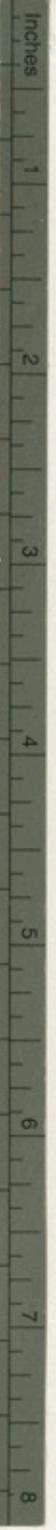


ADDRESS.

No.21, Vol.9.

SUBJECT:

Effects of Alcoholic Drinks upon Young People.



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1, Effects of alcoholic drinks upon young people.

In these days whenever the word temperance is mentioned there is such a contrariety of thought on the subject based upon a variety of experiences in any group of men and women that it seems hopeless ever to secure unity of plan, purpose or action.

The other day fourteen gentlemen sat down to a lunch table, having been called together for mutual consideration of ~~the same~~ topic, to wit; How shall we be able in Greater New York to meet the consolidated liquor organization and power with a view to prevent ~~that~~ traffic which has been a corrupter of youth, a nucleus for crime, and a constant menace to the happiness of the people?

Scarcely two individuals agreed. All wanted temperance. But ~~one~~ one opinion strongly favored resting mainly upon personal example; another, prohibition in law; another, ~~the~~ the prohibitory union and training of Christian men as in the Rochester movement; another still high license, while two were earnestly in favor of removing all license and allowing the terrible results of consequent degradation and woe to perform ~~its~~ ^{their} self-correction on the old principle: "Of whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad".

I may say, however, that there was an unanimity in this one thing namely, ^{genuine} ~~that~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ love would be promoted of practical temperance, that is, such love as our Lord speaks of as the fulfilling of the law; that Love which penetrating the heart makes a man love his neighbor as himself.

For sixty years I have observed the effects of alcoholic drinks upon young people. Some students, preparing for college in Yarmouth, Maine, with myself fifty-five years ago were so far advanced toward the end of their term that they had considerable leisure, and concluded, as boys will, to have a good time. The city of Portland was not far away so that they went thither in groups, usually hiring carriages at the livery stable to take them, wait for them and bring them back.

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For sixty years I have observed the effects of alcoholic drinks upon young people. Some students, preparing for college in Yarmouth, Maine, with mutual fifty-five years ago were as far advanced toward the end of their term that they had considerable leisure, and concluded, as boys will, to have a good time. The city of Portland was not far away so that they went thither in groups, usually hiring carriages at the livery stable to take them, wait for them and bring them back.

The results of their good time I afterward traced. One was not able to finish his course in college, another became powerful to drink strong drink, but soon ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~, after graduating, succumbed to a disease induced by alcohol; another became a low debauchee and before he was thirty years of age was not acceptable in decent society.

It is astonishing what havoc liquor made amongst those young men. Not one of those ~~XXXX~~ ^{themselves} who were addicted to drink, I mean in that company, ever accomplished anything worthy of record in their lives, and not one of them is living today.

Again of young men at ~~The~~ military academy, who were there at the same time with myself, there were a few who broke the regulations at every opportunity, and succeeded in supplying themselves with liquor, usually of the worst kind. Of them one ~~took~~ ^{lost} his own life, while under the influence of drink, by the accidental discharge of a rifle that he was carelessly handling; another committed some outrageous action induced by drink while in New Mexico, and came near being condemned as a murderer for hanging some Mexicans whose lives his soldiers saved. He with a jug of whisky managed to drink enough on one occasion to cause his death, all this before he was thirty years of age.

But still another example is that of a young man ~~wo~~ ^{who} with great difficulty succeeded in getting into the Army; soon he was a confirmed drunkard and would have been dismissed from the service, but for an astonishing and unexpected reformation. He had some friends who loved God and their fellowmen and they induced him to make a complete change; after that he had a very distinguished career till he fell in a battle with the Indians on our western frontier. As a rule the prohibition of liquor to the cadets for four years, that is during their cadetship, has been in a physical sense remarkably beneficial.

Health and vigor have not been interrupted or impaired by the sure poison of alcoholic beverages during that formative period when youth are passing into manhood; but the moral influence would be ~~xxx~~ ^{at the outset} greater if every young man could be convinced, as our Surgeon General is that alcoholic beverages are promotive of disease, particularly ~~so~~ ^{also} on our Southern coast, and in the tropical climates of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines.

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2. Liquors in social life.

One of the most prominent lawyers of this city spoke the other day in public of how family men were subjected to ostracism even here in liberal New York, because they gave dinners and suppers without wine or other liquor. Little by little, he said, such a family man was dropped by many a valuable acquaintance and his hospitality laughed at. I do hope that this is but a partial view of good society in this metropolis.

The influence of fashion, however, is tremendous. Young ladies go to entertainments and are urged to drink wine and punch; they see the brilliancy of their companions and are ridiculed because their own eyes do not sparkle or their cheeks redened from the excitement of wine; they feel ashamed because it is the fashion to drink and they wonder that their parents should restrain them from so innocent and harmless enjoyment, but we know very well the consequences of such enjoyment. The fruits are neither innocent nor harmless.

Young men are injured more as a rule than young ladies for in their separate life they are doubly exposed. In the joyousness of a feast we know that thousands of them have fallen below a plane of right living to which they never again are able to ascend. Nothing can be more seductive than the wine cup presented by the hand of a beautiful, highly esteemed woman to a young man who is not settled in his convictions to resist that sort of temptation.

3. Methods of producing Reformation.

I need not say to the young that there is one proverb that will never wear out and that is, That an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The best reformation will come to any young man or woman by having a purpose fixed as the rock like that of Daniel when he was asked to partake of the King's wine. A weak and flickering resolution is of little avail, it will not stand the test, temptation will break it down and character be degraded.

Reformation by pledges. I have watched through a long ~~xxx~~ life they are sometimes effective, but never, I think, is a pledge a good staff to lean on. Of course if one has made a pledge and put it in writing it will have a staying influence, but it wants something more. It always needs the help of a friend, human or Divine.

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A fixed purpose, supported by constant prayer, is better than the simple written pledge. A friend of mine told me that he had made up his mind not to drink and that he had a solid resolution such as I have described, but that his head was weak and sometimes dizziness and confusion troubled him as he walked a half a mile from his house to his office having to pass several liquor saloons on the way.

To resist the invitation of friends, the sollicitation of the aiders and abettors of the liquor traffic, and of others who would influence him in his business and so pass ^{on} unscathed ~~on~~ to his place of work he found it necessary to pray all the time and all the way, particularly when the smell of strong beer or of whisky feached his nostrils.

For years I have labored ^{together} with my fellow Christians in what we call the rescue work. The method is doubtless familiar to you. I will illustrate by a single case. In Portland, Oregon it was the custom for Mr. Chattin, the secretary of the Y.M.C.A. of which I was president, to go every day to the jail in order to visit those who were sent there for temporary confinement. One day he found a man by the name of Priece, very stupid, imbruted by long and hard ~~and~~ drinking. He had been a good boy in a Christian Family; a child thoroughly instructed in the Gospel and the prayer-book of the Episcopal Church; a merchant quite successful for a time in New York; drink and failure went together; He started again in New Orleans with similar results due to the same cause; next we find a like trial and a like failure in San Francisco; then began the tramp period of his life, more and more degraded, till in Portland, Oregon, in one of the drink places, that ought to be abolished, he was suffered to drink till he was in a stupor and then rolled into a ditch in front of the establishment. The next day after the police had had mercy on him and kept him in the station house he was brought before the judge and fined \$10 or in default of money to be imprisoned in the common jail for one month. Mr. Chattin paid his fine, took him to his own home, had him washed and dressed and fed; more than that, the family united in doing those kind things that won his heart. His soul was converted. I remember when he first ~~and~~ rose in our Y. M. C. A. Meeting and

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besought with tears our sympathies and our prayers.

He was regenerated. His flesh became like that of a little child. His face shone, and all his powers were rejuvenated. The prayers that he had learned in childhood ^{he} came the language of the prayer-room, and the early songs, taught him by his mother, were his delight. When on the Pacific coast I frequently met him, in Portland and elsewhere, and I found him, though somewhat infirm from a weakened body and impaired constitution, living a cheerful, worthy life always by his labor gaining his own support.

(General Howard gave other illustrations)

My theory as to the best method of reforming those who have already passed the bounds of safety and become drunkards is this: When everything has been done that medicine can effect try the expulsive power of a new affection. The conversion of ~~Christ~~ ^{Christ} is suggestive of it. Fill the heart of a man with a spirit of Christ with love for the master and for his fellow man, ^{this a} will be sufficient impulsive power to drive out the old and clinging eagerness for drink or for other foolish excitement and soon he whole system, body, mind and spirit, will be completely regenerated.

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