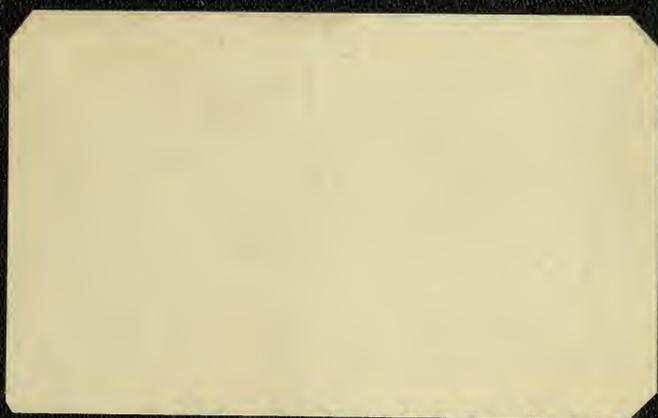


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TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

ITS

EFFECT ON SOCIETY

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AND

INDIVIDUALS.

BY J. R. WHEAT.



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TO
MY FRIENDS
IN THE
TEMPERANCE CAUSE, AND ALL WHO WOULD BE
FREE FROM INTEMPERANCE,

THIS PAMPHLET

Is Respectfully Dedicated,

WITH THE HOPE THAT SOME GOOD MAY BE
DONE BY IT.

J. R. W.

TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

ITS MEANING.

We understand the words Total Abstinence to mean for a person not to use as a beverage, or even occasionally, whatever they may have decided in their own minds they can or are willing to leave entirely alone.

The Temperance cause, as most people commonly term it; in our day, is founded almost entirely on this principle of Total Abstinence. Its advocates say to the public outside of their circle that it is wrong for any man or woman to use intoxicating drinks as a beverage; they say, only in cases of sickness or some severe cases should liquor be used internally. It is one thing for these men who believe in this doctrine of Total Abstinence to make this assertion, and another thing to give some good reasons for it, and see if their professions will stand the test of argument. The majority of all classes of men admit that this drinking habit is causing great misery in our nation, and that thousands of smaller evils are following close on the whiskey business, and yet they cannot exactly say that they believe in totally abstaining themselves. They say every man should be his own master, drink or let it alone. The man who will drink to excess, and use all his money in that way is a fool. This is their argument. They forget men are not all constituted alike, that some can drink or let it alone, while others of weaker minds cannot. Hundreds of different things cause men to drink, and the habit once formed holds man, the same as any other habit, until very often nothing but death will release him. In view of these things, who dare contradict and call the man a fanatic who says the only safe rule is Total Abstinence? But how many reasons might be given to prove that these Temperance men are about correct in their principles, and we suppose no one in this age would try to oppose this great work of reform now going on? You all read for yourselves and say it is right, so we will just give a few thoughts as they have presented themselves

to us and pass on. The habit of drinking intoxicating drinks helps to destroy both body and mind, and puts man very often on the level with the animal; and completely ruins him for active and social life, the very elements in which he was designed to live.

For individuals to use these drinks moderately, they form appetites which can be broken and controlled at will by few; while the majority of our moderate drinkers do not stop there, but continue on until they are blanks in society, and disgrace themselves and humanity. In proof of this statement, we point you to facts of history and your own personal observation. Wherever you have noticed its effect on individuals, and whatever way you look at this question, whether morally or financially, you must come to this conclusion, that these advocates of Total Abstinence, when they say these things are so, speak the truth.

ITS RISE AND PROGRESS.

The way in which this question first came to be agitated, and its bad effect being seen so plainly in America, not only by men of one idea, as some call them, but by all who had given it any thought whatever, was owing to the fact that it was increasing so rapidly, and crime was of so common occurrence, men began to say something was wrong in the country. Here we have our churches on almost every corner, schools established all over, men preaching the Gospel, and yet something is at work counteracting all these good influences. "What is it?" Soon the echo could be heard in the distance: The drinking customs are ruining America, stop that and you shut down on your greatest foe. Men looked in the future — where are our young men going? was the question, the answer was to destruction! What hope then for our country? None! for no nation can long stand, if its young are allowed to grow up dissipated. The whole net work of society was seen to be giving away, and the look ahead was dark. As soon as men began to realize the situation, a movement was started to organize an army of moral forces to overthrow the rum power. How much success they have met with it is needless for me to state. Feeling the power there would be in organized bodies they said we will band ourselves together and destroy the rum traffickers, or they can destroy us. If we let them alone, longer, we are ruined, and if we unite and commence action, and get defeated, so let it be.

So the conflict between right and wrong commenced ; to-day, they stand well armed and drilled, still on the field of battle, contending for the same principle they started with ; you stop making drunkards and knock in the head of whiskey barrels, then go your way in peace ; until you do so, we will oppose you in every lawful manner. Which of these two parties is on the side of humanity and religion, is so plain that the passer by cannot but notice. So this movement started. At times it has seemed to die away, but like the spirit in man it can never die, but has always come forth looking brighter after every conflict, and with new champions to defend it ; the future is still before us.

“ Truth crushed to earth shall rise again.”

YOUR DUTY.

Every man has his influence for good or evil, which it is impossible for him to destroy or conceal, and this being the case the question arises, what is your duty in relation to this movement, for or against ? Where are you ? Most certainly on one side ; and if not on the right, where are you ? This question has gone so far and made such rapid progress, as to demand the attention of one and all. So no man can deny but what it has become a mighty power for good in the world, because its effect on society and individuals all see for themselves. What then is your duty, to unite with and help it along, or withdraw your influence and money from it, and do that much toward chaining the wheels ? When Mr. Davis and our brothers at the south, said we will separate, dissolve partnership with the north, and raised the rebel flag, nearly all men at once took sides and supported the government. Then your duty was plain to stand by the national flag, let the result be as it might, because it was absolutely wrong for the south to lift the arm of rebellion against lawful authority, and well they feel it now, and mourn over a lost cause. So in this moral warfare they have not, because they dare not, rise in arms and show their true colors always, and yet the spirit of rebellion lies hidden there, it is the serpent in the grass, a secret enemy always worse than the open foe, and standing behind their fort of dollars, are doing more to destroy governments and homes, than if in arms on the battle field.

The simple fact, that men will manufacture, and sell these drinks

for the sole purpose of gain, and no other, should convince all honest men what their duty is. On all sides the lesson is being taught daily, both in public and private life, that the human family is one common brotherhood, and are in this world to promote each other's happiness; and nearly all believe in the teachings of the Bible, and yet a certain portion take the liberty, and are allowed to cause a great deal of misery, and ruin their fellow man, and say I am not responsible! Oh, we wish we could impress upon the mind of every young man, the great importance of pledging himself to Total Abstinence in the morning of life, before habits are formed which will be hard to break! You trifle now, and say I have nothing to fear, but remember, you have something to fear from the Wine Bottle! Be warned in time, and "shun the paths of the destroyer." The social custom of society, young men are daily going to ruin, through this one thing! The question is asked, won't you take something? And they yield. Young man, in the Temperance ranks there is room for you! If you have talent, here you can use it, and do some good, your influence will be on the right side. And, before we close, we ask you this question: What is your duty?

A WORD WITH TEMPERANCE MEN.

Brothers: We wage war on one common enemy, that is, strong drink! I care not what association you belong to, if your motto reads, Total Abstinence from these things, then, we welcome you as co-workers with us, we stand pledged to do all in our power to destroy the enemy. Are we doing it? As I look around, I see this enemy of ours very strongly fortified; in one place, we see him standing behind his works, with the greenback in his fingers, saying, the law allows me to sell; gentlemen, do not disturb me in my lawful business; in another place, you see him looking over his breastworks, and saying, come in and see some of my Temperance converts here, they are working for me, once they opposed, now they are willing subjects of mine. For want of moral courage to say, No, Sir, to some pretended friend, they deserted our army, and went over to the enemy. These things we cannot deny, they are too true. In another place you find our enemy saying, "our best citizens have signed my license; some Temperance men take a drink here occasionally, our best politicians (who are said to be gentlemen in every respect) are

on our side " (anything to get in office). And so these enemies of ours, continue in their lawful business, as they term it, and I write these things, my brothers, for your benefit, and to keep you on guard, and make you watchful. And yet, we are pledged to do, all in our power, to destroy our enemy. And yet we hear words like these ; some are growing weary and falling out, some are fearing we can never succeed, and the call is as strong to-day, as ever ! Save our people ! it can be done ! only, keep close on the enemy ! every man to his post of duty ! keep out of the enemies hands ! give him no communications ! cut all the wires along the line ! when he presents the almighty dollar, as his refuge, then you present the Almighty God and his word as yours ! and say, we conquer by this sign, and the time will come when the handwriting on the wall will be seen in such clear letters that he will begin to tremble, and run in confusion, only let us be faithful, and press onward ! never let it be said, that you deserted in time of action, or when some swamp of difficulty had to be passed through. The ladies, who are the pioneers in this work, are out ahead, clearing up the roads, and all we have to do, is follow close on, and hold the land passed over ! weaken the enemy at every point ! sometimes openly ! sometimes secretly ! wherever duty calls, go forward, and my advice to all who are already pledged to this work, is, remain firm in your principles ! remember, that in every department of life, the call comes for faithful, honest, straightforward men and women. Our mission, is to lift up, and make better our fellow man. We are on the side of right, our enemies being judges. Our labor ceases at Death, and may the record read with all of you, died with the armor on.

THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

We read in sacred history, words like these : " Because Judgment against an evil work is not speedily executed, the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to do evil." We think this text will apply well in the case of all engaged in liquor selling. They see for themselves that the day of Judgment is speedily coming for their traffic ; their race is nearly run, although they will not admit it. They are allowed to go, year after year, paying money to certain officials in every town or city, and getting for it a paper, giving them power and authority to go on, and do as much injury as they

please, indirectly and very often directly, only do it in a kind of respectable way : "allow no gambling in the house ; have so many rooms, etc.," and do this thing with as little confusion as possible ; but at the same time do it. What difference does it make to you, my reader, whether some man, on the highway, says, "your money or your life," and takes every cent you have ; or whether, some man, who pretends great friendship, borrows every dollar you own, and very nicely and systematically—because law will not oblige him—cheats you out of every cent ?

The acts in these two cases are quite different ; but the principle is the same as with this rum trade—ruin a man and family, but do it lawfully—there is so much of this respectable way of sinning in these latter days, because judgment is not speedily executed ; but it is sure to come ! our people are getting their eyes opened ! some men tell us it will always continue ; but we cannot so read the times ! What was done in the west, last winter ? How this will be accomplished we cannot tell, whether by moral suasion or legal suasion ; but let both these elements unite, and the work is complete ! If all societies now in existence, who are trying to kill the traffic, will remain faithful—with what will unite with them—they can break down the drinking customs in America ! who doubts it ?

Ask the man, who sells liquor, why he does it ? Ask him if he cannot see the injury he is doing ? And the reply comes back "Am I my brother's keeper ?" We say, yes, sir, you are ; and they deny it.

Why is it that men engage in this business, sooner than in any other ? Because the most money comes in from it ! They will barter away soul, friends, a pleasant home ; ruin their children ; all these things for money ! and at last must die, and leave it all ! and the world moves on, and says, "here lies a rich man !"

"But, what shall it profit a man !"

Their motto is, "let me make money and all will be well ! every man paddles his own canoe !"

Because judgment is delayed, "their hearts are fully set in them to do evil." But as we look out in the future, we see the Temperance army moving on ! Its leaders give the command : "remember your Pledge !" and the answer is heard, all along the line,

PROHIBITION !



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