

[COMMUNICATED.]

WHAT OF "TEMPERANCE?"

The ordinary unread or non-reflecting man sees around him countless appliances and things which he without inquiry assumes have always existed as they appear today, being much the same as our children who cannot realize that Salt Lake City and Utah were veritable deserts in their fathers' time. But this is a world of changes, rapid ones, too, in modern times, and even the most observant on glancing backward may be astounded at the number of those inaugurated in the last few years.

Many a discussion has arisen in regard to the Bible, that old and yet most precious book, but few seem to understand that it is a collection which is the product of many men, and the accumulation of many ages during a strange and eventful historic past. It is called "The Book," and the average mind at the mention of the word instinctively refers to the vast variety and the easily multiplied collections that are not only found in stores and libraries, but which are a necessity of these times having found more or less lodgment in every home. It is difficult to comprehend the fact that printing is comparatively but of yesterday and that for the generations gone by all duplication of books was done by hand, and that while paper is of great antiquity, yet no such thing as that of modern production entered into men's wildest dreams. Writing on papyrus, on parchment, tablets of brick and stone, were the forerunners of record and history such as is now found on every printed page.

Such were the thoughts on reading in the "News" a short critique on a Northern writer in regard to "Temperance." The commentator on the attitude of the Bible in regard to this matter seemed to look at antiquity from a modern standpoint; little thinking, perchance, but that facilities for reaching intoxicants were as numerous then as in the modern Christian city.

The present writer knows nothing of the way in which the stated conclusions were reached, that "a man who seeks for information in the Bible on this subject (temperance) is further off when done, than when he began!"

It is an utter impossibility to associate with those ancient times the sad development of production as it is known to moderns! The "strong drink" of Biblical criticism was neither that of America nor of the old country. The wine to which reference is very often made in the sacred record does not imply all the manufacture, storage and bottling, such as enters into the conceptions and habits of today. While the Scripture alludes here and there to mixed wine, no such medication, adulteration and creation of supply, or even the demand, was probable or possible in the cradle (so to speak) of the human race. Palestine was doubtless the land of the vine and so the "grapes of Eschol" was a surprise to the hosts who were delivered from Egypt and destined for the promised land. "Treading the wine press" was an occupation for the feet of men, even on the then largest scale, and much of the product was consumed in its sweet or unfermented condition. Fermentation was often produced by burying the bottles or jars in the ground, and the "bottles" were simply made of the skins of animals, and not of glass save in rare exceptions as the association of ideas would suggest. The Savior's illustration that "no man putteth new wine into old bottles" had when uttered a striking significance.

This ancient practice of drinking "new wine" is being duplicated right at home, where the purchaser of a pound of grapes can have them

crushed while waiting, and the drinking of such wine is said to be life-giving and specially beneficial to certain invalids. Perchance this was the wine commended of Paul who advised Timothy to "take a little wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities;" and when it is remembered that drunkenness was divinely denounced, it is presumable that when "the Master" provided wine for the marriage at Cana of Galilee, it was a non-intoxicant, although the inference has been drawn that it had this quality in excess, because one of the guests remarked that, unlike other hosts, the giver of the feast had "kept the best wine till the last." But why not take the common sense view and conclude that He who commanded the elements had concentrated those of quality, flavor, bouquet, as men might now say, into an impromptu evidence of His godlike power?

Wines in our day vary according to the variety of the fruit, and even localities give name and character to their products as in days gone by. Modern science simulates these peculiarities and fact says that there is more so-called port wine sold in London alone than there is produced in the island (Oporto) from whence it originally derived its name.

Of course other beverages were in use among the dwellers in Palestine. The fathers had learned the art of making beer from the Egyptians, who used barley largely, and flavored the products with herbs as a substitute for hops. Drinks were also made from apples, from honey, from the pomegranate, date, fig; and quite often between vintages from raisins already dried. With all this under the old dispensation, indulgence to drunkenness was in no wise encouraged, as the old Scriptures evidence by the caution: "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder;" and the questions are asked, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wines!" Special instructions were given to Aaron and his sons, saying, "Ye shall neither drink wine nor strong drink when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die, and this shall be a statute forever through all your generations, that ye may know the difference between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean."

In the later dispensation it was said that the bodies of the Saints were the temples of the Holy Ghost, and "who-soever defileth that temple, him shall God destroy." But even this unequivocal statement is outranked by that one now often overlooked which asserts "No drunkard... shall inherit the kingdom of God." "Woe unto him (saith Habakkuk) that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth the bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also." As if to emphasize blessing on the abstainer the case of Jonadab's posterity is worthy of note; to find a lesson for disobedient Israel the Lord through Jeremiah invited these Rechabites into the house of the Lord to partake of wine which in the course of offerings had come there; but inasmuch as they had promised their father that "they would drink no wine all their days, neither they nor their wives, nor sons or daughters," they declined. Because of this obedience the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, was pleased, and He decreed "that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, should not want a man to stand before Him for ever and ever." History demonstrates that for two and

a half centuries they were faithful to this covenant—and modern travelers declare that down to the twelfth century A.D., and as some think much later, they still have individualization as the sons of Rechab and children of promise.

It is an unfair and an unjustifiable inference that drunkenness is encouraged or approved because the Scriptures say, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that are of heavy hearts," (and all by way of medicine) particularly when these know that intoxicating beverages were declared to be unfit for kings or rulers, that they were not for men holding responsible positions, and that they were not for those ministering the holy things. Yet while sceptics and critics may pretend that they neither find direct commandment, nor are they able to infer the righteousness of temperance or abstinence, or to read denunciation of drunkenness in the history of Noah, Lot and others or to see blessings on the sons of Rechab or the three Hebrew children, the Latter-day Saints have "a more sure word of prophecy, unto which they do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place." This is called "the Word of Wisdom" which places the matter beyond controversy, being adapted to "even the" weakest of all those who are called to be Saints.

UTAH WAS IN IT.

[The Nashville American Nov. 8, 1897.]

One of the most interesting booths on the Centennial grounds was that occupied by the new State—Utah. It was compact and placed in such a way that every article could be understood without the help of a guide; but in addition to this the commissioner was always there to explain the exhibit and make things clearer to the visitors. One of the noticeable things about it was that the booth and grains were as clean on the last day as on the first. During the summer the products of farm and garden were shown as they were received by express from Salt Lake City. Especial interest seemed centered in the immense potatoes, which were the largest ever seen here. One weighed three and a half pounds and measured twelve and one-half inches from one end to the other. Commissioner Pyper says that one potato raised in Utah this year weighed six pounds, but it was dug too late to be sent to the exposition. The crop of the raiser averaged 600 bushels to the acre.

Magnificent apples, peaches, pears, quinces, grapes, prunes and plums from Salt Lake created a furore whenever displayed. Dr. Cattinger said he had visited most of the vineyards of Europe but had never seen such grapes in his life.

Utah fared well in the matter of awards, and those received were well merited. They consisted of one gold, two silver and ten bronze medals and two certificates of merit.

The exhibit is being rapidly packed up and most of it will be shipped to Salt Lake City in the early part of next week. The beautiful minerals will be left with the Vanderbilt and State universities as gifts from the Utah commission.

During the last six months many humorous incidents occurred in the Utah booth. For instance: One woman, after gazing long and intently at the beautiful raw silk displayed there, said: "Mister, has that hair been colored or is it just as it was cut from the head?"

Another examined the silk cocoons and then asked the commissioner to show her "some cocoons with the silk on." Hundreds took them for Georgia gubers, and one farmer asked "How in