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ART. I.—*Introduction to a New System of Rhetoric.*

I. RHETORIC is the Art of Discourse.

The definitions which have been given of rhetoric are almost as numerous as the books written on the subject. Quintilian, after having enumerated a great many of them, adds, "There are a thousand other definitions . . . since a foolish desire, as I think, has prevailed among the writers of treatises on rhetoric, to define nothing in the same terms that another had already used—a vainglorious practice which shall be far from me." The marrow of them is, that rhetoric or oratory is the science, or the art, or the faculty, or the power, of persuasion. Yet Quintilian criticises them all, and gives as his own, "Rhetoric is the art of speaking well." Among the moderns, Archbishop Whately limits the art to argumentative discourse in prose. It is hoped that the definition here adopted from the work on rhetoric by Professor Henry N. Day, of New Haven, will be justified by what follows.

II. There is both a science and an art of rhetoric.

The distinction here indicated is exhibited in the following particulars:—

ever plausible they appear, yet they contain a lurking fallacy, which needs only to be brought out to spoil them all. Now, why confirm such prejudices by doing violence to the acknowledged meaning of words? What is an intelligent man to think of the unfermented wine which some insist shall be used at the sacrament when he reads such definitions?"

Writers generally agree that our Saviour used the ordinary wine provided for the Passover. Thus L. Coleman, D.D.,\* says: "The common wine of Palestine is of a red color. Such was the wine which our Saviour used at the Sacrament, as it would seem both from the nature of the case and the declaration: 'This is my blood.'"

Why then imperil the cause of temperance, as promoted by the practice of total abstinence, by undermining faith in the obvious meaning of the word of God as understood by the Church in all ages; by putting it on grounds against which the convictions of its most devoted, pious, and intelligent friends, and of the great majority of Christian scholars and divines, are arrayed; which innovate upon the Holy Sacrament; which must tend to narrow its influence to the small minority who can be gained over to such views; and which, so far, enlist in their defence more of misrepresentation and vituperation than of truth and argument, and of charity?

[The ethical, Scriptural, and ecclesiastical relations of total abstinence will be discussed in our next article.]

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ART. VI.—*Testimonies of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the United States against Intemperance.*  
Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication.

This is the pamphlet ordered to be printed by our last Assembly, containing the collective deliverances of past Assemblies on Temperance. It was also ordered to be sent to all ministers, and read to all churches in our body. Before directly discussing the questions it presents, we propose to give a brief

\* *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, p. 437.

history of the course of the temperance reformation as connected with total abstinence from intoxicating beverages, since the peculiar phraseology of many of these testimonies cannot otherwise be understood.

The movement, which now runs back through nearly half a century, to abate or extinguish the evils of intemperate drinking, by inducing men to wholly abstain from some or all classes of intoxicating stimulants, has had three great forms of development. In its early stages, abstinence from distilled liquors, otherwise called spirituous liquors or ardent spirits, along with the temperate use of fermented drinks, was all that the original temperance reformers inculcated or sought to accomplish. Of these, Rev. Nathaniel Hewit, D.D., often called the "Apostle of Temperance," was a representative and typical specimen. This method of assaulting intemperance and checking the drinking usages of the people held sway during the first ten years of the temperance reform in our country, after which it came into conflict with and largely gave way to the doctrine of total abstinence from all that can intoxicate. The extent of the reformation accomplished under this system of procedure was truly wonderful, whether we consider the number of persons who adopted it, the radical change wrought in their habits and in the drinking usages of society, or the diminution in the use of fermented liquors which came in the wake of abstinence from ardent spirits. The reasons which led the original temperance reformers to confine their plan of abstinence to distilled liquors were: 1. It would have been vain to attempt more. It was all the people could then bear. Congregations in which Dr. Hewit hurled his thunderbolts of terrific eloquence at these highly alcoholic and acrid beverages, were often stung to fury, and cried out against him as a raving maniac. We well remember the infuriated outburst of the people where we lived in our childhood, when he first proclaimed his new and strange doctrine there. They said he had run mad. Any attempt, therefore, to go further would have failed. 2. They saw that nearly all the drunkenness and intemperance then in society was directly due to the use of distilled spirits, and that intoxication from the mere use of fermented liquors was rare and exceptional. For reasons yet to appear, this was far more the case then than

now. They believed, therefore, that so far as they could stop the use of distilled liquors, they would nearly or quite put an end to intemperance; a conclusion greatly strengthened by the benign results of their first experiments in the matter. Even those who still became inebriated by the excessive use of fermented liquors were supposed, and generally with truth, to have contracted the appetite which led to this abuse from a previous habitual indulgence in distilled liquors. 3. A still more imperative reason with many of them for limiting the abstinence movement to ardent spirits was, that they thus avoided any seeming or real collision with the teachings of the Word of God and the example of Christ touching the use of wine. They could, as was their wont, denounce ardent spirits as wholly noxious, poisonous, and unlawful, except when prescribed as a medicine, without including wine in this condemnation, or raising any scruples as to its sparing use, especially on festive and sacramental occasions. It was long before even most of the leaders of the temperance reform gave up wine at weddings, and to this day the Church of God, a few exceptional cases aside, holds fast to its use in the sacramental cup. We judge from an able and stirring paper, which conveys facts and statistics enough on the horrors of intemperance to startle the most torpid, presented at the last meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at Amsterdam, that this is now the theoretical and practical basis of the temperance movement on the Continent, while it appears from this and other documents that expediency, as unfolded by the Apostle, Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii., x., is the only ground on which the ear of that representative assemblage of Protestant Christendom was sought in behalf of abstinence, whether from distilled or from other intoxicating liquors. The paper on "Philanthropy and Intemperance" read before that body by C. Bleibtzen, Pastor and Second Inspector of the Rhenish Westphalian Deacon's Institution at Duisburg, and published in the volume of proceedings of the Alliance, says: "I must explain that I am dealing especially now with those drinks which in Germany are called burnt or distilled." P. 576. He afterwards eloquently adds:

"I believe that every one who makes even a general claim to the name of a philanthropist—a lover of his kind—must be

touched with deep compassion at the sight of the multitude of unhappy slaves to drunkenness, and must and will ask himself the question, 'Can I do anything to stem this torrent of evil?' And if we go further, and call ourselves *Christian* philanthropists, then we are bound to be guided by the spirit of Him who said, 'A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you.' This love demands of us that we look steadily into the sin and sorrow of our fellow-men, and consider by what way and means we can come to their relief. First of all, we must set them a good example of renunciation, and not ourselves touch a drop of brandy, or any other spirituous liquor, rum, liqueurs, etc., or even punch. If any are prepared, also, to give up wine and beer with the teetotallers, I, of course, shall have nothing to say against it. I am not prepared, however, to urge as a universal rule and duty abstinence from all intoxicating beverages, though I do demand of every Christian philanthropist, not only for the sake of his own physical and moral, temporal and eternal welfare, but also especially for the sake of the influence which he must desire to exert upon his intemperate fellow-men, the most conscientious moderation in their use. But one Christian calls this legality, and, in the name of Christian liberty, he will not be deprived of his daily glass of liqueurs out of the familiar corner-cupboard. Let me ask, in return, is this Christian self-denial? Does not the freest of all Christians, the Apostle Paul, say: 'It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak?'"

The following extract from a paper on "Temperance," read before the same body by the Rev. John Rodgers, M.A., London, in behalf of total abstinence from all that can intoxicate, puts it exclusively on the same Apostolic ground of expediency guided by Christian love, wholly disclaiming all pretence of the intrinsic sinfulness of the mere use of these beverages:

"It is calculated that 60,000 of our fellow-creatures die drunkards every year in our country. We want to save some of those that are hurrying to a drunkard's grave and the awful realities that lie beyond, and to prevent others from filling in the ranks as they are thinned by death. We believe this to be a complete specific in each case:—Abstain from these drinks

altogether. And in order to encourage the drunkard to abstain, and in order to encourage those that are weak and easily liable to be overcome to keep on the safe side and totally abstain, we invite the sober and the strong, for the sake of their weaker brethren, to adopt this principle of total abstinence. If it is calling for an act of self-denial, is not this according to the spirit of the Gospel? 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself.' Was not this the spirit that animated our Divine Master—self-sacrifice and self-denial for the good of others? 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor.' 'Learn of me,' He says. It behooves us to do this in everything, desiring to have the same mind in us that was in Him. And I submit that one important way of thus imitating Christ is that taught by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who drank so deeply of his Master's spirit. 'It is good (says he) neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.'"

Towards the end of the first decade of the total abstinence movement in this country, on this basis, a second stage of its development appeared. A large proportion of its leaders and adherents extended its scope beyond distilled liquors to all beverages of any kind, which, drunk in whatever quantity, could intoxicate. This became the prevailing standard of temperance reformers. The great mass of temperance societies adopted a pledge to this effect as a term of membership, in place of the pledge to abstain from distilled liquors, on which they had previously been organized. And in the early stages of the movement these pledges were of great service in the mutual support thus given by good people to each other, and so greatly needed by them in breaking the bondage of habit and the tyranny of industrial and social usages which treated these liquors as essential, like food, to the sustentation of the laborer; as the life of all festivities and convivial occasions; and as a necessary element in decent hospitality. But after the "new departure," which excluded fermented as well as distilled liquors from use, a portion of the total abstainers, which has been increasing ever since, till it now includes the great majority of them, declined longer to sign special pledges or join special societies for this

purpose, because they judged that these expedients had answered the special end which gave rise to them, of making an effective and permanent breach in the drinking usages of Christian society; because their vows as professing Christians and their obligations as good men included all duties touching intoxicating drinks; and especially, because many of these associations showed a tendency to secrecy, with the usual foolish parade and paraphernalia of secret societies, or to propound false and unscriptural doctrines; to despise the Church of God; to dictate to it and denounce it, its ministers and members, however saintly and exemplary, if they refused submission to the control of these outside voluntary organizations.

The reasons of this extension of the pledge and practice of abstinence so as to include fermented liquors, were the disappointment and impatience felt by the chief promoters of the movement at encountering what all great reformatory movements must sooner or later encounter, a pause in its progress attended with various symptoms of reaction; the increasing evidence that an intemperate appetite for intoxicating drinks once contracted, whether from the free use of distilled or other liquors, would sate itself to inebriation upon vinous, malt, or other light drinks, however mildly impregnated with alcohol; that fermented liquors had come to be largely adulterated with the products of distillation and other equivalent infusions; that because wines were allowed and spirituous liquors were not, the latter were often made, compounded, sold, and drunk in different forms, under the name of wines. But what was more potent than all, and gave to most of the foregoing reasons their highest potency, was the logical consequence of one of the leading arguments employed in favor of total abstinence from distilled spirits by most of its promoters, including those who shrank from some of these logical results when they came to distinctly apprehend them. This argument was that *alcohol, in every form and degree of its use, is a poison, and injurious to the physical, moral, and intellectual powers of men.* If this were true, of course it was a complete and conclusive answer to every plea for the use of ardent spirits. But it was equally conclusive against the use, and the lawfulness of using, wine and all fermented liquors. If it were good for anything,

it was good for everything. As it is wrong for any man to take poison as a beverage, so it is a sin to drink any wine or cider, if they in any and every quantity are poisons. Hence inevitably emerged what is known historically as the "Wine Question," which is the third stage of this movement, and in some of its aspects remains a *quæstio vexata* to this present. The effect of this was not to arrest the tendency to make total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks the common basis of aggressive temperance movements, but to divide its adherents into two classes, between whom earnest controversies have hitherto been waged, because the principles involved are deemed on both sides vital and fundamental. If alcohol, in any and every combination, form, and degree of it, is poison, and all drinking of any liquor as a beverage containing any portion of it is sin, it follows that either the wine permitted, in its moderate or sparing use in Scripture, and made by our Lord for a wedding in his first miracle, is unfermented and unintoxicating, or the Bible sanctions sin, our Saviour committed sin, and has made a poison one of the elements to be imbibed by His people at the sacrament of His love, in order to show forth His death till He come. The second horn of this dilemma of course was repudiated by all but infidels. But a small proportion of Christian believers have been able to accept the former, or to admit that the wine allowed in Scripture was unfermented; or, taken in excess, unintoxicating, for reasons given in our last article, which need not be repeated here. The more judicious friends of total abstinence, therefore, have not dared to put it in an attitude of antagonism to the Word of God, and which, by necessary implication, impeaches its morality, or that of our Lord, or which sets it against the nearly universal historical belief and the present scholarship of Christendom. By this they do not mean to charge those who hold that the wines made by our Lord, and allowed in Scripture, are unintoxicating, or that it is sinful to drink intoxicating wine, intend to impeach His morality or that of the Bible. It seems strange that it should be necessary to say this, and yet it is needful to cut off occasion from those who seek occasion to parry the force of argument by such petty perversions and insinuations. All that we mean is, that, on the supposition that the wine made and drunk by Christ,

and allowed as to its temperate use in Scripture, is intoxicating if used in excess, a position which we think cannot be successfully impugned, then the doctrine that all making or drinking of beverages, in whatever circumstances, that can intoxicate is sinful, does, by necessary and immediate logical consequence, impeach the morality of Christ and His word, whatever may be intended. Judicious Christians dared not impale the temperance cause on such an alternative as that. And they dared not in conscience expose their faith and religion to be thus sapped at its foundations.\* They were and are conscience-bound in the matter. And unless some other basis for urging total abstinence could be found, they felt bound to let it go—however dear—their Saviour and their religion were still dearer. But they found such a basis in the law of Christian expediency and the dictates of Christian love, which bid us forego the use and enjoyment of things in themselves innocent, when we perceive that such self-denying abstinence will promote our own or others' edification, in accordance with the exhortations of the Apostle, Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii., x.—as already set forth in our quotations from British and Continental Temperance Reformers, the true import of which Scriptures we propose carefully to examine in a subsequent stage of this article. It is sufficient for our present purpose to say that here was found a ground for urging total abstinence which did not logically involve any impeachment of the morality of Christ or His word, on the one hand, nor necessitate any wresting of the Scriptures, by strained rationalistic exegesis, into a non-natural meaning on the other.

On this ground the great majority of Christian total abstainers in this and other countries rest. If it is undermined, the cause of temperance, as dependent on abstinence, is also undermined. For, in our opinion, not one in twenty who practise it, does so, or feels any obligation to do so, on any other ground. Still there has been a numerous body of abstinence men outside of, and more or less within, the Church who have not been satisfied with this view. They think it leaves some liberty in the matter to each person's conscience and judgment as to abstaining or not abstaining, and that no adequate headway can be made against

\* Dr. Hewit and other pioneers in the temperance cause held this ground to the last.

an evil so enormous as the intemperance which begins with moderate drinking, unless all drinking, making, and vending intoxicating liquors be treated as a sin in its own nature; or, at any rate, disciplinable, if not as a sin *per se*, yet as always tempting men to sin. This ground most of them perceive cannot be taken, so long as the wines of Scripture made by Christ, and by Him constituted the sacramental symbol of His blood, and not forbidden as to their moderate use, were intoxicating. Hence the persistent efforts of exegetical ingenuity to worm another meaning out of them. They have first concluded that wine which taken in excess may intoxicate is so abominable a thing, that the Saviour never could have made it, used it, or allowed it in any circumstances; and that if He did, no sufficient motive could be brought to bear upon men to abstain from it under altered circumstances. They even speak of it as an abomination and a marvel for any Christian minister to hold what ninety-nine hundredths of all ministers and Christians do believe and have believed on this subject. And then they set themselves to find out some exegetical process that shall grind that meaning out of the Scripture. This is one way. It is another, and far more excellent, to take the Word of God in its plain and obvious sense, and to trust and conform to it, even if it confound us by its mysteries.

Dr. Herrick Johnson declares, that "the doctrine of Christian expediency in its application to the wine question (on the hypothesis that Christ made fermented wine at Cana), is not worth a puff of empty air." \* Perhaps this is so with reference to Dr. Johnson's view of this question. St. Paul, however, made another deliverance: "It is *good* neither to eat meat, nor DRINK WINE, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Tens and hundreds of thousands of Christians have been swayed by it, and felt it good for this reason not to drink wine, without undertaking to judge those who think and do otherwise as to its temperate use. Nearly all abstinence from intoxicating drinks in Christian society is practised on this ground. If there were no other difference between our present circumstances and those of our Saviour's day, there is not only

\* *New York Evangelist* of April 20.

the vast abundance of distilled liquors, but the prodigious adulteration of them, and of all kinds of liquors, especially wines, which so often retain the name while they undergo a real transubstantiation into the veritable whiskey mixed with drugs and poisons passing under their name. Is not here a ground of the expediency of abstaining from wine unknown in our Saviour's time? Besides, it has long been a familiar observation, that the people of northern countries have far stronger propensities to drunkenness than those nearer the tropics. Moreover, in a country where distilled liquors were unknown it was impossible that intemperance should have prevailed on the scale which it reaches in countries where they abound. Let those pool-pool at the doctrine of expediency as a motive to abstinence from intoxicating drinks who will—let them plant themselves on the supposed firmer basis of the intrinsic sinfulness of all wine drinking whatever, and the unintoxicating character of the wines of Scripture—all such build on the sand. We have no idea that the great body of the Christian Church will ever accept or rest in that interpretation of Scripture.

Some habitually speak of those who believe the wines of Scripture fermented as if they were the enemies of all righteousness and the advocates of all abominations. Suppose that all their fulminations against these brethren strike not only them but their Adorable Master! They may well be targets for envenomed shafts which cannot hit them without first piercing Him.

This analysis of the successive phases of the total abstinence movement, while important for other purposes, is especially so for the due understanding of the successive testimonies of the different Presbyterian Assemblies contained in the pamphlet before us. In regard to a large part of these there can, of course, be no difference of opinion. They are divisible into various classes :

1. As far back as 1812 against not only "actual intemperance," but all those habits and indulgences which tend to produce it.

2. In various forms from 1818\* to 1837, taking ground, first

\* We notice, however, that the pamphlet before us says of the Assembly of 1818: "They enjoined, therefore, 'the officers and members of our Church to abstain even from the common use of ardent spirits.'" As quoted in *Baird's*

against the use, then against the manufacture and sale, of "distilled" liquors, sometimes called "spirituous liquors," but more generally "ardent spirits," or "strong drink." There was, for reasons before stated, a studied avoidance, during this period, of all declarations or testimonies condemning all use of fermented drinks. Thus, in their strongest deliverances, they avoided even the appearance of collision with Scripture, the example of Christ, and the ordinances of His house, while they also declared that "*they would by no means encroach on the rights of private judgment.*" In 1834 and 1835 they speak of the use, manufacture, and sale of *ardent spirits as a common drink* as "immoral," and in 1835 recommend professing Christians to set the example of "total abstinence" from "inebriating drinks," for the first time.

After this we find, with a single exception, that the declarations of the Assembly related to intoxicating liquors universally, and not to distilled liquors exclusively. The church having been divided, each branch, prior to reunion, had its own way of dealing with the subject. The N. S. body strenuously urged on its members abstinence from all intoxicating beverages, and from all implication with the traffic and manufacture. It also recommended prohibitory legislation, with earnest efforts to promote it. In most of this action we heartily concur.

But the deliverances which, in our judgment, declare the truth of God in respect to intoxicating drinks, and by which we intend to abide, God helping us, until he gives us further light, are those of the General Assembly (O. S.) from 1840 and before 1865. These are as truly authorities for our guidance within the order of the last Assembly as any others that may conflict with them. Conformity to these is as truly conformity to the action of that Assembly as is conformity to any other deliverances of either body inconsistent with them. One is as much reaffirmed as another. If the deliverance of 1865 was included in the order to print, so were those of 1842-3-8.

*Digest*, the words "earnestly recommend" are used by the Assembly in place of "enjoin." A considerable difference. Dr. Baird is right. "Enjoin" is wholly a version of the compiler.

And, so far as we can understand the meaning and intent of the last Assembly's order, any one of these deliverances is no less and no more authoritative than any other, even its own. The catena of testimonies then which, not to the exclusion of many others, especially constitutes our platform, because it articulates and emphasises what is either omitted, or less explicitly stated elsewhere, is the whole series issued by Assembly O. S. up to 1865. They are as follows :

In the Assembly of 1842 (O. S.), p. 16.

“ *Overture No. 15.* The question whether the manufacturer, vender, or retailer of intoxicating drinks should be continued in the full communion of the Church. The committee recommended the adoption of the following resolution, viz. : That whilst the Assembly rejoice in the success of the temperance reformation, and will use all lawful means to promote it, they cannot sanction the adoption of any new terms of communion. Which was adopted.”

In the Assembly of 1843 (O. S.), p. 189, it was

“ *Resolved,* That the records [of the Synod of Pittsburg] be approved except so far as they seem to establish a general rule in regard to the use and sale of ardent spirits as a beverage, which use and sale are generally to be decidedly disapproved, but each case must be decided in view of all the attendant circumstances that go to modify and give character to the same.

The Assembly of 1848 (O. S.) \* adopted the following minute in reference to temperance and other secular societies for moral ends :

“ The Church of Jesus Christ is a spiritual body, to which have been given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world. It is the great instrumentality of the Saviour, through which, by His eternal Spirit, He dispenses salvation to the objects of His love. Its ends are holiness and life, to the manifestation of the riches and glory of divine grace, and not simply morality, decency, and good order, which may to some extent be secured without faith in the Redeemer or the transforming efficacy of the Holy Spirit. The laws of the Church

are the authoritative injunctions of Christ, and not the covenants, however benevolent in their origin and aim, which men have instituted of their own will; and the ground of obligation which the Church, *as such*, inculcates, is the authority of God speaking in His word, and not *pledges of honor* which create, measure, and define the peculiar duties of all voluntary associations. In this kingdom of God the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners, and no church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws which shall bind the conscience, or to issue recommendations which shall regulate manners, without the warrant, explicit or implied, of the revealed will of God. It is, hence, beside the province of the Church to render its courts, which God ordained for spiritual purposes, subsidiary to the schemes of any association founded in the human will and liable to all its changes and caprices. No court of Christ can exact of His people to unite with the temperance, moral reform, colonization, or any other society which may seek their aid. Connection with such institutions is a matter of Christian liberty. Their objects may be in every respect worthy of the countenance and support of all good men, but in so far as they are moral and essentially obligatory, the Church promotes them among its own members,—and to none others does its jurisdiction extend—by the means which God has ordained for the edification of His children. Still, in the exercise of their Christian liberty, as good citizens, as patriotic subjects of the State, from motives of philanthropy and from love to God, Christian people may choose to adopt this particular mode of attempting to achieve the good at which all moral societies profess to aim; they have a right to do so, and the Church, as long as they indorse no false principles and countenance no wrong practices, cannot interfere with them. Recognizing these propositions as the truths of the word of God, this General Assembly, as a court of Jesus Christ, cannot league itself with any voluntary society, cannot exact of those who are subject to its discipline to do so, but must leave the whole matter where the Scriptures leave it, to the prudence, philanthropy, and good sense of God's children, each man having a right to do as to him shall seem good.

“These societies must appeal not to church courts, but to

church members. When they proclaim principles that are Scriptural and sound, it is not denied that the Church has a right, and under certain circumstances may be bound, to bear testimony in their favor; and when, on the other hand, they inculcate doctrines which are infidel, heretical, and dangerous, the Church has a right to condemn them. In conformity with these statements the General Assembly has no hesitation in cordially approving of abstinence from intoxicating drinks *as a matter of Christian expediency*, according to the words of the Apostle in Romans xiv. 21, 'It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak,' and in expressing its affectionate interest in the cause of temperance; *and would recommend to its ministers and elders who have become connected with temperance societies, to use every effort to prevent the introduction of any other principle as the ground of their pledge*, and to throw around these institutions those safeguards which shall be the means of rescuing them from the excesses to which they are liable from influences opposed to or aside from the Gospel of Christ."

This is our confession of faith in the premises to which we religiously adhere. It has for its chief articles:

1. That, while desirous to promote temperance by all lawful means, no new terms of church communion are to be sanctioned for this or any other good end.

2. That while the use and sale of ardent spirits as a beverage is ordinarily to be disapproved, yet it is not necessarily, and in all circumstances, such an immorality as is disciplinable by the Church. Much more is this true of merely fermented liquors. The use, making, or vending of either may or may not be a disciplinable immorality, according to circumstances. And church courts must deal with each case, not as being necessarily an immorality, but according to the circumstances which give it character.

3. The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners. No outside associations, however benevolent, may dictate laws to the Church. Nor may any church judicatory pretend to make laws which shall bind the conscience, or to issue recommendations which shall regulate manners, without the warrant, expressed or implied, of the revealed will of God. Therefore

the whole matter of total abstinence should be left where the Scriptures leave it, to the prudence, philanthropy, and good sense of God's children, each man having liberty herein to do as to him shall seem right, upon his accountability to God.

4. Abstinence from intoxicating drinks as a matter of Christian expediency, according to the words of the Apostle in Romans xiv. 21, is to be unhesitatingly and cordially approved, *and every effort should be made to prevent the introduction of any other principle as the ground of total abstinence, or of any pledge thereto.*

This injunction we shall do our best to follow.

We differ from the declaration of the last Assembly only in so far as it is at variance with the foregoing, in affirming, *unconditionally, and irrespective of circumstances*, "the manufacture, sale, and use of alcoholic stimulants as a beverage, to be contrary to the spirit of God's Word, and wholly inconsistent with the claims of Christian duty." We see not how, on any fair interpretation of the Scriptures, this fails to array the "spirit of God's Word" against its express teachings, and our Saviour's example.

We could go, too, very far with the former deliverances of our New School brethren in favor of stringent legal restraint, even up to prohibition, if not always adopting their precise phraseology. This we avowed two years ago, in the following words: "We will heartily join in efforts to promote abstinence on this ground (expediency), even to the extent of supporting prohibitory legislation so far as the public will sustain it."—*Princeton Review*, 1869, July No., pp. 412, 413.

The next great deliverance of the Assembly (O. S.) differed from all others that we have met with in our own or other communions. Admitting that all obligation to total abstinence from the making, vending, or using intoxicating drinks is founded, not on their intrinsic immorality, but on expediency, and basing its extended argument wholly on the Apostle's appeal to Christians to abstain from certain things indifferent on this ground, it concludes that the refusal thus to abstain is a disciplinable offence; thus taking the new, and, as we think, self-contradictory ground, that the performance of acts from which the Apostle dissuades us, on the ground of Christian expediency,

constitutes a disciplinable offence and a bar to communion. Let us, therefore, look a little into the ethical relation of things indifferent, also of liberty and expediency as related thereto, and to the deliverance in question.

Meanwhile, if any perceive inconsistency in these deliverances, or that some of them taken together with others thus constitute a "confused and contradictory medley," we cannot help that. It is certain that although some persons have undertaken to put the ban upon all further discussion and criticism of the action of the last Assembly in the premises, and all attempts to render future testimonies consistent with themselves and the truth of God, that action is differently interpreted by different parties. Thus Dr. Mears, in the *Interior*, had felicitated himself and his readers that "By this last action the Assembly and the Church is pledged not only to total abstinence, but to prohibitory law, and the liquor traffic as a disciplinable offence."

Upon which the *Interior* of June 6 remarks: "It (the action aforesaid) is a protest against any indulgence on the part of Christians in the use of alcoholic drinks of any kind as a beverage, and against any complicity in the liquor traffic. We fail to see in it, however, any assumption of what is called the 'radical ground,' anything that indorses prohibitory law as a measure of reform, or any assertion of what is, or is not, disciplinable. It is true that in 1854 and '55 the New School Assembly took strong ground in favor of prohibition, but we suppose the action of the Assembly referring to 'testimonies of former Assemblies,' to be general in its character, and not designed to reaffirm in the United Church the position of one branch, in a matter which the other branch was careful not to indorse, and which is in a degree—that is to say unless prohibition is construed to mean restriction—contrary to its traditions."

Now to the main point.

Since total abstinence from these intoxicating beverages, therefore, cannot be enforced on the ground of intrinsic sinfulness or immorality in the mere use of them as a beverage, it only remains that it be placed on the same grounds on which all other morally indifferent actions are placed. All such ac-

tions are to be done or left undone according as the agent, in the special circumstances of each case, judges doing or not doing them to be of good or evil tendency to himself and others. And while tendencies to promote other and inferior kinds of good and evil, such as health, wealth, and worldly happiness, or the contrary, are not to be underrated, what is paramount and overmastering is the tendency to promote moral good or evil. When a man clearly sees that the tendency of an act, as compared with its omission, is to promote the moral welfare of himself or others, he equally sees it to be his duty to perform it, and if evil, to refrain from it, unless he has blunted his moral sense. Accordingly, the obligation to do or forbear things indifferent depends, first, on circumstances, and next, on the view the agent takes of the tendency of the act in those circumstances.

Giving money to a beggar is an act indifferent. Our obligation in regard to it varies with circumstances and the view we take of them, whether we are able to give, whether he needs it, whether it will encourage idleness and vagrancy, whether he will use it to procure needful food, raiment, or shelter, or spend it for vile liquor. No further illustration is necessary to show the heaven-wide difference between the relations of moral obligation to things indifferent and things intrinsically right or wrong. Does it, however, depend on circumstances, and the view we take of those circumstances, whether we ought to love and obey God, confess Christ, do justice, love mercy, maintain truth, abstain from fraud, intoxication, profanity, and blasphemy? This on the one hand. On the other, it is equally clear from what we have already adduced, that actions indifferent, although not intrinsically moral or immoral, nevertheless are not without relation to moral obligation, but, in their own way, full within its scope, and often under its most stringent and relentless gripe. Suppose, *e. g.*, in the instance above noted, one is confident that the beggar who solicits his money will spend it in a drunken frolic, on the one hand, or that he will use it to keep himself or family from perishing by cold or starvation on the other. Is there not obligation, even the categorical imperative which allows no release from it, in either case? But, then, suppose some other

person or persons apprehend the matter differently, and take a different view of what the beggar will do with the money, and of what is duty in the premises. Then their duty is different. But may one of these parties judge or condemn the other, or set up himself as a standard or law to the other, making the matter a term of Christian communion, and enforcing it on pain of excommunication? Of course not. To do so would be not only to usurp God's prerogative, but, not unlikely, to reject whom God has accepted. But would this be so in case of discipline for adultery, theft, profaneness, drunkenness, denying or betraying our Lord? Obligation reaches each kind, but with different conditions and limitations. With regard to one class of actions it is variable in its requirements; with regard to the other immutable; shaped by circumstances in the former, independent of all circumstances in the latter.

Here we find the clue to several problems which often lead to no small perplexity and embarrassment, and are wont to be enveloped in a haze of needless confusion and obscurity. The first of these lies in the term *expediency*, as applied to this and other departments of ethics. In strict propriety, expediency is applicable to actions indifferent, and to them only. It denotes simply that relation of them to moral obligation which we have just pointed out. Such actions are expedient when they are promotive of good, especially moral good, and inexpedient when the contrary; and if they are in this sense expedient or inexpedient in the view of the agent, it is for this reason so far forth obligatory to do or not to do them.

In these things, expediency, as above defined, is the true ground, criterion, and measure of obligation. And when it is applicable, that is, in things indifferent, it is not a low, or lax, or unworthy ground of moral action, as it has grown fashionable with some of our extreme *doctrinaires* in regard to total abstinence to style it. It is the legitimate and only possible basis of moral obligation in such cases. Whence, then, has arisen this degrading association of expediency with looseness or corruption of moral standards? Simply from its perversion. It has been forced beyond its true sphere of application to things indifferent, and applied to things intrinsically good or evil. Here it is utterly irrelevant, and can only serve to distort and vitiate the

whole subject of morals. Whatever is in itself right is in itself binding; whatever is in itself wrong, for that reason ought not to be done whether expedient or inexpedient, if such an alternative were possible, and not in its very conception solecistical. Even Cicero pointed out that virtue was the supreme good and vice the ultimate evil. That, since the expedient is that which is promotive of good, and the inexpedient that which is promotive of evil, they can have no application to that which is *in itself* supremely good or evil. It is therefore debasing the whole subject of morality to interject questions of expediency here. Hence when men apply the test of expediency to actions in their own nature good or bad; or when they estimate and determine their duty therein by calculations of profit and loss; or when they are known as men of expedients in matters where they should know no law but the law of rectitude, we justly associate with such characters more or less of moral debasement.

Withal, there are systems of ethics like Paley's, and all the utilitarian schemes which found morality, and the elementary idea of obligation itself, on the tendency of acts to promote happiness or unhappiness in the agent or others. They deny any such a thing as intrinsic moral good or evil. They found all on expediency, and know nothing higher. They know not even expediency, as indicating the tendency to further what *in itself is morally good*; but only as a tendency to promote happiness, and therefore, and therefore only, morally good. Hence the term *expediency*, on account of this perversion of it, has come in many minds to be associated with a certain laxness or depravation of moral standards. And when so perverted or extended beyond its due limits, the association is just. But expediency has its legitimate ethical sphere in respect to things indifferent. This has been recognized by the profoundest moralists, heathen and Christian. And by none is it articulated more precisely or emphatically than by the great Apostle, when he declares "all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient," *i. e.*, not all things indifferent are expedient, and consequently proper to be done.

In passing, we digress a moment to say that much of the arguing on this subject is about as fair, discriminating, and conclusive, and just as much dependent on catching and twisting.

words out of their obvious meaning as determined by the context, as if one should contend that in the above phrase, "all things are lawful," or when he elsewhere says, "I become all things to all men," Paul had obliterated all distinction between good and evil, sanctioned the most nefarious conduct, and opened the floodgates of universal licentiousness. Such is the character of the criticisms we have seen on the brief remarks made by us in regard to abstinence from intoxicating drinks in our last number.

Our next position is, that, in respect to the expediency or in-expediency of indifferent actions, each one must judge for himself, weighing all pertinent considerations conscientiously, in the fear of God, and according to the best light he can get. The judgment of other men is not his law, nor is he bound by it, if contrary to his own. He may attach what weight he sees fit, and is bound to attach reasonable weight to the judgment of others, in making up his own. But, nevertheless, he must act upon his own judgment thus conscientiously made up. And herein, so far as the mere ethical nature of the act is concerned, and aside of the prohibitions of lawful government, civil or parental, while accountable to God, he is free of man, who may not wrench from him a liberty which God has not withheld by making that a test of goodness and piety, or term of Christian communion, which God has not so made. Our readers can hardly deem it necessary that we should make expressly an exception which of course is implied in such cases, viz., of prohibition by competent secular authority. Has not the State power to draft men into the army, to require vessels to undergo quarantine, to compel hackmen to buy a license and display their numbers, and a thousand other things, which, without such prohibition, would be morally indifferent, and no man could erect into a criterion of righteousness or term of communion? This is not because these things are morally evil in their own nature, or because on this account men have a right to treat them as such; but because they are prohibited by the powers that be, which are ordained of God, and "whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God." All things indifferent are fully subject to the authority of civil government. It has power to command anything not inhibited

by its own constitution, that does not involve disobedience to and rebellion against God. The only sphere in which the framing and administering of law in the premises devolve in any degree directly upon us is in the Faculty of the College of New Jersey. With all our associates in authority here we join in enactments prohibiting the use of intoxicating drinks, as likewise of fire-arms and other like things in that institution. This creates an obligation on the part of the students to refrain from them as prohibited by competent authority.

For the same reason it is clear that the *mere* doing or not doing a thing indifferent cannot be erected into a test of piety, a term of communion, or ground of Church discipline. It is only articulating more definitely and expressly what has already been said. He that eateth and he that eateth not are not to judge one another. They are to receive whom God has received, however weak in the faith, and not to refuse or cast out those whom Christ does not cast out, or to make that a bar to communion which He does not.

Here we reach what we deem the weak point in the argument of the deliverance of the O. S. Assembly of '65, an able, extended, and elaborate paper, arguing some of the most intricate questions of Christian casuistry, which have long tasked and perplexed the masters in this department; issuing them with little or no opportunity for debate, in an assembly greatly reduced at the heel of the session, impatient to leave, the doubting or opposed members preferring, in the hurry and impatience of the moment, to let the paper pass, with this most convenient sort of go-by, to showing their hand in opposition when there was no opportunity to show their reasons, and no alternative consequently but to reap the usual reward of fidelity to truth in such cases—being held up to opprobrium by ultraists, as allies of tipplers and tippling-shops. If this course is not most courageous, it is very common in such cases. And of the reaffirmation of it in subsequent General Assemblies, the same thing for substance may be said.

But to the distinguishing point of this paper: it agrees with the maturer declarations of previous O. S. Assemblies, that the making and selling of intoxicating drinks is not, in its own nature, and hence as such, in all circumstances

sinful. "That the practice of manufacturing and retailing intoxicating drinks, is in its own nature sinful, we do not affirm, and need not, therefore, consider it in this sense an offence against the laws of Christ's house. But that it tempts others to sin and mars their spiritual edification, is too obvious to require proof." On this last clause hangs the whole subsequent argument of the paper, maintaining that it is a just bar to communion. This also is coupled with the argument and conclusion of the Apostle, in regard to using our liberty with respect to eating meat that has been offered to idols, so as to wound the consciences of weak converts from idolatry, and tempt them to sin, by eating this meat with conscience of the idol. This conclusion of the Apostle, which this paper makes the great premise for its own conclusion that such making and selling of intoxicating drinks is a bar to communion, is in the following words: "When ye so sin against the brethren, ye sin against Christ," see 1 Cor. viii. The paper proceeds to argue that what the Scripture pronounces a sin, it of course authorizes and requires us to make a bar to communion. On a superficial and hasty glance this may appear plausible, and not easily controvertible. But a more searching glance will at once detect its oversights and fallacies, and bring to light the inherent difficulties of the subject.

The first and great fallacy running through this paper is that which vitiates so much reasoning, and underlies much of the inconsequent arguing and uncharitable denunciation of good men and divine truth, that have so greatly marred the edification of weak and strong brethren on this whole subject. It is the familiar *fallacia accidentis* of confounding things, in their essence merely, with some of their accidents, or their different accidental conditions with each other. Men eat what they buy in the markets. Raw meat and vegetables is what they buy; therefore, they eat raw meat and vegetables. This might seem to some, very smart arguing. Most, however, would think it neither keen nor weighty. Now, the extracts already made show that the paper in question is constantly confounding the essence of making and selling intoxicating drinks, as such in any and all circumstances, with certain very common accidents, but not necessary or universal properties of the same. While

it does not assert that it is in its own nature a sin, it asserts without any qualification as to time, place, or circumstance, "that it tempts others to sin, and mars their spiritual edification, is too obvious to require proof." Now that it is often, or commonly so, may be admitted. That it is so in all instances, and in its own nature, cannot be admitted without declaring that the first miracle of Christ tempted others to sin, and marred their spiritual edification, and flying in the face of the nearly unanimous judgment of the Church; this, too, as confirmed by the most recent and competent critical scholarship. Other parts of the paper speak of the Apostle's argument, on which it builds its whole reasonings and conclusions, as applying "to the *use* of intoxicating drinks when manufactured and sold as a *common beverage*." Here, then, it is not the sale, but the "use" of intoxicating drinks that is marked as a disciplinable offence, and this not absolutely, but under a certain accidental condition, viz., that these drinks be "manufactured and sold as a common beverage," that this be the purpose for which they are made and sold, to be not merely a beverage, but a "common beverage." We should think such a set of conditions would insure an immunity from church discipline to all drinkers, by rendering conviction impossible. For though one might be convicted of using intoxicating liquors, in how many cases could it be proved that the particular liquor that he drinks is made and sold with the design of its being not only a beverage, but a "common beverage"? Then, in the next sentence, it is not the use, but the preparing and selling them *for this purpose*, that are made to constitute the sin. "When prepared and sold *for this purpose*, those who do so sin against the brethren," etc. Although the presumption may be very strong that most manufacturers and venders of such drinks do it mainly to supply the demand for them as a common beverage, yet it is no less to be presumed, until the contrary is proven, that they mean to supply any legitimate demand for them as well, whether medicinal, sacramental, for the arts, or as a beverage not common, but sparingly and seldom used, only on rare and special occasions. For notoriously and undeniably there are all these uses of intoxicating liquor, besides that of a "common beverage." How is it to be proved from the *mere* making and selling of it, aside of any

special proof of such intent, that it is for the "purpose" of making it under the condition of its being a "common beverage," instead of the other, and some at least legitimate objects named above?

Still another accident of selling, repeatedly signalized in this paper as what gives it a pernicious character, is retailing it. "That a manufacturer, or *retailer* of intoxicating drinks *for the purpose mentioned*, is guilty of an offence proved to be such from Scripture, the foregoing remarks clearly demonstrate." "The retailer is the proximate agent in tempting many to drink to drunkenness, and in forming in others the appetite for strong drink which leads to brutal intoxication." But then again, it is repeatedly said that the "manufacture and sale," irrespective of distinctions of wholesale and retail, is a disciplinable offence. Now it is true that a large proportion of retail trade in liquors has the malign purpose, character, and effects ascribed to it above, and as such, *when these can be clearly proved upon it*, it is justly obnoxious to the discipline of the Church. But this may be without its being true that all retailing these liquors, as such, has this character, or that it can be in no case legitimate in purpose, manner, and degree. And still further, the proof that retailing them is always iniquitous and a just bar to communion, would not prove that the wholesale traffic is always and necessarily of this character, or that all making and selling, under any and every condition, is such, and may rightfully be dealt with as such by the Church. It is, however, difficult to see what can be lawfully made and wholesaled, which may not be distributed in such smaller quantities at retail as are needful for its lawful uses.

Thus it appears that the paper in question is at fault for vacillation in its grounds, for confounding the accidental with the essential,\* the particular with the universal; for shifting

\* This confounding the accidental with the essential runs through and underlies the whole argument to prove that the Scripture wines must be of two kinds, fermented and unfermented, intoxicating and unintoxicating, because wine is sometimes mentioned with approval as a blessing, and again with condemnation as a curse. Is it not in the one case spoken of with reference to the accident of being lawfully used, and in the other of being used to excess, and so made a cause of drunkenness? Is any other view necessary, or even adequate to make the Bible consistent? This arguing is about as conclusive as if when

from selling at retail to all sale; from making and selling as a common beverage, to using what is made for such a purpose. Suppose such a deliverance in Christ's time, whom and where would it have struck? And do we not see enough to show the unwisdom of adopting, or readopting papers thus long, elaborate, and bristling with the toughest points of casuistry, on the most momentous subjects, without stopping to discuss even the phraseology, when the phraseology is everything?

But we go still further. Our second and great point is, that while one may sin against the brethren and against Christ by not walking charitably in the use of their Christian liberty, yet this sin is a violation of that class of obligations technically called imperfect, not because as before God they are tainted with defect, but because they are not judicially enforceable before human tribunals. This is not saying that there is not an abundance of liquor selling and drinking that is subject to church discipline—of which more very soon. But it is saying, that as there is a possible making, selling, and drinking of intoxicating liquor which is morally indifferent, then the use of one's liberty herein, to this extent is not a proper subject of church discipline; and that if, within these limits, there be merely that lack of Christian charity against which the Apostle exhorts, as being a sin against the brethren and against Christ, yet the lawful and scriptural antidote to it is not excommunication, but precisely the expostulation which the Apostle used when treating of this subject, in his three great deliverances thereon, Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii., x. That the uncharitable use of Christian liberty, so as to stumble, or hinder the edification of weak brethren, was like a similar misuse of Christian liberty in the inadequate giving of our substance in charity, and countless other shortcomings and omissions from which the Church and religion may suffer—a matter to be dealt with by appealing to Christian love, and shedding light on the conscience, but not by being made a term of com-

money is said to "answer all things," and the love of money to be the root of all evil, two kinds of money, genuine and counterfeit, instead of the same kind of money, reasonably or unreasonably loved and sought, were intended—as if, when wealth and honor from men are spoken of, now as blessings, and now as evil, two kinds of wealth and two kinds of honor were spoken of—and not one and the same kind, properly or improperly sought and regarded.

munion; and under these conditions, leaving each to his own liberty with regard to man, and in view of his accountability to God, we think demonstrable from the following considerations: 1. From the subject-matter to which it relates. It refers exclusively to the mutual duties of two classes of Christians, one of whom regarded certain things in reality morally indifferent as sinful, while the other, with fuller knowledge and stronger Christian insight, regarded and treated them as innocent, and had no scruples, on their own account, about doing them. The former class consisted either of Jewish converts, as in Rom. xiv., who were still so far in the twilight of Christian knowledge as to think the observance of the sacred days peculiar to the Jewish dispensation, and of abstinence from certain meats prohibited under it as ceremonially unclean, still binding upon Christians. The case dealt with in the First Epistle to the Corinthians is that of heathen converts who supposed that eating meats which had been offered to idols involved some sort of homage to those idols, or contracted the guilt of idol-worship. The more enlightened converts, however, knew that the Jewish sacred days and forbidden meats, and meats that had been offered to idols in sacrifice, were simply like other days and other food, and that observing, using, or abstaining from them was simply indifferent. Now the danger was, as the context shows, that a breach of charity might be committed by the parties concerned in two ways: *a.* That the better instructed would despise the less informed for their blind scrupulosity, and repel them by their overbearing pride of superior knowledge; and on the other, that the weaker class would judge and condemn the others as sinners for neglecting these uncommanded observances. This appears clearly from the Apostle's charge to both parties, Rom. xiv. 2, 3: "For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." *b.* There was the still greater danger, because so liable to be overlooked or ignored, that those having the superior knowledge would do without hesitation those things which they knew to be innocent and their weaker brethren believed sinful, in circumstances when their example would tempt the latter to imitate them by

doing what, though it to the former was by itself innocent, yet to the latter would be sinful, because they believed it so. For no man can do what he believes sin, *i. e.*, intend to commit sin, without therein sinning. For this reason he exhorts them to dispense with meats when the eating of them would lead to such results: "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil to him who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." *Id.*, verses 20, 21. Precisely the same analysis is given in 1 Cor., chapters viii., x.: "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no questions for conscience' sake. But if any man say unto you, this is offered in sacrifice to idols, eat not for his sake that showed it, and for conscience' sake, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other. For why should my liberty be judged of another man's conscience?" Chap. x., 27-29, so also in chap. viii. he says: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. . . . Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered to an idol. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." 1 Cor. viii. 8-13.

It is quite clear then to what the Apostle's reasonings and expostulations are applicable. The case that in our day would be most closely analogous to it would be that of converts who had been trained in the usages of the ritualists, and, while truly receiving and received by Christ, still believe that the

observance of Lent, Good Friday, and other church days, abstinence from meats on Fridays, or in the ways and times prescribed in Lent, are of religious obligation. Here is a case to try the wisdom and charity of the well-instructed Christian who knows better. He is not to despise or disregard their scruples. He is not to put on proud or overbearing airs towards them. He is not, if he can so do, *with fidelity to other claims of truth and duty*, to refuse to abstain from meats, or to attend religious services on these church days, when by refusing to do it his example will lead these weak brethren to disregard them while believing them obligatory, and thus to do what to the eye of their conscientious conviction is sin. In short, he must act charitably towards his neophyte brethren, and instead of causing them to stumble, must do what he can to promote their edification; and, without causing their fall, to lift them up to the light and strength and liberty of the gospel. But of the extent to which he must go in doing this, to which he *may* go without indorsing popery, prelaey, or ritualism, without treason to the truth and the God of truth, he must be the ultimate human judge, responsible for the use of his liberty to that Master to whom alone he stands or falls. Nay, he might carry his sinful compliances so far as openly to betray his lord, and so deserve excommunication. Suppose that these converts should insist that, unless he kept fast on Fridays and during Lent, or attended service on Good Friday, or counted beads, or went to the confessional, he was no Christian and should be debarred from communion. What then? Instead of complying, is it not his duty to vindicate the truth by refusing conformity? Was not this the case of Paul himself, in like circumstances, who circumcised Timothy in accommodation to Jewish prejudices, and in other things became as a Jew to the Jews; but when the Jewish converts undertook to make circumcision essential to justification, withstood them to the last? He refused to circumcise Titus "because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty, that they might bring us again into bondage, to whom we gave place by subjection; no, not for an hour; THAT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT CONTINUE WITH YOU."—Gal. ii. 3, 4, 5. Nay, he declared, "if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you

nothing." How then would the argument of the paper of '65 have been confronted by the Apostle? One might very well consent to immerse or be immersed, in order to promote brotherly love with persons of immersionist proclivities. But the moment it is insisted on as essential to religion, that is another matter. In reference to the great subject of our discussion, using or abstaining from intoxicating drinks, the ease precisely analogous to those put by the Apostle would be that of one who did not regard the sparing use of wine as a beverage as sinful, having to shape his course with respect to others who do so regard it. The Apostle's argument would be apropos to the former to induce him to abstain, out of respect to the scruples of the latter, until it were insisted on as a test of piety, or term of communion; in which case as devout and holy a man as Dr. Archibald Alexander would, on rare occasions, drink a glass of wine in rebuke of such a heresy, and in practical assertion of Christian liberty, although habitually practising entire abstinence. A still closer parallel to the case argued by the Apostle, as related to this subject, is the signing of some pledge of total abstinence. There have been times when large numbers enlisted in temperance associations have insisted, not only on total abstinence, but on all signing some pledge to practise it; and that those who refused to sign such pledge were doing great injury to the cause of temperance, vastly more than the hardest drinkers could do. They have made this a test of temperance rectitude and orthodoxy, and hurled reproach and defamation at the devoutest men, and total abstiners too, who could not see their way clear to sign the papers they presented. Now here is an act indisputably indifferent, which one may do or not do, as he shall judge expedient out of respect to the conscientious scruples of others, or to prevent their falling into what to them is sin, by imitating his innocent example. But suppose the signing of such pledges, or joining of Rechabites, Templars, or other organizations, is insisted on as a test of righteousness or term of communion. Can it then be submitted to *salva fide et salva conscientia*?

2. The fact that eating meat is put by the Apostle on the same footing as drinking wine in relation to these subjects, is decisive of the whole question now in issue. It shows that, how-

ever we may be moved by the impulses of Christian love to abstain from the one or the other, and however there may in some circumstances be sin in not so abstaining from them, or either of them, such abstinence is not enforceable by church discipline, and could not be made a bar to communion without danger of excluding some whom Christ has received. For who but Romanists would think of enforcing abstinence from meat, and this on certain days, by exclusion from the Lord's table?

3. Still further, this conclusion respecting the Apostle's meaning is clinched by his forbidding either party to judge or condemn the other. "Let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him." So far, therefore, as Paul's argument for abstaining from things indifferent which may wound weak Christians is concerned, it in its very nature precludes making excommunication its penalty for refusing so to abstain. It forbids those who abstain to judge those who do not. Instead of excommunication of one party by the other, he forbids it alike to both.

Unless, therefore, we are utterly astray in our whole conception of the scriptural view of expediency and liberty with respect to the disuse of things indifferent, it is only applicable where excommunication is inapplicable. Whatever may be true, therefore, of the doctrine of the deliverance of 1865 with respect to the disciplinable character of the pure and simple making, selling, and drinking of intoxicating beverages, the argument adopted to prove it is fallacious. It is always hazardous for deliberative bodies to vote not only doctrines or measures, but extended arguments to sustain them, especially without thorough discussion. New judges have often been advised by their seniors that they will be less likely to go far astray if they do not amplify the reasons for their decisions. Documents of that length, importance, and difficulty, ought to be circulated in print among the members of a church court some time before voting upon them, that they may be thoroughly understood, examined, criticised and perfected preparatory to final action upon them. So was it with the basis of reunion adopted by the Assemblies of 1869; so is it with every act of any importance before our legislatures, State and national.

It is an incidental confirmation of the view we have taken of

the non-disciplinable character of the cases dealt with by the Apostle, and made the basis of the deliverance of 1865, that those who maintain that all use, making, or selling of intoxicating beverages is a bar to communion, are more and more deserting and disparaging the expediency ground for total abstinence founded on Paul's reasonings (Rom. xiv., 1 Cor. viii. x.), as altogether too weak for their purposes. Hence they give it up, risk their whole cause on the success of the effort to extract from the Scriptures an unconditional condemnation of all use of intoxicating beverages—with what success, our readers have had opportunity to know.

Another very questionable principle, at least in the application of it made in this paper, is, that "whatever would prevent the admission of one to the sealing ordinances of the church on his first application, ought, if found in connection with his character or conduct after his admission, to exclude him from her communion. This is so evident as to require no proof." It is perfectly true that the inward qualifications for the due partaking of the Lord's Supper are the same at the first and all subsequent communions. But it is not true that the proof of the presence or absence of these qualifications, that should control church courts in admitting or excluding persons from communion, is of the same kind in both cases. In reference to the first admission to the Lord's table, the applicant is to be examined for such positive proof of such knowledge and piety as indicate a credible profession. The burden of such proof is upon him, and unless he furnish it he is to be excluded. In the eye of the church court the presumption is against receiving him until he present credible evidence of his fitness to partake aright. Hence, they are to examine him with reference to his knowledge and piety. But after his first admission to the Lord's Supper, the presumption is always in favor of his fitness to come; and, as against any prohibition by the authorities of the Church, he has the right to come without further examination by them for positive proof of his knowledge and piety, and until they can prove against him ignorance or scandal, which, in the judgment of charity, are inconsistent with piety. And here the burden of proof rests upon the session. They must prove that he is ignorant or scandalous. The whole

relation of the parties as to burden of proof is shifted. Hence it is the practice everywhere to debar men from a first entrance to the Lord's table on a state of evidence which would by no means warrant their subsequent excommunication. This, while it does not affect the question what may or may not be a term of communion in the abstract, does affect its concrete application, and renders the whole argument of the paper, as related to this point, irrelevant and inconclusive. There might be a way of using, making, or vending intoxicating drinks which would induce just hesitation about first admitting to the communion, but which would induce still greater hesitation about excluding one who had been once admitted. But while we dissent from the deliverance of '65 as too sweeping and unqualified in itself, and still more from the arguments it gives, as contrary to Scripture, we nevertheless earnestly maintain the doctrine on which the O. S. Assembly had settled in a series of matured deliverances preceding this, already adverted to, viz.: They are so true that we will emphasize them by repetition: —

1. That abstinence from intoxicating drinks as a beverage, in the circumstances in which we are now placed ought to be urged upon Christians on the ground of expediency, and from motives of Christian love, in order to assist the abatement of the drinking and intemperance which now have such baleful prevalence.

2. That we ought to be very particular to urge it upon the ground of expediency alone, lest we reflect upon the example and teachings of Christ.

3. That those who prepare, sell, or use intoxicating liquors in a way to foster and tempt to drunkenness and intemperance, should be dealt with by the Church as befits the aggravating or mitigating circumstances of each particular case.

4. All intoxication and intemperance is itself immoral and unchristian, and amenable not only to the denunciations of moralists and preachers, but to the discipline of the Church.

We must not, however, construe the mere making, preparing or drinking, or offering to be drunk, in any and every circumstance, of anything and everything that, taken in any excess, can intoxicate, as necessarily tempting to drunkenness. Otherwise we charge Christ, who once made wine, and by some use of it afforded a pretext to his scoffing foes for the wicked cal-

umny that he was a "wine-bibber;" and Paul, in cautioning persons against being "given to much wine," thus giving implied allowance to a little in some circumstances, with tempting to intoxication and intemperance. This will never do. It is difficult to define what constitutes a criminal incitement or temptation to sin. We must shape our definitions so as not to charge God, in the course of Nature and Providence, with tempting men, since he "is not tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man." Yet under his ordering the earth is full of what man, not by the proper use of them, but by his depraved abuse of them, become the incitement or temptation to sin. In this sense again God is said to have tempted Abraham, *i. e.*, he tried him. He put him in circumstances involving strong motives to disobedience, antagonizing with the principle of faith and obedience which ever ought to suffice, as it did then suffice, to overpower them. This was a trial of Abraham's faith, but not a temptation in the sense of soliciting, alluring, or instigating to evil, such as that wherewith God tempteth no man. And it is an eminent type of that trial of men's spirit in all things as to whether they will make a right or a wrong use of those gifts, bounties, occasions, and opportunities which he is pleased to bestow upon them.\* The whole of life is such a moral probation, as Butler and other great Christian apologists have had abundant occasion to signalize. Nay, the word of God itself is purposely put by its divine author, not with apodictic demonstration, like the problems of Euclid, but in such a way as to depend for its acceptance on the fairness, candor, and right disposition of the reader and hearer. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Christ often speaks in parables, so beautifully instructive to babes in Christ who receive them with childlike simplicity, but nevertheless to the

\* Calvin, commenting on the miracle of Cana, John ii. 8, says: "Sed mirum est quod Christus frugalitatis magister vini et quidem prestantissimi, magnam copiam largitur. Respondeo, quum nobis quotidie Deus largum vini proventum suppeditat, nostro vitio fieri si ejus benignitas irritamentum est luxuriæ; quin potius hæc temperantiæ nostræ vera est probatio, si in media affluentia parci tamen ac moderati sumus. Quemadmodum Paulus gloriatur, se ad utrumque edoctum esse, ut abundare et esusire sciat. Phil. 4, 12."

very end of giving cavillers their chance, and testing their fairness or perverseness; as he himself declares, "that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Luke viii. 10. We can barely touch this great and difficult subject. Our only object is to call attention to its difficulties and the exceeding danger of any hasty or heedless disposition of it; to caution against definitions of temptation that by logical consequence would make God and Christ tempters to sin, not in this matter merely, but in the whole course of administration in the realms of Nature, Providence, and Grace; against laying down terms of membership in the Church which would bar out the Head of the Church, and especially to show the necessity and safety of those deliverances of past Assemblies which, refusing to say that the making, selling, or use of intoxicating liquors as such in all circumstances is a disciplinable offence because it tempts men to sin, direct the various church courts to deal with each separate case according to its own circumstances, and judge whether it evinces a guilty complicity with the promotion of intemperance or not.

These views will be confirmed if we consider how far our definitions of what constitutes guilty and disciplinable tempting, if good and sound, will hold in application to other departments of human conduct, as well as what respects intoxicating drinks. We will specify an instance or two:—

1. We reproduce what we said in a former number (July, 1869, pp. 413, 414) on the enormity of the social and domestic sins to which prevailing extravagance and luxury give birth, and predicated in part upon what the Assembly of 1869 declared, and is unquestionably true, on the subject, viz.: That for infanticide and its affiliated social evils this extravagance and luxury are largely responsible. After enumerating several causes of these abominations, the Assembly say, "an influence not less powerful than any of these is the growing devotion to fashion and luxury of this age."

On which we remarked:—

"There is no region in which good men are more in danger of being misled by superficial and fanatical views, than in that wherein God hath called us unto liberty, at the same time charging us not to use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh,

but by love to serve one another. We are left to our liberty as to dress, equipage, and general cost and style of living, so long as we are able to sustain it honestly and keep within the bounds of decency. And yet, as we shall soon find, our Assembly justly laid to the charge of the luxury and extravagance now in fashion, that they promote the present alarming growth of licentiousness, including the horrible crime of infanticide! Does the enormity of drunkenness exceed this? And would it not be true that if people were to abstain from all luxuries and ornaments, they would greatly lessen the temptation to these crimes and promote social purity, together with whatever is pure and lovely and of good report? What then? May the Church interdict on pain of excommunication all use of ornaments and luxuries as a sin, in order to lessen the present fearful excess in them, and the direful consequences of which it is so prolific? No. This is an unwarrantable and dangerous interference with Christian liberty. It could never be carried out without putting Christianity in a straight-jacket and rending our churches into fragments. Yet who can doubt that there is great sin in much of this luxurious self-indulgence, this costly ostentation, this 'splendid misery and shabby splendor'? How ought the pulpit, the press, and all Christian teaching and persuasion, to beseech, persuade, warn, thunder against it? Yet if all this fail, can the Church demand of her ministers to preach upon the *duty* of total abstinence from *all* ornaments and luxuries, because it seems as if such abstinence in Christian people would have some tendency to abate the dreadful evils in question? It is, however, none the less the clear duty of Christians to lay these things to heart; to deny the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and to shun the appearance of evil; and of ministers to warn them thus to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against their souls, on peril of losing these souls. But there is a range of liberty in the manner of doing it, for the use of which they are accountable, not to man, but to that Master to whom they must stand or fall."—*Princeton Review*, 1869, pp. 413, 414.

We had prepared similar illustrations, the bearing of which must be obvious to our readers, in respect to dancing, tobacco, etc. But want of space compels us to omit them.

Much unwarrantable effort has been made to cast odium upon those who have felt conscience-bound to take a true stand for the only scriptural ground of total abstinence, by charging, in various forms, that their discussions afford aid and comfort to drunkards and dram-sellers. To which we answer that this can only be by a perversion of the truth, for which the truth and those who defend it are not responsible. But we believe the whole extent of this is nothing, or an infinitesimal next to nothing, which has been immensely and inexcusably exaggerated. But whether so or not, the truth necessary to vindicate our Saviour and His Word, and to keep the temperance cause off the breakers which will wreck it, must not be kept back because perverse men will wrest it, even as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. This is incident to the declaration of all truth, and especially truth in correction or refutation of ultraisms. No doubt there were Sabbath-breakers who quite exulted over our Lord's rebuke and refutation of the extreme rigor of Jewish doctrine on the subject. It is very certain that Antinomians exult when legalism is rebuked, and have always been ready to continue in sin that grace may abound. Legalists, also, by a like one-sided distortion, luxuriate in the declaration that only they who keep Christ's commandments are His friends. The wicked turn the very grace of God into lasciviousness, and respond to His electing love, "Why doth he yet find fault?" What great awakening ever occurs in which the surrounding bar-rooms of the vicinage are not using perversions of the very truths that inspire it to confirm their wickedness and animate their revels? Why, in a drinking-shop with which it was once our fortune to make war-till it became a dry grocery, and its keeper a deacon of the Church, there was once a mock celebration of the Lord's Supper itself. Was this glorious ordinance at fault? And is it not time for respectable men to have done with these petty flings about the writings of their adversaries being quoted and perverted in tippling shops? Is not all this true of the Word of God itself?

What, then, shall be done to promote temperance and withstand intemperance?

1. All attempts to advance this or any other good cause by placing it on unscriptural foundations, or by wresting the Word

of God out of its plain and obvious meaning, as it has been and still is understood by the great body of Christian believers, will prove worse than abortive. They must react against any cause, so far as it employs them, by setting them against God's everlasting truth. We are having sad experience of this now. We believe that a principal reason why so many temperance organizations have enlisted the small co-operation of which they complain, is the unscriptural footing of the "new departure" that has been adopted. We believe that the great reason why vast numbers who signed pledges of abstinence twenty years ago, and have since gone to drinking, has been that they find that the reasons as to the intrinsic sin of drinking any alcoholic beverage, then urged upon them as the conclusive reason for signing such pledges, are not sustained by the Word of God.

2. The system of uncharitable and calumnious attack upon those who cannot accept the doctrine that the wines of Scripture are not intoxicating, and of attempting to overawe them by misrepresenting, perverting, and then vilifying them and their sentiments must cease, or it will react terribly against any agency which adopts it.

3. The vast extent, evils, and woes of intemperance, together with the special causes which in present circumstances render total abstinence from intoxicating beverages an important and necessary means of arresting it, must be set forth and urged upon all as a ground for such abstinence, to which the impulses of a Christian love should constrain them. We should strive to show them that such an exercise of Christian liberty is expedient for the edification of their brethren and the welfare of the people.

4. Let due diligence be given to enforce all existing laws in restraint of drunkenness, drinking, and vending such liquors. If few States have prohibitory laws, or having them are able to enforce them, there are few that have not laws prohibiting the selling of intoxicating liquors to minors and drunkards, or to any without license. The simple enforcement of these laws would often exert a powerful influence for good. So also of laws against the sale of adulterated liquors. When needful laws are wanting, let them be sought and provided. Few States would refuse some legislation in restraint or prohibition of the

sale, at least in its most dangerous forms. Michigan has lately passed a law making every man who sells liquor, so as to induce drunkenness, responsible in damages to the family of the drunkard. We have not the exact words, but are informed that this is the principle of the law. Indeed, it is doubtful whether even the common law could not be availed of for such a remedy. We have seen it stated that a husband lately recovered damages in a suit against an apothecary for selling opium or laudanum constantly to his wife for six months, knowing that she used it for purposes of narcotic inebriation. Why might not the same principle hold and be enforced with reference to like sales to produce alcoholic inebriation?

Above all, let our great reliance first and last be on the Word and Grace of God. This is our great and only sure defence against intemperance and other sins. Let us, then, obtain that for ourselves and others, and we are sure of victory. "For the grace of God hath appeared unto all (all kinds of) men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 11-14.