

Temperance Department.

Woman's Work.

Read by L. Rosenthal before the Blue Ribbon Society of East Portland, on the evening of May 29, 1882.

(Continued)

But there is another thought—the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks are a sin against God and humanity, and drunkenness is a sin against purity and love, and all the interests of social life. Appetite may be artificial or hereditary. Multitudes of parents, have by the family use of wine, beer, cider, or palatable compounds of these, which they have fed sparingly in sugar drops, or weak dilutions as food, drink or medicine to their children, cultivated a taste for spirituous liquors, which has proved the destruction of their loved ones. Many, alas! have begun the fatal work still earlier, and so the evil has grown, from an innocent indulgence to an appetite, which is in every sense of the word a disease, and men and women afflicted with physical and moral taint walk up and down our streets frightful to contemplate. For a person with a predisposition to consumption or scrofula in his system cannot bear hardship and exposure without jeopardizing life, so an unfortunate person bred up with this lurking virus in his veins, cannot, without fearful risk, come in contact with the intoxicating cup; the touch, the smell, the very sight will set his whole system in a state of excitement, and, except for timely interposition will overwhelm scruples, resolutions and conscience, and plunge him into an abyss of sin and shame. Let alcohol, in every form, be put away from the sideboard, the kitchen and the medicine shelf, let parents say to their children, "We must neither touch, taste, nor look upon the accursed thing," and society, the church and the nation will no longer groan under the sorrows, reproach and burden now so keenly felt.

The remedy for intemperance? It is simple as the A B C. Total abstinence in the household, taught at the parents' knee, enforced by the parents example, founded upon intelligence and conscientious conviction would settle the question at once. If no stimulants were used at home, none would be required away from home; if uniformly treated in the domestic economy as a poison, there would be no more danger of its becoming a luxury, than arsenic, strychnine or cam-

phor, the demand stayed and the supply would cease. No longer would shops be open for its specific sale, no longer would distilleries ply their subtle arts by day and night; grain and fruit would be restored to their normal use, the nutriment and blessing of mankind. How natural, how easy the cure! "Natural? Surely, but not so easy in the present position of affairs," says one; "This monstrous evil is not so readily removed." Not in the whole, by sudden miracle, we admit. The present race of drunkards must be swept off the stage; but if no more are made, the work is done. Our only hope is, to arrest this fatal process of drunkard making; this cannot be done in a day, but it can be directly and everywhere begun. No great work is ever done at once; let the foundation be rightly laid, and let every individual do his part of the work, and it is finally and surely accomplished.

When Nehemiah essayed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, in the face of the scoffs and opposition of his enemies, his method was simple and effective. He put the work on individual responsibility. As a whole, it was great, divided among the families it was feasible. Each one was directed to build "over against his house." "So built we," says the historian, "and all the wall was joined together, for the people had a mind to the work." The reasons for its speedy accomplishment were two-fold, the work was done, not alone by each pious individual in the community, but done with a mind, will and alacrity, that surely is a solution easy enough.

How pitifully mistaken is much of the labor of reformers of our day! How sacrificial! How ineffective! How wasteful, too, is the expenditure of public and private charity! We are spending time, strength and money in alleviating distress, while the cause of that distress receives no attention, in striving to abate the consequences of a system, which, in its primary working, is left untouched. We all acknowledge intemperance to be the fruitful source of crime, pauperism and disease; for the demands of which prisons, asylums and hospitals must be erected and maintained, and in the support of which an incalculable amount of talent and money is required. We know, that but for this sin, our day-laborers and mechanics would support their own families, benevo-

lent institutions would be almost wholly-uncalled for, and the burden of civil taxes would be immeasurably lightened; yet here we are, striving with all our might to shoulder a pyramid which individual morality and home-culture alone would at once disintegrate and distribute so that its colossal obstruction would be instantly dissipated and surmounted. We suffer the industrial receipts of the masses to be drained off into the coffers of the liquor dealers, and meekly step forward to supply the deficit from our own purses. Is not this charity upside down? Surely, this is spending money to no beneficial result. Let us direct our attention, our energy, our resources to the origin of this evil, and proclaim the banishment and non-use of spirituous liquors as the only corrective; and right here fits in beautifully the work of woman. God has called her in these last days for a purpose. It is she who stands nearest the hidden home-springs and who can most easily and effectively put out her hand and shut it off. It is she who can put away from her house the fell destroyer. It is she who can indoctrinate the child in the virtuous principle of total abstinence. Great is the power of a godly woman. Sisters, heed the call of God; accept the trust he commits to you! Look out from your quiet homes and view the widespread overflow of ruin. Shall a tributary go from your fireside to extend and deepen the stream in its desolating course? Shall your sprightly bright boy you bred up with such tender care fill one more drunkard's grave? Let your household be pure; let your influence be wholly on the side of right; stand up before God, as David did, and say, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes." Then will the work of the legislator and the philanthropist be superseded.

Mothers! It is for you, mainly, to settle this question. Surely, if the appetite is never created, there will be no temptation for unlawful indulgence. If, unfortunately, it is an inherited curse, your energies should be set to eradicate it, and we may well believe the testimonies of those who know by happy experience, that this can be done. Stern principle, rigorous habit, and the mighty grace of God, can root out the old nature, and gloriously overcome the power of inbred sin.

The question before you is, while

it is generally conceded that the most hopeful phase of the temperance work is with the rising generation, it is asked who shall do it? Shall the parent do it? Shall the mother, at home, by time upon time, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little inculcate it into our very natures; or shall it be neglected there and left for the temperance missionary to correct? Rather, let each of you, with the prominent facilities afforded you, cultivate your own field. It is a labor-saving arrangement; the "ounce of prevention which is worth a pound of cure." Practice radical temperance principles at home, and society will be purified.

Women of America, the question is before you, shall this noble Republic, so favored of God, in its rise and progress, thus far, go on to perfection, in influence, privilege and honor, or shall it sink to the doom of "the drunkards of Ephraim, to be trodden under feet," its glorious beauty "to be a fading flower and the hasty fruit before the summer."

The solemn decision is committed to you. Our future, as a nation, must depend largely on the verdict of this generation. What shall be the character of our citizens, the teachers, rulers and parents of the people a few years hence? Are we to have those in places of trust and power who "will walk in the fear of the Lord to do right," or shall it be said as of the generation just passing away: "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way. The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink; they are swallowed up of wine; they are out of the way, through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."

Never was such a momentous crisis at hand. At the present rate of deterioration in health, and in public and private morals, our nation will inevitably and soon be stranded with the shattered wrecks of ancient kingdoms which have foundered, all through the past ages on the rocks of sensual and selfish indulgence. May the God of our fathers avert the impending calamity. "Tremble ye women that are of ease, be troubled ye careless ones, for the blighting curse that has settled upon us, for the plague that is ravaging our household, and destroying our life. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your