquor traffic.”

It seems, however, to be a work of supererogation to prove a fact that is universally admitted. The inseparable connection between the evils of intemperance and the whiskey traffic is recognised in the laws of all civilised countries. There is not a State in this Union which does not seek to mitigate the evils by regulating and restricting the sale. It is every where felt that the vice which marshals the long army of criminals that throng our jails ; and the long army of paupers that fill our poor houses ; and the long army of miseries that enter almost every home in

the land, and cast a shadow over every heart, must be guarded against by law. And the common sense of mankind has everywhere and always suggested the same thing—that the proper place to apply the law is on the person of the seller. The implication in all license laws is that the traffic is so exceedingly liable to result in great evil, that the State must exercise a very special guardianship over those engaged in it. The State examines them, and requires proof of good moral character, and then examines the neighborhood and premises where the deed is to be done, and finally sells them the dearly prized privilege of dealing out “liquid death” to their fellow-men, only on condition, however, that they do it in strict accordance with certain clearly and minutely defined regulations. It seems strange that any one whom Christ has made free, should willingly submit to the degradation of having his character investigated and passed upon yearly at the tribunal of Cæsar; and besides the degradation, pay a considerable sum for the legal right to follow a business which by the common consent of a wicked world is fraught with so much moral danger. When it is perfectly evident that all the evils still exist which the license laws propose to suppress, it seems strange that a Christian who is professedly striving to keep himself pure and unspotted from the world, should knowingly be a party with the State in perpetrating a miserable farce in pretending to regulate by law an evil which the law does not touch. Had our State Legislatures, in devising regulations and restrictions for the whiskey traffic, been consciously attempting to “frame mischief by a law,” it is doubtful whether they could have succeeded better than many of them have. For instance, it seems hardly probable that the devil himself could improve on the idea of making a license to sell whiskey equivalent to a certificate of “good moral character.” The more respectable the traffic, the more respectable is drunkenness and the more dire its consequences. The devil would have a respectable man at the head of every department of his work if it were possible. He can accomplish more through one Pharisee than through a half dozen Publicans. All that is required to make the evils feared from the traffic as great as they can be, is to see to it that the laws are

faithfully executed. Because this has not been done, the traffic has for the most part fallen into the hands of bad men. As a rule, only such men will follow a calling which a none too scrupulous government professedly watches with constant suspicion, and which is shown by abundant experience to merit not only suspicion but positive aversion. Certainly the Church is not to be charged with infringing Christian liberty, if she use even the rod of discipline in restraining her children from forming exceptions to that rule. There are but few things which respectability even pretends to do by way of preventing the evils which flow from an unrestricted sale. Respectability refuses the buyer permission to drink on his premises. This only necessitates the bringing or buying of a bottle, and this only insures that the purchaser will buy more than a drink at a time. Very recently the writer was told by a dealer that he began selling by the drink because convinced that it involved less injury to his customers. It is plain that whiskey drunk on any other premises is just as harmful as when drunk on the premises of the seller. Respectability refuses to sell to notorious drunkards. True philanthropy would sell to them rather than to others. They crave it more, and it will do them less hurt. They are already ruined. The time to have refused them, if mercy prompted the refusal, was before they had yet taken the step that carried them beyond the hope of recovery. Moreover, the refusal only puts them to the trouble of asking a friend to buy for them. Respectability refuses to sell to a man that is already growing disorderly under the influence of drink. If such refusal cut off the possibility of the man's sinking on down to the wretched state of beastly drunkenness, it would neither cut off nor retard what is far worse, the formation of a habit that ends in ruin. These little insignificant discriminations mark all the difference between the traffic as respectably conducted and as otherwise conducted. It is perfectly evident to a reflecting mind that these discriminations are utterly ineffectual in mitigating or diminishing the evils; and if any weight at all be allowed them, we certainly cannot allow enough to counterbalance the great moral aid given by respectability to the traffic.

The time has long gone by, if it ever was, when a man could

innocently follow this business because ignorant of the consequences. The tragic proofs of its desolating effects spring up quickly and thickly around every whiskey establishment that opens its doors to the public. The dealer must now be presumed to know perfectly the nature and results of his acts. However respectable he may be, however amiable in the other relations of life, as a whiskey dealer he must be regarded as a man who for the sake of gain is willing to be an accomplice in the wreck of the health, happiness, reputation, fortune, and homes of some, and it may be many, of his neighbors. He is a cool mercenary speculator, making profit out of the frailty and vices of those who are helpless slaves to a raging and tormenting thirst, and of others in whom he is helping to create and nourish just such a thirst. We insist that he is knowingly dependent upon these two classes for the success of his business. But for the quantity demanded by an artificial and destructive thirst, he could not pay a high license tax, and still derive a handsome income from the money invested. Take from any dealer the privilege of furnishing a part of the whiskey that produces the sufferings and inspires the crimes that attend on drunkenness, and he would at once turn his capital into other channels of commerce. "He has looked the sure consequences of his course fairly in the face, and if he can but make gain of it, is prepared to corrupt the souls, embitter the lives, and blast the prosperity of an indefinite number of his fellow-creatures. He knows that if men remain virtuous and thrifty, if these homes around him continue peaceful and joyous, his craft cannot prosper. But if the virus of drink can only be made to work, swift desolation will come of it, and every pang will bring him pelf; each broken heart will net him so much cash; so much from each blasted home and shame-stricken family; so much a widow; so much an orphan! He does not expect to win all that others lose; so far from that, he is perfectly aware that only a meagre per centage of the wreck will find its way into his hand. Yet for this he sets it all afloat! He fires a city that he may pilfer in the crowd." Why the State tolerates this traffic (to say nothing of feeding her own treasury on the profits, as is now the case,) is explained by such Scriptures as Job ix. 24. But why

should the Church tolerate it? Oh that she would ponder this question in a spirit of prayerful earnestness.

The obligation resting on the Church to assume a more clearly defined and actively hostile attitude towards the evils of intemperance is rendered more solemn in that experiment has proven what might have been concluded *a priori*, that the Church is the only organisation that can cope successfully with these evils. Temperance societies have no resources of strength sufficient for such a warfare. It is not denied that they have in some places, and for a time, achieved a partial success. But doubtless even this partial success has been due to the use of instrumentalities borrowed from the Church. The gospel truth, embodied in temperance lectures and tracts, and the fervent prayers breathed from pious hearts, which have always and everywhere formed part of the means of temperance societies, have not been entirely barren. But who that believes in the divine origin of the Church can doubt that if she had used her own weapons, the victories in behalf of temperance would have been much greater in extent, and more lasting in results? It is with reluctance, and certainly in no unsympathetic spirit, that we utter a word in disparagement of temperance societies. We recognise them as the fruit of a great woe-seeking relief. Their origin is to be found in hearts breaking under the pressure of sorrows unutterable. They are the feeble earthworks, thrown up in the agony of despair by those who saw no other way to prevent hopeless defeat and intolerable slavery. If there were in fact no other way, we would gladly give our aid, and pray God-speed to temperance societies. Although they give promise of no ultimate and permanent conquest, it is better to have the appearance of doing something than to sit idle in so dire an emergency. But there is another way which commends itself to reason, and especially to Christian faith. One of the objects for which God has established a Church on earth is to resist the swelling tide of intemperance, and hurl it back on its source, while the sacramental host cross over to the land of Canaan dry-shod. Drunkenness is one of the works of the devil, and Christ came to destroy *all* the works of the devil. He is made "head over all things to the Church"

for this very purpose. He and he only is stronger than the "strong man armed," and, therefore, to him only can we hopefully look as an adequate power to deliver us from our great enemy. We think Christians have shown a sinful lack of faith in turning from the Church, headed by Christ, to organisations founded on nothing higher than human prudence. Their excuse is that such a course is necessary in order to enlist and utilise the valuable aid found outside of the Church. Inasmuch as intemperance is a sin, many of whose consequences ripen in time, and are destructive of the dearest interests of society, many who "make a mock at sin" in general are ready to organise for the suppression of this social evil. We say, let them organise and put forth their most earnest and persevering efforts. But when they ask for the coöperation of Christians, let the answer be, "We are already working for the same end, in an organisation much better equipped for the purpose than your's. We can wield the thunders of Sinai, and present the melting picture of Calvary; we can terrify with the dire threats of wrathful Omnipotence, and persuade with the sure promises of incarnate love; we can open the pit of perdition to alarm, and the door of heaven to induce. We are under the leadership of the Son of God, and through him are in possession of 'all power in heaven and earth.' If they still show a want of confidence and insist on our coming down from our high vantage ground, let not Christians show practically the same unbelief by acceding to the demand. The Church is the best temperance society, and the word of God faithfully preached, and the discipline of God's house faithfully administered, are the best instrumentalities "under heaven given among men" for the promotion of temperance. Christians can only be justified in leaving the Church for other organisations in the war against the evils of drink when it can be shown not only that the Church has been unfaithful, but that it is either not designed, or not adapted to the end sought. It is readily admitted that the Church has been unfaithful, and is not yet throwing her undivided and mighty weight of influence on the side of temperance. But let Christians, instead of trying to set the Church in unfavorable contrast with purely



human organisations, strive to give her a more definite set, and a more powerful impulse in the right direction. Let them not relax their efforts in the cause of temperance; but while they strive even more earnestly, let the Church reap the glory and the benefit of their efforts. In other words, let them do the work they are now doing, simply as Christians, and not as Good Templars, Sons of Temperance, etc. If they are in the path of duty, fighting against sin, they are exactly where they pledged themselves to go when they publicly vowed allegiance to Christ. Their obligation to the Saviour demands that they should let the world know that they are doing their duty because Christians, and not merely because they have signed the pledge of a temperance order. Thus would they stimulate their too sluggish brethren to greater fidelity, and we might hope in the course of time to see the contagion of their example spread from heart to heart, and from rank to rank, until finally the whole army of Christ, recognising the spread and triumph of temperance principles as one of the distinct objects of its enrolment, would be marshalled under the lead of the Great Captain, and marching on to speedy victory. But even now there are hopeful signs of the good time coming. Not to speak of the advances made outside of the great brotherhood of Presbyterian churches, it is enough to cheer the most despondent to note the evidence of growing activity and deepening interest in all the influential Presbyterian bodies of the world. The Irish, English, and three Scotch Presbyterian Churches, the Calvinistic Methodist Church of North and South Wales, which is virtually Presbyterian, the Northern Presbyterian Church of this country, have all in their General Assemblies and Synods passed from time to time, during the last few years, more and more stringent resolutions, and inaugurated stronger and stronger movements in favor of temperance reform. Some of them explicitly, and all of them implicitly, condemn the whiskey traffic. The General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church has never, so far as known to the writer, made a deliverance on the subject. But the largest and most influential Synod in connection with it has recently set its most emphatic disapproval on the traffic; and there is no doubt that it gave ex-

pression to the sentiment of the whole Southern Church. As this stage of reform has been reached by a gradual progress which shows no signs of abatement, it is certainly not too much to hope that the whole Church will advance to the position which the more zealous temperance workers throughout the country long to see it occupy. Its growing sentiment of aversion to the liquor traffic will find expression in terms of law; and the professing Christian who wishes to take advantage of the morbid thirst of his fellow-creatures for the purpose of filling his pockets will not be permitted to bring reproach on the fair fame of Christ's Bride.

There is another consideration that brightens hope. While it rests with man to formulate and give practical efficiency to Christian sentiment through the courts of the Church, it is the prerogative of woman to create and nourish this sentiment until it shall attain to such a degree of strength as to make its legal expression a certainty. The Christian influence of women is powerfully felt in every department of morals; but in no direction is it exerted so energetically as in the direction of temperance reform. The coarse and brutal sins of the drunkard are peculiarly shocking to her refined and sensitive nature. To know the attitude of the women of the Church (and they constitute the vast majority of the Church's membership) to the liquor traffic, it is not necessary to collect their votes. An ungodly custom may blind the minds of men who keep their eyes too steadily fixed on the prospects of gain, but custom can never stifle the true utterance of woman's heart, when that heart has been touched by the Spirit of God. The sophistries of error may pervert the judgment of man, especially when his interests seem to lie on error's side, but sophistry has no power over the unreasoning impulses that govern the life of woman. She owes this traffic no sympathy, and it is certain that she gives it none. Earth holds no greater enemy to her peace. It shoots its most envenomed shafts through her pure and gentle heart. Though she is as innocent of all personal participation in the sin as the angels of heaven, yet it sends its baleful influence into the sanctuary of home where she presides, and lays waste all the realm of its sacred and tender affections. It is not man who through intemperance has lost

health, character, and happiness, and gained in their stead poverty, shame, and rottenness, who suffers the sharpest pangs and deepest agony. The deadening of his sensibilities keeps pace with his degradation, and when he has finally lost all that glorifies human nature, he has also lost all sense of his deep disgrace and hopeless destitution. But the mother, the wife, the sister, these have hearts that can feel everything but the numbing effect of the beloved one's sins. Our most profound sympathy is with the countless multitude of tender women who are sitting in silent grief under the shadow of this awful curse, and waiting in mute despair until the welcome grave shall afford deliverance. At the same time we breathe a sigh of relief when we reflect that each one of this countless multitude is sending up prayers from her anguish-smitten soul to the great God of pity and of justice to stay this tide of evil and save the Church and the world from its destructive power. Could the Church be made to understand what is felt "by the bursting hearts of mothers for their ruined sons; of wives from whose lives all joy and hope, all love and tenderness has been blotted out; of daughters crushed and doomed to penury and disgrace", there would be no further need of witnesses to prove the guilt of the liquor traffic, nor any further question as to the righteousness of law to prevent it. By and by the Church will be made to understand it, and then she will no longer speak to her offending sons in the impotent language of advice and entreaty, but in the strong language of positive prohibition. In doing so the Church will not transcend her legislative function, which, in the sphere of morals, is simply to echo the law of God contained in Scripture; for that law in condemning the child condemns the parent. R. C. REED.