

Letter From Dr. Morris.

To the Editors of the Public Ledger: Please give me space enough to express briefly some thoughts suggested by "a communication" from Mr. Louis de Lacroix. It is the first time I ever desired to give public expression to my thoughts through the medium of the press.

To come straight to the points, I shall quote most of the striking expressions in his communication. We do not think the average mind is "apt to get the real facts in the case mixed." The proposition is as simple as this: the intemperate use of alcohol is an evil. This evil steadily and rapidly grows with no more than the present restrictions of the manufacture and sale of them. The evil is destructive of the highest type of citizenship, and therefore the state ought to restrict its manufacture and sale to the needs of medicine—its proper domain. This is very properly attempted in the case of morphine and other derivatives of opium, cocaine, chloral and other poisons, and, nowhere in the communication referred to, do we see any objection to this. If restriction is necessary and right in the one case, by the same principle it is right, and more necessary, in the case of alcoholics because of its more universal abuse.

The speech of Gov. Glenn is rated as a sort of "ditto" affairs, in that it is called "regulation." Gov. Glenn's speech was solid and logical. He does not beg the question when he admits that it is likely to be no more prohibition in effect than statutory enactments against theft, pistol carrying, etc. Every logical mind knows that all such may be criticised in this manner by those who are inclined to disregard them. No evil of any nature whatsoever which tends to corrupt citizenship and subvert government ought to be left to the moral sense of those who practice the evil. It is governmental function to restrict it with an arbitrary, and that government is to its own peril if it does without alternative fundamental principle and is no more relative to the taking move than is one's own which we denominate "theft" than it is to the taking of more alcohol than will leave the individual a moral and integral part of the state or government.

It does no good to say Gov. Glenn "drops his argument and resorts to piling up the agony resulting from the use of intoxicants." Every drink, for the time, at least, destroys the worth to the state of the citizenship of that drunkard. Therefore the state is injured, and for the principle of self preservation, ought to prevent its recurrence. The agony is not piled up by Gov. Glenn, but finding it already as a "mountain of evil" (Mr. De Lacroix's own designation) he pointed his finger at it, and made the advocates of alcohol as uncomfortable as a bank examiner would make a crooked bank official feel when he points out its irregularities and arraigns the official for it. Who does the piling up of the agony? Alcohol, certainly, and we are not getting the facts mixed.

In paragraph three of the article in question the writer assumes that it is granted that "prohibition will not prohibit," and proceeds to assign reasons why. He writes, "it does not carry with it the endorsement of public opinion." If at the ballot box a majority of the voters say by their ballots the manufacture and sale of alcoholics shall be prohibited, is not that the very strongest endorsement of public opinion? Is not majority rule an essential of democratic government. The truth of this is common knowledge, and to enact a law whether prohibition of theft, alcohol, or whatever by this means, is a moral and just way of regulating that evil, even though the enacting be done by an honest majority of only one vote. No man is allowed to participate in government by casting a ballot until he has taken an oath that he will stand by the consequences of such an expression of the will of the people. In this connection arises the question in the mind of this writer, who will be at fault if prohibition does not prohibit. It will not inhere in the law enacted as this will be, if it be enacted by popular vote. The fault must lie, then, with those who desire to continue an evil against our state by willfully breaking that law. There is as much moral obliquity in break-

ing this law after enactment as in any other infractions, and it becomes incumbent on every moral citizen, whether he were for or against the enactment of that law, to see that the law is effectively executed so far as he is able. He has sworn to do it when he registered to vote and thus to participate in governing. The man who goes around with this shibboleth in his mouth lends color to a far off vague suspicion that that man would himself condone the violation of such a law, if he did not grossly violate it. Close study of the argument "prohibition does not prohibit" reveals something of the entrenched power of alcohol. It shows defiance of even the powers that be. Is it any wonder that sober, serious, reflecting minds, are disturbed at this species of impertinence? It makes one "set his teeth" and say, "we'll see." The very argument is the severest arraignment of the free manufacture and sale of alcoholics. It means that free alcohol is stronger than the government. What logical mind with loyal and patriotic heart would say there ought to be free alcohol?

"Probably there is no community where not only the best sentiment, but public sentiment as a whole is opposed to intemperance." This is about like saying the best people of any community and even the whole community desires to get to Heaven when this life is ended. The question in the latter proposition is what are the best people or the whole community doing to demonstrate the desire to get to Heaven? The question in the former proposition is, what is "the best sentiment" willing to do by way of opposing intemperance. This writer suspects that it is desired to prove or have it inferred that a community can have free alcohol and the temperate use of it. This is weapon. Experience is not in accord with it. If you have free alcohol, by the nature of man (just as he is, not as he ought to be) you must have the intemperate use of it along with the alcohol. This brings us to the point where we must choose to endure the intemperance or get what our appetites call for, or choose to endure our unsatisfied appetites with alcohol taken away by drastic prohibition. This writer believes there is no effective way of opposing this abuse of alcohol but by removing it, and that the abuse of it will be abated in direct proportion to its removal. Opposition is activity. Supinely wishing intemperance absent, while you keep the power of the temptation to evil, is willingness to the evil, and will ingness to the evil is participation in it. It need not be urged that high license and high taxing regulate it. All who think, know this only speaks the evil of alcoholics to those who do not drink and yet who are dependent on the drinks. By putting up the price it is harder to get, but the hardship falls on the innocent, after denying his fam-

ily the returns from his labor, a man will sell his coat to get a drink, if the price be about what he has in hand. Home training is not enough. It is good as far as it goes, but it has been tried, and is known to fail both with alcohol in the house and with it excluded from the house. Alcohol gets fine boys no matter what their previous environments and training. It does so by its power to take away that by which in most other forms of temptation a man protects himself—his will power. Mr. De Lacroix reasons by analogy, and I may say, fallaciously when he says the virtue of soberness comes by meeting the evil of drink and overcoming it by force of without temptation is by far better than drunkenness with the exercise of the will power, and the knowledge of right from wrong. Besides, if a man have free access to alcohol and take it only occasionally, meanwhile exercising his will power, but still, moderately drinking, that man's will power, exercised though if he is struck hard by every drink as a by a cudgel, and I would just as soon believe that Mr. De Lacroix's cranium would grow stronger and more resistant under the blows of a highwayman who wanted his money—even though he exercised his brain vigorously meanwhile as to believe that one's character grows stronger by trying it against alcohol. It's the devil's cudgel with which to strike one's will power, and it is a "big stick."

To bring up a child without knowledge of good or evil would be a crime, because it is the inherent right of every man to know right from wrong. Thus reasons Mr. De Lacroix. It sounds strangely like the reasoning of a certain personality to mother Eve. Gen. 3: 5, To follow this as a philosophy or rule of life surely leads to the same results as occurred in the garden of Eden.

A wise man has said that a child's education should begin 100 years before it is born." Some one also said that we should be very careful in the selection of our associates. These are quaint ways of declaring the force of the law of heredity. Mr. De Lacroix admits, "If a family has a drunken member, the original cause lay with his parents or grandparents who through excesses, over indulgences or otherwise gave their descendants vitiated constitutions, or reproduced actual degenerates." What an argument for the total suppression of the stuff! Intemperance by the law of heredity increases in geometrical ratio. To this we must add the increment of the strong losing strength in the contest, and finally succumbing. If any man recognizes the operation of the law of heredity, it seems to me he is in duty bound to his state and to his creator to make every effort to save the helpless creature born to a contest he is not armed for.

Men who see that because our grandfathers had it freely and drank only moderately; and that our fathers by the grandfather's practice took a little more, see clearly the ancestry of our present excesses. They need be no sons of prophets to forecast what our sons and son's sons will be. But if any should ask for the forecast, answer: orphanages, asylums, eleemosynary institutions; speak out, prison! Prohibition aims to stop the addition of degeneracy to degeneracy. It is mercifully undermining the combined strength against the unfortunates who have been thrown into this arena like the captives of Rome. The weak degenerate must fight a strong enemy without a strong man's weapon—a will power unweakened by ancestor's faults. And, now, Mr. De Lacroix that you actually witness the unequal contest and see men borne down helpless (call them degenerates if you will, they are men), and know that with free alcohol unreasoning, pitiless alcohol, the process will still go on. Will you have thumbs up or down on the 26th of May. J. A. MORRIS.

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A man's morals depends chiefly on whether he's away on a trip or not.

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keep a complete line of Coffins, Gaskets and robes. Sale of Land. By authority conferred by a Deed in Trust executed to me by T. M. Seese and wife A. Leine Speed on the 11th day of January, 1907, and recorded in Deed of Trust Book 68 in office of Register of Deeds of Granville county. Default having been made in the payment of the debt secured by said Deed in Trust at the request of the holder of the bond so secured, I shall sell for cash at public auction at the Court House door in Oxford on THURSDAY, MAY 14TH, 1908, at 12 o'clock M. The real estate described in said Deed of Trust, to-wit The part intended to be conveyed hereby is my undivided one-tenth part of the 8 1/2 acre tract of land formerly owned by my father Thomas Speed, deceased. Said land lies in Walnut Grove Township on the waters of Tar River and bounded as follows: On the west by E. M. Sherman, on the north by W. S. Lyon, on the east by I. N. Day, on the south by Spencer Jones. W. T. LYON, Trustee.

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