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Intemperate Temperance. Food for the Temperate and Intemperate to Ponder Over.

The late Norman Macleod used to tell a story to the effect that on one occasion when he was driving with a parishoner, the conversation turned on the subject as to whether it was irreligious to take a walk on Sunday. An old clergyman present said: "I can't say that it is positively irreligious to take a walk on Sabbath day. I often do it myself, but I am always very careful to go out by the back door!" Now this back-door religion, and back-door morality, I do righteously abhor. In the Prohibition movement there is not only the attempted tyranny of legal prohibition, but there is the actual tyranny of social prohibition. One of the consequences undoubtedly is the fearful increase of those sly and secret modes of indulging the intemperate appetite of which we are now hearing so much. A bottle of lager beer on the dinner table can't well be hidden from those impertinent busy bodies who are always wanting to regulate the lives of other people, but a bottle of morphine can be carried in the pocket and nobody but yourself and the druggist who supplies it be any the wiser. Advocates of prohibition, it seems to me, are lamentably lacking in the important element of tact. Tact is a very important thing to have. Success in well nigh everything depends on the possession of it. I have not much of it myself, and the consequence is I am always getting into a mess of some sort. If I had more tact perhaps I should not be speaking to you to-night on this subject and confessing to you any beer bibbing sins. I should but drink the beer all the same and pretend I didn't. And then, what a delightful acquisition I should be to the temperance platform! But Prohibitionists, in the advocacy of their movement, lack tact. I read a story in a Magazine, the other day, which illustrates the value of this quality: "Frederick Douglass was traveling with a friend of another color in a part of the country where public sentiment was bitterly hostile to the association of colors. They stopped at a tavern and dined together, at such a spectacle the villagers, growling and grumbling about the stove in the bar-room, was immediately disposed to mischief. The bar-room philosophers, being white men, were sadly troubled for the honor of their color. 'What business has a white man to be traveling and eating with a nigger, anyhow? If he don't know what's decent we'll teach him.' Tarring and feathering for the white man seemed looming in the very remote perspective. Frederick Douglass slipped quietly out, and returning, after a little while, he remarked to his companion, in a good humored way that he had just seen a very singular sight in the stable. Of course the murmuring crowd turned to listen. 'You'll hardly believe it,' said Douglass, 'but I gave my white mare and your bay horse four quarts of oats each, and they are eating side by side as quietly and contentedly as if they were of the same color. 'Tis most extraordinary.' He neither laughed nor winked, but made his remark with a simple sincerity absolutely irresistible. There was a moment of silence, and then came the answer of the human heart to the wit that had been spoken. 'What cursed fools we are,' said one of the crowd, and a laugh followed which scattered like a burst of sunlight the gathering clouds of evil intention. Tact had been a hundred fold more effectual in melting a prejudice than a series of solemn lectures.

If the prohibition reformers had possessed tact when they found themselves confronted with a habit the most ancient, the most deeply rooted, the most widespread of any habit humanity has yet formed, instead of attempting the impossible task of eradicating that habit would have sought to regulate it, and so they have deprived it of those evil excrescences from which society was suffering.

Again, if they had had tact instead of alienating moderate men by denouncing temperate drinkers as worse than the intemperate ones, as men who were responsible for all the woes that come of drunkenness as men who were all on the downward road to hell, they would have utilized the immense amount of temperate force which these sober men had in their power to wield and so they would have brought a force of public opinion to bear upon all the abuses of the drinking system before which those abuses must, long ere this have been swept clean away. They would have endeavored to create and foster a taste and appetite for the less fiery kind of intoxicants for beer and the lighter kinds of wines; and they would have endeavored to ensure that all liquor sold should be unadulterated—absolutely free from all foreign and deleterious compounds—for it is a fact that a considerable part of the drunkenness that exists is caused by the vile compounds with which alcoholic drinks are adulterated; and it is a further fact that the drunkenness thus caused is of the vilest, most passionate, most vindictive sort. Alcohol is not so much a stimulant as a narcotic. Pure alcoholic beverages tend to stupefy and not to madden.

And yet, again, if they had had tact, finding them-

selves confronted by a habit which had necessarily called into existence a vast trade; a trade stretching out its ramifications all over the world; a trade in which millions upon millions of capital was invested, they would have called to their aid the persons engaged in that trade, and appealed to their intelligence, honesty and patriotism—qualities in which even saloon keepers are not entirely deficient—to aid in making the trade as clean and decent and honest as possible. It is as much to the interest of traders in intoxicating drinks as it is to the interest of traders in any other commodity, that the public should think well of them and of their business. Take them as a whole, taking into consideration, as we ought to take into consideration the peculiar temptations with which their business surrounds them, the dealers in intoxicating drinks are as honest as citizens and as upright as men, as any other class of the community. They are not the "murderers" which ardent temperance apostles delight in declaring them to be. They do not delight in seeing a young man blasted in his promise, and saddened through and through with drink; they do not gloat over the miseries and the shames which the families of hapless drunkards are made to feel. They have hearts in their bosoms; they have wives and children whom they love; they are capable of being touched and influenced by tender and solemn emotions. And I have no hesitation in saying that if they had been approached in a proper spirit, they would have proved—the bulk of them, that is—a valuable auxiliary to a temperance—not a prohibition—but a temperance movement.

Inasmuch as we cannot, for a long series of centuries to come, eradicate the habit of drinking intoxicants it is necessary that there should be a class of men whose special business it is to minister to the habit; and considering the peculiar nature of the trade, it is of great moment that intelligent, honest, moral men should be induced to enter it. The policy the prohibition party has pursued has had a direct tendency to drive such men away. Men of intelligence and honesty shrank naturally from investing their capital in a business which the caprice of public opinion may, by a popular vote, at any time destroy.

Prohibitionists make their movement too much a moral and religious movement. It is that, but it is not that primarily. Primarily it is a physical movement. Drunkenness is a physical disease, and can be made to yield to physical methods of treatment. How absurdly the religious element has been imported into the question. What valuable time, and what laborious ingenuity have been wasted in the attempt to prove it scriptural—in the attempt to prove that whenever wine is spoken of favorably in the Bible the unfermented juice of the grape is meant; and that whenever it is spoken of unfavorably in the Bible the fermented juice is meant. Just as though that mattered. People before they settle great questions do not wait until those who read the Bible differently and give a different interpretation to the texts, have adjusted their differences. Humanity abolished slavery without waiting until those who attacked slavery and those who defended it, on scriptural grounds, had come to an agreement as to what the Bible teaching really was. So with this temperance question. If it be a good thing it will triumph because it is good—because it commends itself to the enlightened reason and conscience as good, and not because certain passages in a book, the last words of which were written eighteen hundred years before ever the thing was heard of, can be ingeniously twisted in its favor. A preacher says that faith in Christ is the only thing that will cure the drunkard and keep him safe. Unfortunately for this theory, so many of those who have an abundance of this faith, or who profess to have it, are constantly tumbling into all sorts of slimy pits of wickedness and shame! Faith in Christ will no more cure drunkenness than it will cure a broken leg; it will no more prevent a man from getting drunk, if he is fool enough to drink a sufficient quantity to produce that end, than it will prevent him from having the life crushed out of him if a heavy wagon wheel passes over his head. Temperance appeals are almost invariably addressed to the moral and religious feelings. The laugh at the antics of the drunkard, the tear over the description of the drunkard's ruined home and broken hearted wife, are varied by terrific denunciation of that arch villain of all villains the moderate drinker. The consequence is that the fury of a revival is got up, and a vast amount of enthusiasm is created, but fortunately for the world, nobody can dwell long together amid the fury of a revival; and so the revival always cools down and is always followed by a proportionate amount of back-sliding. When the revival is over, you have just as much drunkenness as ever you had before, but in addition you have a prodigious amount of conscious falsehood and hypocrisy.

Continued in the next issue.

Read the Courier.

THE COLORADO DESERT.

New Sound Carries and the Way Mirages Come and Go.

Talk about wireless telephones! The Colorado desert goes science one better in that line. According to travelers in that neck of sand and sagebrush, you can dispense with any kind of telephone, with or without wires, at least up to a certain distance.

Two men a mile apart can carry on a conversation in an ordinary tone of voice, particularly if there happens to be a small hill behind each, writes Harvey Hall Kessler in the Travel Magazine. The prevailing silence is so intense that it might be called deafening.

Perhaps, after all, the weirdest among many strange features of the desert is the mirage. We have camped perhaps and gone to bed early in the evening with the thermometer registering not far below the hundred mark. We awake, shivering with cold beneath our blankets, and look toward the east.

There is the slightest suggestion of light in the sky there, which as we watch grows slowly in strength. A grayish haze marks the horizon's edge, which stands out more sharply at one point, from which broad, pale rays creep up and out high above in the sky. These again slowly fade as a point of brilliant light appears at their base. This point grows to a half circle, then breaks and runs along the sky line in a surging, golden lake.

Upon the shores of this lake cities spring up, towers, spires and solid blocks. These fade into fields and forests and farming scenes—fields of golden grain, cattle standing in green alfalfa, sheets of water. The mountains near the edge of the lake separate from their bases and float upward, topple over and stand on their heads, their unwieldy feet in air.

Soon our lake begins to contract and collect into a big round ball of dazzling brilliance hung just above the horizon. Farms and forest disappear. The mountains, as though abashed at being caught in such an unseemly attitude by the broad light of day, quickly resume their normal position, while all the stark landscape stiffens into unshifting endurance of the garish light and blazing heat of the desert sun. The mirage is gone like a bubble. Only the gray desert remains.

Uncle Ephraim Raylense—Why, that's a perfect picture of my old hoss! What'll you sell it fur, mister?

Artist (who has been sketching in the neighborhood)—Well, when that painting is finished it will be worth \$100 anyhow.

Uncle Ephraim—Ain't there goin' to be nothin' else in it?

Artist—No, nothing but the horse.

Uncle Ephraim—Well, you can't sell it anywhere 'round here fur no \$100. Everybody knows I've offered the hoss himself time an' ag'in fur \$15 an' take it out in truck.—Chicago Tribune

TRICK SHOOTING.

The Way Some of the Stage Feats Are Accomplished.

When a champion rifle shot fires blindfolded at a wedding ring or a penny held between his wife's thumb and finger of seated back to her shoots, by means of a mirror, at an apple upon her head or on a fork held in her teeth, the danger of using a bullet is obvious. None, of course, is needed. The explosion is enough. The apple is already prepared, having been cut into pieces and stuck together with an adhesive substance, and a thread with a knot at the end, pulled through it from the "wings," so that it flies to bits when the gun is fired; is "how it is done."

Generally the more dangerous a feat appears the more carefully is all danger guarded against. In the "William Tell" act the thread is often tied to the assistant's foot. When, again, the ash is shot off a cigar which the assistant is smoking a piece of wire is pushed by his tongue through a hollow passage in the cigar, thus thrusting off the ash at the moment of firing.

A favorite but simple trick is the shooting from some distance at an orange held in a lady's hand. Great applause is invariably forthcoming when the bullet drops out on her cutting open the fruit. It is inserted by hand earlier in the evening.

Another popular trick is that of snuffing out lighted candles. Half a dozen are placed in front of a screen, in which as many small holes are bored, one against each candle wick. At the moment of firing a confederate behind the screen sharply blows out each candle with a pair of bellows.

In most instances where a ball or other object has to be broken on a living person's head blank cartridge is used and the effect produced by other means. A special wig with a spring concealed in it worked by a wire under the clothes is generally used, the confederate manipulating the spring simultaneously with the firing of the rifle. As the ball is of extremely thin glass, a mere touch suffices to shatter it.

In these exhibitions some of the rifle "experts" invite gentlemen from the audience to testify that the weapon is indeed loaded. The cartridge shown looks very well, but it is a shell of thin wax blackened to resemble a leaden bullet. It would not hurt a fly.—London Tit-Bits.

A Tabled Tale.

A man once collided with an opportunity.

"Why don't you look where you are going?" growled the man.

"Don't you recognize me?" asked the opportunity pleasantly.

"No, and I don't care to. You have trodden on my corns," replied the man as he limped away.

Moral—Don't believe the people who say they have never had a chance.—New York Times.

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