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Vice and Poverty and Drunkenness

Do vice and drunkenness cause poverty? Thoughtlessly the world assumes that they do. It is easier to blame the multitude for its own misery than to untangle the complexities of civilization and find the true causes of its ancient wrongs.

Thoughtlessly too numerous shallow public moralists agitate the land for regulation of small sins that were better left to nature's secret but unfailing adjustment. Legislatures are besieged for an ever increasing multiplicity of statutes restricting—actual vice born of excessive luxury and idleness? Or no; for laws to penalize the petty weaknesses of poverty.

The vices of wealth are beyond the pale of law. And the sadness thereof is the frequent sincerity of the public moralist—and sadder still is his ignorance.

Skimming the surface of life and of logic, the mere perception of two associated circumstances links them indissolubly in his mind. Nothing remains to complete his knowledge but the question of sequence. So reasons (1) the world, the public moralists always accept the judgments of the world—or, is the world's thinking done for it by its public moralists? Whichever, the world's judgments are always wrong, or trite, or out-of-date.

All these is its shallow verdict that vice and drunkenness cause poverty. Yet of nothing else in society, scarcely, is the world's dictum more persistent and emphatic—to the great harm of society, the discouragement of progress, the encouragement of vice and drunkenness, and the hindrance of the abolition of poverty.

Whatever may have obtained in early days when land and opportunity were free and apparently inexhaustible, it is not now true that vice and drunkenness cause poverty. Headache and heartache they cause, remorse, disease, and death, but not poverty.

Labor Gets the Least.

Time was in America when wealth came largely from industry and thrift—though there never was a time—despite the lying text-books and school readers, when those who worked hardest and lived meanest thereby gained the most wealth.

But now, at all events, wealth comes mainly from monopoly, from special privilege, from the "unearned increment" of land values—from idleness, scheming, bribery and theft. And poverty is the other pole of the tangled ball.

If vice and drunkenness caused poverty would not most of the drunkards and the vile be very poor, and the rest of them in the process of becoming poor? But this is not the case.

Vice and drunkenness prevail much more among the rich than the poor—among those whose incomes year by year automatically increase, for all their indulgence.

The system that pours its treasure into the lap of the fortunate few takes no cognizance of moral values. There is no connection between moral worth and wealth. The facilities required to gain wealth are not ethical.

The owner of a row of tenement houses may be a saint for virtue or a demon in vice, may be hale or paralytic, adult or infant, or child unborn—yet the rent flows on, and its recipient's wildest dreams of licentiousness may not exhaust the flow or diminish its source. Bad luck and poor judgment in speculation often wreck modern fortunes, but vice and drunkenness, never.

More Among the Rich.

That vice and drunkenness exist more among the rich than the poor is not stated in the moral text books, or told in the newspapers (unless one read between the lines) and it may not seem so to dear ladies who go down in slums to uplift the masses by sheer word of mouth.

One must read technical books, be a physician, or know life as it is instead of as it seems, to know that real vice is a special privilege of the rich. Real vice is practically unknown to the very poor, for even those of the lower strata who purvey vice for the rich are fairly well paid for their service and soon put want behind them.

Vice is profitable—beyond all honest creative toil. Whatever else may be its wages it brings to those who buy and sell it that which all the world has its heart set on attaining or retaining—cash.

Broadly speaking, and in the light of established scientific knowledge, vice is that manner of excessive indulgence that produces noxious disease and premature decay. Which is far from saying that disease and decay result wholly, or even considerably, from vice. More often they are due to blind ignorance or "accident," whereupon "vice" is their effect instead of cause.

Vice a Superstition.

Certain departures or innovations from the commonplace are by the public moralists dubbed vice, but since these have no inherent evil in them, being followed by no natural harmful consequences, they must be omitted from the category of vice by an en-

lightened and unprejudiced appraisal.

Eliminating then mere effects and harmful innovations the whole matter of vice becomes largely a superstition, just as witchcraft once was, and the belief in obscenity still is. Yet if man has aught of the power of choice in him, a residuum of actual vice can be found, enough at least to answer for the wanton vagaries of the rich. And this must be the test of willful vice; that its practice results in noxious disease and premature decay. Under this test, overeating is the most prevalent and most dangerous vice, and few escape it who have means enough to "live well."

It is not, however, a vice of the poverty-stricken—nor is vice in any form common to the poor.

Of those vices of licentiousness which run to harmful perversions the very poor have scant knowledge, if any; they lack the education for it, the satiety of comforts and luxuries that brings the tedium which precedes it, the baseness that begets it, the passion for it, or the means to indulge it. By its very nature vice is the prerogative of wealth and the poor who graduate into it quickly cease to be poor.

Poor's Only Vice.

Drunkenness is about the only vice of the poor, yet even this indulgence is less common with them than with the rich. It does not seem so to the good ladies (of either sex) who would legislate us all into goodness. But that is because the poor are obvious when drunk while the rich are only devious, and sheltered from the vulgar eye, in their cups.

The poor go to jail when drunk; the rich go to bed. The poor has spent his bed money for his "jag"—or his household expenses, and fears to go home, if he has one. It is different with the rich.

Yet this glaring circumstance that the poor man has robbed his family or his landlord in order to gain the one exaltation known to him or within his reach, is quite enough for the mental capacity of thoughtless philanthropists and public moralists.

That the poor man has first been robbed, automatically and without malice it is true, but indubitably, of the larger part of his earnings and of a chance to employ himself profitably, is a circumstance beyond the range of the public moralist.

To him A is the drunken workman reeling in the streets; B is the starving family or the squandered bed money, either of which spells poverty. Ergo, A is the cause of B—drunkenness causes poverty.

But this is not good curbstone logic for the twentieth century. Even the daily press can sometimes see that the poverty existed before the drunkenness, more likely led to the drunkenness—favored it and encouraged it, at least; that, contrary to appearances, B was more likely to have been the cause of A than vice versa.

Poor Spend More for Food.

Often the very poor spend all they can get for rent, food and clothes, instead of drink—still they remain on the verge of starvation year after year, and their number is legion.

And if the very poor starve and deny themselves even the scant necessities and necessities within their reach, and finally hoard a little store out of their miserable wages—still are they very poor—still have they lived starved and hungry lives—and the sum of all their savings would not equal a year's income of the owner of a ten-story building, who may be an inebriate—some are.

But John Doe had a little home and a saving account, until he took to drink and lost it all. Quite true, but Richard Roe also took to drink at about the same time—and while he lay in prison for shooting his wife after a prolonged spree, his property automatically increased in value half a million dollars.

Sociologists who study life carefully will tell you that John Doe took to drink because the years of scantily rewarded hard, dull toil had deadened his nature and made him obdurate to finer and keener vibrations than those induced by strong drink. And the "moral" of it is, not the "sin" of John Doe, yielding to the enticements of drink, but that his store was so meager, for all his years of toil, that it could be quickly blown away with the froth on his beer glass.

Why Richard Roe took to drink is not now in question, but his drinking did not cause poverty. Drinking never does cause poverty in any true or basic sense.

The immediate causes of poverty are low wages and unemployment. And these in turn rest upon—the three evils of civilization, profit, rent and interest," says the anarchist; "the profit system of production," says the Socialist; "land ownership and special privilege," says the single taxer—all of which are right and true and none of which bear the remotest relation to vice and drunkenness as causes. Both of them are effects of social and industrial mal-adjustments, and any sane and rational system of life would soon obliterate them.—Labor World, Duluth, Minn.

COLD DISHES FOR HOT DAYS.

Cold dishes in sufficient variety to provide every course for luncheon or dinner for those who like the soup to nuts programme even in warm weather now appear upon the menus of all the leading hotels and restaurants in town. Less than ten years ago it was difficult to procure any cold dish but a salad or cold meats, as there was little or no call for anything except hot dishes and there was almost and obsession in the minds of many persons as to the injurious effects of cold viands, just as there was a decided prejudice against the deadly effects of night air. Both of those bogies have passed.

As change in the menu is always desirable the conservative housekeeper can make the experiment of one cold dinner a week, and if it proves successful it can be repeated until it becomes the custom to mark every very hot evening with a cold repast. These repasts are especially desirable in the absence of servants.

Cold dishes are easily prepared several hours before they are required and may be kept in an ice chest until ready for the table. This makes the service of the meal easy and the clearing up of the plates and tableware much more simple, for such foods do not soil dishes as do the meats and vegetables that come from the oven.

The table may be set early in the afternoon and covered over with an extra cloth to prevent any dust from falling on it. Plenty of fresh plates, glasses and silver may be placed on a convenient side table so there may be little going to and from the kitchen. Some hostesses, entertaining at these servantless repasts, use the rolling tea tables that even do away with the necessity of rising from the table, as the lower shelves may be used for the soiled plates, while new plates are supplied from the top shelves.

These tables are built of white enamel ware and have removable glass shelves and easy running castors, so that they may be moved about without exertion from one person to the other, and there is accommodation for fresh napkins, silver and small tableware.

Melon or grapefruit make a desirable cold first course, one that is acceptable all Summer long and may replace half shell clams or be used with them as taste dictates. Celery, radishes, olives and relishes of various kinds are especially good with the cold foods. Chutney, not usually served except with curried dishes is an excellent accompaniment and jellies and fruit should always be on the table.

Cold strained gumbos and jellied soups are delicious; iced consommés and broths also and for this, pretty china cups and saucers should be chosen as they add to the good effect. Crisp crackers are now served with soup rather than bread and thin dry toast is a novelty.

For those who like fish, the cold service is very satisfying as a number of the larger fish are unsurpassed when sent to the table cold with a garnish of vegetables in contrasting colors. Halibut and of course salmon are the best for this purpose, but experiments with any of the solid fleshed fish will produce, sometimes, amazing results.

Lettuce and all of the green salads, beets, beans, peas, carrots and artichokes lend themselves to the decorative scheme of these cold, fish dishes. Mayonnaise and tartare sauce are always good with cold fish, but it is wise to serve the sauces in a separate bowl as there are some who consider them too rich. Ripe, instead of green olives will be found a pleasant innovation in the cold dinner menu.

Cold sausage while probably rating more as a supper than a dinner dish will be found spicy and appetizing, as well as that other German combination of pot cheese with caraway seeds and chives. Head cheese and jellied meats and game, pate de foie gras, cold meat pastry are among the genuine treats for the table.

It has become the fashion to serve chicken, beef and ham, sliced, owing to the popular dislike for the act of carving at table. But if the meat is sliced at the table it will taste much better and will retain a lot of its flavor. Chicken also should be carved at the time of service and ham is very much better sliced as it is required. If these cold cuts are too large for the table they can be placed on a sideboard and each plate helped from there.

Fruit salads are now very popular and as they are suitable for Summer fare they should have a place at every meal. Strawberries add a zest to these salads, and for those who object to French dressing on fruit the dish may be separately served with the sauce in another boat. Then those who like powdered sugar can dress the dish to suit themselves.

Cold hard boiled eggs are one of the few foods that never seem to lose their charm. In their various jellied forms they are also well liked. Chopped and heated in cream with butter they may be made into little pates. Devilled they are especially popular. To prepare them in this way the hard boiled eggs are allowed to get cold and are then cut in halves, the yolks removed and placed in a separate dish.

These yolks are then mixed with butter, pepper, salt, tabasco, paprika or cayenne, well blended with a wooden spoon. The mixture is then used as a stuffing for the half eggs which must be handled very neatly so, that

the form and freshness of the food are retained. Parsley or cream may be used as a green setting for these devilled eggs and the effect is extremely pretty, which is one of the desirable qualities for Summer foods.

Green salads cannot be used too plentifully and should be mixed and sent to the table in a bowl. Tomatoes will be found very much better when they are served whole or in halves rather than sliced. They can be peeled and placed on the ice for an hour or so before the meal.

Whipped cream is a cool and refreshing accompaniment for fruit, fresh or stewed, for cold puddings and jellies, custards, indeed all the many cool desserts that should be a feature of the meal at this time of year when the more substantial foods are not so much in demand.

Iced tea and coffee remain the popular beverages for the Summer table. Lemonade is getting more in favor for this purpose with those who find tea and coffee too stimulating. Cider also is an English dinner food that is finding many followers here.

MARKETING WITH A BASKET.

Men and women "marketed" not many years ago and saw no impairment of their standing or dignity in marketing with a basket. It has become a question in some quarters whether the further establishment of public markets in communities already partly provided with these conveniences, or the introduction of them into communities where they are at present unknown, will be a movement fraught with any degree of popular satisfaction, or promising any considerable measure of relief from high living cost, unless there shall be also a return to the democratic market-basket custom. Public markets can be made truly efficient only through public support. If buyers go to the markets in great numbers, stall-owners prosper in their business, are content with their custom and strive to increase their profits by charging reasonable prices and rendering good service. The public market is the nearest approach to general co-operation between producer, seller and buyer so far accomplished, but it is of no practical utility if any of the three principal factors to its success becomes negligent, lukewarm or indifferent.

Even with conditions as they are, a return to personal marketing with the market basket would go very far toward reducing household expenses. Employment of the telephone and ordering in the kitchen through the butcher's or the grocer's representative, are both equally expensive processes. This system involves heavy charges in the conduct of business; it means delivery of supplies at a cost that would strip the sale of profits unless something were added for the time of salesman, driver and maintenance of a delivery wagon. The added charge, of course, is assessed, and properly, against the purchaser.

It is not necessary to wait for the coming of neighborhood, district or general public markets before reviving the only system under which full benefit may be derived from them. If men and women would only return to the market-basket custom of their grandfathers and grandmothers, public markets would probably become so necessary to the convenience of the buyers and the business of the producers and the retailers that their establishment and maintenance would be unavoidable.

PRACTICAL WORK FOR GIRLS.

Within two years the number of students on the roll of the vocational school for girls in Kalamazoo, Mich., has increased from 21 to 61, and this is hardly to be wondered at when it is known that the main purpose of the institution is to give girls something that will be useful to them in the present and in the future—to impart to them knowledge which, in case they must do for themselves, renders unnecessary a long period of apprenticeship. It is often contended that since only a certain percentage of girls must do for themselves, the cost of maintaining vocational schools for this percentage should not be borne by the community; it is also held that girls who do not actually need to earn their own way should not be given special vocational instruction.

The percentage of girls who are likely to be called upon in Kalamazoo or in any other community to do for themselves should be put down as uncertain rather than certain. It is impossible for anybody to determine for any girls, and equally impossible for any girl to determine for herself, just what she may be called upon to do in the future. No matter whether she should be supported in comfort or whether she must depend upon her own exertions for support, if she has received a vocational training she is in possession of a dependable asset. The aim of Kalamazoo seems to be to give its girls an opportunity, at least, to decide whether they shall equip themselves for possible emergencies.

Traveling Chaperone.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company has established on its through California trains chaperons for the girls and young women who travel alone.

When a woman is in love she acts like a fool, but when a man is in love it isn't altogether acting.