

TEMPERANCE SERMON BY REV. A. H. MOMENT

"They Have Erred Through Wine, and Through Strong Drink Are Out of the Way"

The annual sermon before the North Carolina State Convention of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, by Rev. Alfred H. Moment, D. D., in the First Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, October 1st, 1905.

Text: Isaiah, 28:7. They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way.

Theme: "Temperance, in the light of the letter and spirit of the Bible."
When I was asked, last mid-summer, to preach the annual sermon before this convention, I readily consented, feeling it an honor to serve a society with a record so noble, and also believing it a privilege to speak once more to a Raleigh audience on temperance and against the awful wickedness of the liquor traffic.

The society represented here tonight, is Christian—so the name implies, and so facts prove, for these women are professed Christians, members of the church, with the Bible for their guide and Jesus for their helper and hope. But is the temperance of this organization, with its two radical propositions, prohibition for the state and total abstinence for the individual Christian? Have these ultra principles any real foundation in either the letters or spirit, or Holy Scriptures? Are the uncompromising reforms, think you, according to the revealed will of God?

These are questions that determine for me the course of my thoughts, compelling the Bible to be opened in your presence and honestly read upon this great living issue, in order to see whether it and these temperance principles are at variance, or in sweet and beautiful harmony. Now, it will serve as a beginning to open the Good Book and hear, first, what a king said, then what a prophet said, and lastly the words of an apostle. The king: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging." (Proverbs, 20:1); the prophet: "Woe unto him that giveth to his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him and makes him drunken." (Habakkuk, 2:15); the apostle: "Drink no longer water but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." (Timothy, 5:23).

Proverbs, Habakkuk, and Paul's letter are all of authority as parts of the canonical scriptures. If, therefore, Saint Paul is approved in his use of wine medicinally, Habakkuk in his woe upon the drunkard maker, and Solomon in his declaration of wine and strong drink being devilish in purpose, must likewise be approved. It is both ludicrous and impious to hear men who rake in the dollars in the work of making drunkards, or who gozzle down ardent spirits, quote Paul as if the Bible defends their conduct.

When the Sacred Volume is opened, not to make it speak, but to let it speak on this subject, three things seem to be clear. First, the book declares the drunkard to be a criminal. According to the Mosaic requirement the man of this incurable habit was stoned to death. (Deut. 21:20-21). The new testament classifies the drunkard with the fornicator, idolator, covetous, raller, and extortioner. (Cor. 5:11); and then declares that all such cannot enter the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 6:10). In these days of wide-open sympathy the drunkard is pitied, petted and apologized for, but God's great lawgiver and apostle both put him in the worst class of law-breakers. Think you is the comparison of the 20th century superior to that of God's Holy Word?

In the second place the Bible declares the drunkard-maker to be a criminal. (Habakkuk, 2:15).
The 3rd point that seems to be clear, is that the inspired Word, in its letter not in its spirit, commands, but does not command, total abstinence. True there are statements that look as if total abstinence were meant. That great passage in Proverbs, (23:29-32). "Look not upon the wine, seems to carry us a long way into this ultra principle of temperance. In his Romans, Paul leaves total abstinence on expediency, (14:21). Of the nine fruits of the spirit in the fifth of Galatians temperance is the last mentioned. In Peter's array of glorious virtues, temperance is the 13th. (2 Peter, 1:6). Under certain circumstances—it is not absolute command. I think it not wise to declare that "temperance," a fruit of the Holy Spirit, or a Christian virtue, means total abstinence from wine. To dogmatize is something not the source of great strength. The Nazirite institution imposed total abstinence only during the time of the vow, and was not a life-long obligation. The Rechabites did not belong to the chosen people and their principle of abstinence never was imposed upon the Israelites. The priests were required to abstain from wine only during the time of active service, when off duty they could drink. During the wilderness journey of forty years the tribes of Israel were total abstainers from necessity, not from command. (Deut. 29:5). In the long ages of Israel's dwelling in the Promised Land, wine was the national beverage, used in the family and on all festive occasions. It even came to be used by the bards and prophets as a beautiful figure of God's Word. (Isaiah, 55:1,2). Jesus made wine for a sumptuous occasion (John, 2:1-11). The two-wine theory of the Bible, is not sustained by the best scholarship.

Taking in, therefore, the whole survey of the case, this seems to be as far as the letter of the Bible would lead us: Total abstinence commended, but not actually commanded.

And, now, as they would say in a naval engagement, the decks of our

ship are cleared and we are ready for action. This is what, thus far, we have seen, the Bible making the drunkard and drunkard-maker both criminal and shut out from the Kingdom of God; but while commending, yet not commanding, total abstinence. Such seems to be the teaching of the letter of the Holy Scriptures.

But, mark you, the spirit of the scriptures, in their teachings goes very much farther, except the Bible be obsolete, out of date, belonging to a past age, and not for the living, throbbing, sinful, sorrowful 20th century! If the Bible be for our day, we are bound to know and be guided by its spiritual, not its literal teachings, because the habits of bible-times are not the habits of the people of the American nation in this intense age.

In that far-off time and land, wine was made in the people's own private wine-presses, stored in their leather bottles, kept absolutely pure, and used daily in each family as a beverage, as we would tea, or coffee. Now, how can such a use of a pure beverage be compared to the use now made of whiskey, brandy, gin, rum, beer, absinthe, and wines in every stage of adulteration, all of which are poured out in limitless quantities from multitudinous breweries, distilleries and wineries, for the express purpose of money-making?

As one travels over Palestine one sees everywhere the press of the ancient people; but never, from the beginning of time till the present day, has there been in that land the semblance of a brewery, distillery, or modern winery. Indeed, there is not a beverage sold in one of our dispensaries, or saloons, that was known to the nations of the earth while the Bible was being made. The strong drink mentioned in the Bible more than twenty times, was the hard cider of our day. It was produced largely from the fruit of the pomegranate. Our word cider, comes from the Greek name of this pomegranate beverage. It is a notable fact, and also a commentary on the spirit of the Bible as a modern book, that distilled liquors were unknown until eleven hundred years after the time that Jesus made wine in Galilee. That is, whiskey, brandy, rum, gin, and such like intoxicants were not known to mankind till the beginning of the Twelfth Century. There was drunkenness from the beginning, for all fruit gases will develop alcohol when exposed to the atmosphere; but alcohol did not actually become satanic, sweeping the nations from off their feet of drunkenness till a thousand years after the Bible was finished. With alcohol thus loose in all diabolical power for the last 800 years, how frightfully have the habits of men changed from those of Bible times! To meet such changes the spirit of Holy Writ must be served, not its letter, or else the Good Book is ancient, not modern.

Moreover, not only did the Bible-ages know nothing of these spirituous and malt liquors, but nothing of the North Carolina dispensary, the American saloon, English bar, French Cafe, or German beer garden. Think of one such place in Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, Nehemiah or Jesus, where from sun up till night hours men would stand gulping down drinks, to go out on the streets staggering, fighting, swearing! It is not too much to declare that the power for evil of alcohol is as much greater now than in Bible times, as the power of the locomotive is now over that of the ox-drawn cart of that far off day. In a word, the open grogshop—call it by name—is not only an enemy, but the enemy of mankind in this Twentieth Century. Its one commodity is alcohol, which, when used as a beverage undermines the health, entices the will, makes the mind savage, and the tongue vulgar, brings discord into the family, deprives children of their rights, lowers the standard of morals, corrupts politics, fills prisons and asylums with human wrecks, mocks at religion and ruins immortal souls!

In view of this gigantic evil, which is now destroying annually more people than disease, famine and war put together, are we going to pin the blame down to its literal teachings upon this subject, when alcohol for evil was a thousand times less than now? To do this is to make the Bible an ancient book only. Not able in its spiritual teachings and moral tone, to cope with present day sins. But this we must not do, for the good reason, we cannot. The Bible is not a book of stereotyped sentences and cast iron rules and regulations, fixed for every age with the same meaning, and unchanging conditions of mankind. It is a life, a living organism, an ever-working and ever-tiring heart, a spiritual power. For ever is God's Word fixed in heaven, therefore, is it ever ready to deal with and conquer each new foe of earth. What, therefore, must be done with humanity's greatest enemy in the Twentieth Century? Kill it, of course! Destroy it, root and branch! And this means prohibition for the State, and total abstinence for the individual. Nothing short of these two things can ever break alcohol's satanic power. The State that won't obey God's spiritual word must not legally harbor man's greatest spiritual foe; and the man who does not want to tamper with sin, who would abstain from all appearance of evil must be total abstainers from Satan's most potent means of destroying human life. The man who will deny these two propositions is up against the Twentieth Century Bible; trying to make the let-

ter of Divine Revelation, that was sufficient two thousand years ago, to cope with changed conditions, and that we are to that far off time, as the darkness of midnight is to the day of the morning. What it meant when first written, we do not well know, but we know now that, "Touch not, taste not, handle not" (Col. 2:21) is heaven's thundering command to us all, not to use alcoholic liquors as a beverage. In the light of awful facts we must today read the Bible on this subject of temperance, not commending, but commanding—total abstinence.

From what has now been said, it is clear that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union is not at cross purposes with God's Holy Word, but in perfect accord with it.

It may be of profit to look at the Bible's attitude toward temperance, not in its letter, but in its spirit, in connection with the temperance movement in this country from the beginning—120 years ago. The very first work done was a book on effects of ardent spirits on the human mind and body, by Dr. Rush, published in 1785, which made a profound impression. In 1811 the Presbyterian and Congregational churches began the discussion, but never went farther than the abuse of ardent spirits—the moderate use believed to be in accord with scripture. The spirit of the Bible's attitude was then not thought of. In 1818 the Friend's Society passed a hard fought resolution in favor of total abstinence. Its enemies—condemned the measure as anti-scriptural, and its friends defended it more on the ground of necessity than its scripture warrant. In 1826 the society for the promotion of temperance was organized in Boston. It was not till ten years later that this society inserted a total abstinence pledge, and as a rule the clergy and multitudes of church people opposed such a pledge. The year 1840 witnessed in Baltimore the rise of the great Washingtonian movement for the reclaiming of drunkards, and its ranks soon numbered 150 odd professed men and women and the Good Templars in 1852. Sons of temperance rose in 1842, both of which rolled like tidal waves over the land. Then came prohibition into politics, and in 1884 the party brought out a candidate for the presidency.

In 1873 the public mind was electrified by tidings of a woman's crusade the saloon, in Ohio, which soon spread to other states. In process of time that agitation was consolidated into the compact and well devised organization of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Of all the bold, far reaching, effective temperance movements set on foot in this country, or any other, that of this organization has been the greatest. It was in 1883 that that great American woman, and one of humanity's grandest philanthropists, Francis Elizabeth Willard, said: "The world is my parish and to do good is my religion." And to prove the sincerity of her watchword, Miss Willard organized the W. C. T. U. around the World White-Ribbon Movement. To make the bold measure effective in reaching out benighted hands to the ends of the earth, its great originator composed the Polyolet petition against alcohol, against opium, and the unspeakable evil. This Polyolet petition, written in many languages, was presented September 12th, 1885, to the World's Temperance Congress, meeting at Antwerp, Belgium, receiving its enthusiastic support. This Polyolet petition afterwards written in the languages of fifty nations, was circulated in these fifty countries; received 7,000,000 signatures, and was presented to the governments of these fifty nations respectively. It was while Mr. Cleveland was president that the petition went to him, signed by hundreds of thousands of American citizens.

It is to be observed that the mighty power that lay back of Miss Willard and her enthusiastic followers, in this stupendous world-wide movement for the good of humanity, was the conviction that the Bible, if not in letter, then in spirit, taught a temperance lesson for the age that involved the radical principles of total abstinence and prohibition. It had been the weakness of the temperance cause from the beginning, the doubt as to the Bible's actual attitude—a doubt arising from a want of that discrimination between the letter and the spirit of the Holy Word, which this discourse is designed to make clear. Miss Willard was not the first to read the Bible's meaning and purpose in the 19th century, but she was the first to make such a reading, tremendously bold. Well, therefore, may the organization represented here tonight bear proudly its name, for in its work of radical reform, it has the Christian scriptures for a granite foundation.

When Frances Elizabeth Willard died in 1890, Joseph Cook, of Boston, said: "The world seems lonely without Miss Willard; one feels exposed and unprotected in the fields of reform now that she is no longer our guard."
The Dean of Canterbury wrote a letter on the occasion of her death, so did other high dignitaries of church and state in Great Britain; so did letters come from India, and other far off parts of earth, and from all over America. Never was any American woman at death more honored in memory. Recently, at the national capital, a monument has been erected to this noble woman, who was, in some respects, the greatest temperance leader the 19th century has produced; a woman of splendid culture, of broad education, of burning eloquence, of queenly appearance, inexorable purpose against all evil, and in all her being adoring, taking the Bible for her guide, and "Jesus for her helper and hope."

Notice
Having qualified as administratrix of the estate of Julian E. Johnston, deceased, this is to give notice to all parties having claims against said estate to present the same for settlement. All persons owing the said estate to present the same for payment on or before the 14th day of August, 1905, or this notice will be placed in the bar of their recovery.
LULA PAGE JOHNSTON,
Administratrix.

FRIEND PAYS TRIBUTE TO CAPT. CHAS. PRICE

(Continued from page nine)

cult Court decree in that case had not been sustained a very large portion of the property of the Southern Railway Co. in North Carolina would have been valueless. Now this great danger has been averted through your constant, persistent and able efforts."

Mr. John G. Johnson, considered by many, the ablest lawyer in the United States, wrote Mr. Price:—"I can congratulate you most sincerely on your success in Julian vs. Railroad, which has been fought out by you under very great difficulties of every sort. Your paper book was most admirable. I do not think the subject could have been discussed with more force, learning or clearness of demonstration. The decision is one which goes far in sustaining the principle vital to your client, and to railroad corporations generally."

Mr. Francis Lynde Stetson, one of the very ablest lawyers in America, says of this argument:—"This last argument in the United States Supreme Court is a masterpiece."
About seven years ago the counties of Stanly and Wilkes undertook to repudiate certain bonds issued by them in payment of their respective subscriptions for stock in two railroads built in their borders. In the supreme court of our state adjudged these bonds to be null and void. After these decisions Captain Price was employed by the bondholders and began suits in equity in United States circuit court for his clients. This court sustained Captain Price, but, on appeal, the circuit court reversed the decision. In this case, this court reversed the decision, and it was found by the judgment of the supreme court of North Carolina, Captain Price filed a petition for a rehearing and he presented the case again so cogently that the circuit court of appeals reversed its own former decree and upheld the validity of these bonds and this decision was affirmed by the supreme court of the United States. Mr. Price received for his services in these suits the largest fees ever paid any lawyer in North Carolina and put an end to all efforts to repudiate just debts in this state.

After Captain Price had won these two bond cases and another case involving the citizenship of the Southern Railway and the operation of United States supreme court, Judge Simonton wrote him: "I think you must derive supreme satisfaction from your success in supreme court at this term. I think that your arguments in all of these cases, and especially in the Stanly bond case, have established your position at the bar and, if you do nothing else, are sufficient for your reputation." Judge Simonton was one of the soundest lawyers in the United States and was offered by President Cleveland the office of Attorney General, which he respectfully declined.

In 1891, by his great argument on the question of unjust discrimination against railroads in assessing their property for taxation, he again added to his reputation and was successful. Mr. George Rountree said of it: "It won the admiration, for depth of learning and cogency of reasoning, of all who heard it and completely vindicated the position of complainants upon the disputed point of the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts in the matter in hand." Judge Shepherd said of it:—"That for close and powerful reasoning and research, the argument of Captain Price was equal if not superior to any other made on that interesting occasion."

Judge Pritchard, in the course of a letter to Captain Price, has said: "I have always thought that you were the best all-round lawyer in the South and I have never lost occasion to say so, when discussing the relative merits of the members of our profession."
These high expressions of appreciation of Captain Price's eminent abilities, acquisitions and attainments in his profession, made by gentlemen of the first distinction at the bar, could be multiplied, but they suffice to indicate the high and general estimation in which he was held as one of the first lawyers of this period of the Southern States. He will be long and sadly missed by his great host of friends.

"B."
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Chicago, Ill.—National Baptist Convention (colored), October 25th-31st. Tickets on sale October 23rd-24th, final limit November 5th.
Norfolk, Va.—Norfolk Horse Show, October 17th-21st. Rate of one first-class fare plus 50 cents for admission to horse show. Tickets sold October 16th-21st, final limit October 23rd. Minimum rate including admission fee \$1.00.
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