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CHAPTER III

DOES THE BIBLE SANCTION THE USE OF ALCOHOL?

There are many men now pleading the Bible as authority for the use of alcohol as a beverage. It is strange that any man who believes that God is the author of that book would use it to establish a habit which the science and medical skill of the age agree in condemning. To me it seems the last extremity for the rum-drinker or the rum-seller when he flies to the Bible for support. Before the courts of medicine, history, and popular opinion, he has lost his cause; and now, as a *dernier resort*, he betakes himself to the Bible, in the vain hope of finding something, under cover of which he may disappear from public condemnation.

The argument is made upon the word wine, which, it is claimed, contained alcohol. The word wine means "*fermented juice of the grape*," which always contains alcohol. The Bible sanctions the use of it, and gives it a place along with corn and oil among national blessings. Inspired men of old spoke of it as making the heart glad, and referred to the time of its increase as an occasion of great joy. God required a sacrifice of wine, a libation, which, if it had been wrong for men to use, he would not have done, any more than he would have directed the sprinkling of swine's broth. These gentlemen rejoice at the wedding in *Cana of Galilee*, and imagine themselves hilarious from the wine made by the Savior. Paul's prescription to *use a little wine* is suited to their "*often infirmities*," and agreeable to their stomachs. And they are certain that the Savior sanctioned the use of alcoholic wine by the institution of the Supper.

Their argument, in logical form, stands thus: 1. Wine is sanctioned by the Bible. 2. Wine means the fermented juice of grapes,

which always contains alcohol. 3. Therefore alcohol is sanctioned by the Bible.

Now it is safe to say that if the word wine, in those passages in which it has the divine sanction, contains alcohol, then there is good support for the use of alcohol as a beverage.

But I must now protest against the argument as a whole. They argue that because wine was sanctioned, therefore we are at liberty to use, without stint, all the miserable drinks now sold in the market. Now, it ought to be known that wine, at the worst, was only supposed to contain a per cent of alcohol; but that it was entirely free from those poisons that now go to make up the staple of other liquors. Alcohol is now being condemned by the entire medical profession as a beverage, and very many of the most learned of the present time deny that it can ever be used as medicine without injury. But whatever may be said of the result of alcohol in the stomach, it ought to be known that the whiskies, brandies, etc., etc., now imported and sold in the market, contain a very small per cent of alcohol. In its place, however, they have a large per cent of sugar of lead, strychnine, strontia, potash, soda carbonates, benzine, Brazilwood, logwood, etc., etc. These poisons are much more destructive, both to reason and to life, than alcohol. Hence we now have but very few old men, who are in the habit of getting drunk, from the simple fact that in the use of these modern liquors a man will not live to be old.

Hence, if we were to admit all they claim for the word wine in the Bible, it would not justify the traffic which they seek to protect. Their conclusions are not contained in their premises. Hence the manifest unfairness of their whole plan of argument.

But I now call in question the meaning which they attach to the word wine. I do not deny that sometimes the word has the meaning they give to it; that many times in the Bible it means the fermented juice of grapes. I will quote a few passages in which

the word contains this meaning. For it ought to be known that the word wine in the Old Testament is a translation of twelve different Hebrew words, only two of which mean wine in its common acceptation. But here are the readings promised:

“And Noah awoke from his wine.” Gen. 9:24.

The son of the Nazarite: “He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink.” Num. 6:3.

Eli said to Hannah: “How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee.” 1 Sam. 1:14.

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” Prov. 20:1.

“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 wine. Look not thou 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.” Prov. 22:29-32.

“Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.” Isa. 5:11, 12.

“Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!” Isa. 28:1. Again, in the seventh verse, God continues to condemn Ephraim: “But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through

strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.”

In this sense Solomon uses the word in connection with the drinker: “Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.” Prov. 23:20, 21.

There are many other occurrences of the word in the same sense, but not in a single instance does the divine approbation certainly rest upon it.

When wine is required as an offering, or spoken of as a blessing, the word is *tirosh*, which contained no intoxicating quality. There are instances in which the word wine occurs in the common version when it should have been raisins, figs or dates. Hence those who have an acquaintance with the original can but smile at the parade of texts from the Old Testament in favor of the use of intoxicating wine.

The drink from grapes approved in the Old Testament, or even tolerated, does not necessarily mean *fermented* juice of grapes. And when we listen to its ringing denunciations of that which could intoxicate, we are in no mood to believe that it also recommends the same things which it condemns.

The use of intoxicating wine was attended, then, with evil results, on account of which it was condemned.

“Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.” Hos. 4:11.

“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also.” Hab. 2:15.

“And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a *drunkard*. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.” Deut. 21:20, 21.

“Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine for it is cut off from your mouth.” Joel 1:5.

They “that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.” Amos 6:6, 7.

Let us turn from this condemnation to the sanction of wine. In doing so, however, we come to other words. Concerning most of them we know that alcohol was not meant. I have space here only to quote a few of these passages:

“And Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh’s cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh’s hand. And Joseph said unto him, this is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days, yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place, and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh’s cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.” Gen. 40:11-13.

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.” Gen. 49:10, 11.

“Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.” Deut. 32:14.

It will be seen at a glance here that the newly expressed juice of the grape is spoken of. So it was in the sacrifices of wine that the Lord demanded of his people. When wine is spoken of that had power to intoxicate, its use was condemned. The Nazarites and Rechabites were blessed because of their purity, arising from total abstinence. The drinks used by the Israelites, containing the power to intoxicate, were employed as the symbols of scourge, and blight, and ruin.

From these facts it would seem unreasonable for any man to attempt to find any authority for the use of intoxicating wine in the Old Testament. Indeed, the strongest condemnation of the use of such drinks that can be found anywhere are found there. Hence the Old Testament is clear, in not supporting alcoholic beverages.

These men, who are just now establishing their cause by the word of God, have recently become profoundly learned in the original of the New Testament. They tell us that the *oinos* of the Greek meant fermented grape juice. And, therefore, the Savior made intoxicating wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee.

My opinion is that *oinos* does mean the fermented juice of the grape, but it also means the unfermented juice, either the newly expressed, or the must, which had been preserved from the atmosphere, and therefore had not fermented.

Here are a few passages in which alcoholic wine is referred to in the New Testament:

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Eph. 5:18.

“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Rev. 14:8. Again, in tenth verse: “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.”

“And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” Rev. 16:19.

“With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Rev. 17:2.

There are two other texts in which intoxicating wine is probably meant: 1 Tim. 3:8, and Titus 2:3. A bishop, or presbyter should not be “given to much wine.”

There are some occurrences of the word in which it is quite as clear that fermented liquor is not intended. In Matt. 9:17, it occurs three times; in Luke 5:37, 38, the same statement is made, in which the word in question also is read three times. In Mark 2:22, the substance of the same is found again, only *onios* occurs four times instead of three, as in the other places. “And no man putteth new *wine* in old bottles, else the new *wine* doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred; but new wine must be put into new bottles.”

The bottles referred to were the skins of animals. If they put new wine into an old one, that had stretched all it could, and was brittle and hard with age, the wine not yet having fermented, would be exposed to the atmosphere in this old skin, and would pass through that condition, but in doing so there would be an

increased demand for space, which would result in the destruction of the bottle, and the loss of the wine. This is, beyond doubt, the simple teaching of these passages on the word wine. Hence we have ten occurrences in which unfermented grape juice is intended, and six in which intoxicating wine is meant, and two in which alcoholic wine is probably referred to. Wine bibber is found twice, in which it is quite evident that they meant to accuse the Savior of drunkenness, as well as gluttony. See Matt. 11:19. Luke 7:34.

Besides these, the word *oinos* occurs fifteen times, in which the meaning of the word is more or less in dispute. Then we have once (1 Pet. 4:3), *oinophlugia* rendered *excess of wine*, by which drunkenness is indicated.

Hence when men tell us that *oinos* in the New Testament always means alcoholic wine, we know that they are not themselves informed in the matter, or are intentionally trying to deceive us. When, therefore, the word wine occurs in the New Testament, we are sure that the blood of the grape is meant; that whether in a fermented or unfermented state, must be determined by the context, not by the meaning of the word itself.

On the day of Pentecost some men scoffingly said: "These men are full of new wine." Acts 2:13. The word which they used is *gleukous*, abbreviated *gleukus*, sweet, and *oinos*, wine. It should be translated *sweet wine*. Yet this word was commonly used to mean the new juice of grapes, or the must, or wine that had been kept from fermentation. Their being full of sweet wine would not indicate that they were drunken, as they supposed—verse 15. Hence, they said one thing, while they thought it would be understood as meaning more than that. It is, however, by Peter's reference to the matter, rather than by the word itself, that we know just what they wished to be understood as affirming.

Since the word wine, then, in the New Testament, may mean either the fermented, or the unfermented juice of the grape, by what rule shall we be able to determine which meaning to attach to it, in those passages yet in dispute?

In the Old Testament the words in the original helped us to the meaning of the word wine. And we find in passing over that ground again, that when a word is used that indicates the presence of alcohol, the curse of the Almighty rests upon it. We find that when God requires a libation, or an offering of the fruit of the vine, the newly expressed juice is indicated, that a word is employed that excludes the thought of alcohol. This is also true in those passages in which wine is spoken of as a national blessing.

If this rule in the Old Testament shall guide us in the interpretation of the New, then where we shall find wine spoken of favorably, we are to know that *must*, or the new juice, is to be understood. This is a reasonable rule. Indeed, we can not suppose for a moment that God would thunder his anathemas, as he does, against intoxicating wine, and then in the perfect law permit, and even encourage its use.

There are only three passages in the New Testament in which wine-bibbers of the present day seek refuge: the wine made at the wedding; the wine used in the Lord's Supper, and Paul's recommendation to Timothy. We will give each of these a passing notice.

We will first consider the wine produced miraculously at the feast. To do this, as we ought, we will read the account:

“And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they

bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants which drew the water knew), the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” John 2:6-10.

Usually there is a play made here on the word drunk, and it is forced to indicate that the guests on that occasion were stupid from the free use of wine. But this thought is in no way presented by the passage. The governor of the feast makes no allusion to the condition of those then in attendance, but to that which was customary on such occasions.

Nor does the phrase “well drunk,” indicate that it was customary for the guests to become drunken on such occasions. The language simply means—when they have drunk enough to satisfy them, so that they do not care for more wine. But whether or not they would be intoxicated would depend on the character of the wine, and the amount that would be necessary to satisfy them.

It is claimed that the wine made by the Savior was strong, or intoxicating, because the governor pronounced it the good wine. This raises the question, “What did they regard as good, or the best wine?” According to Pliny, Plutarch, Horace, Theophrastus, and many others, they denominated the wine that would not intoxicate, “*the best wine*,” the “*wholesome*,” “*the innocent*,” “*the moral wine*,” etc. Pliny expressly says that “*good wine was destitute of spirit*.” Lib. iv. 13. Judging the wine, therefore, by this rule, it was not intoxicating.

4. But a last effort is made to find complicity on the part of Jesus with intoxication, in the quantity of wine that he made. So that if it was not alcoholic when made, yet the condition in which it was left would secure to it the intoxicating quality, with the age

that it attained before it would be used. But here it will be noticed that our opponents take for granted just what needs to be proved, that Jesus made all the water in those water-pots into wine. A second thought will convince us that he made no more wine than was necessary for the occasion, and that it was only that which was drawn out and borne to the governor that was turned into wine. This would be a double miracle, and would better manifest his glory. Hence there can be found no evidence in this account that Jesus produced that upon which men could become intoxicated, or that he in any way recognized the right or propriety of such drinks.

The "Lord's Supper" is appealed to with confidence in favor of the use of intoxicating wine, even in an ordinance of the most sacred character. And while I speak a word upon this point, I am oppressed with the indifference of the religious world on this subject. This question has been raised in religious assemblies, and resolutions relating to it have been tabled, as if it were a matter of no concern. I regret this exceedingly, and yet I need not tell you what others have done in this matter, for perhaps we are no more alive on this question than those to whom we have referred.

Did the Savior, then, leave an ordinance to be observed by his people, in which alcohol was to be used? Both science and history have declared it to be the greatest scourge to any people using it. In our own America it numbers its victims at 60,000 per annum; it fills the land with corruption and crime, with desolation and want; it is full of rape, and theft, and murder; it stupefies, bloats, blackens, and blisters. It is now withholding millions of children from the common schools; it is filling the land with broken-hearted widows and helpless orphans. Like a withering blight, it blasts all it touches. Do you say that I am prejudicing the question? I deny it. I have only stated a few facts of history. Did the Lord ask his disciples to drink of the cup that has slain more than have ever fallen in battle? Does that narcotic poison, that works only death to body and soul, represent that blood by which we

are to be saved from all sin? Did the Lord from heaven give his disciples alcoholic wine, saying: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins?"

Some have been alarmed at the word wine, supposing that both our English word, and that *oinos* in the Greek, indicate the presence of alcohol. But we have seen from New Testament usage that it is not true; that *oinos* does occur in a number of instances, in which such a meaning is absolutely impossible. Hence there can be no need of supposing that alcoholic wine was used on that occasion.

The word wine does not occur in the New Testament in connection with the Lord's Supper. On this account some have maintained that the Lord did not use wine on this occasion. This appears to me to be unsafe; for while it may not be absolutely certain that wine was used on that occasion, yet we can not deny that all the probabilities are on that side of the question. The Lord said: "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God." Mark 14:25. Indeed, the word cup, used under those circumstances, indicated wine as the contents. Paul says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10:16. This seems a clear reference to the Passover, in which they partook of wine four times. The third time the cup was passed it was called the "*cup of blessing*." But it should be remembered that if the Savior took that wine which was on the table at that time to introduce this new ordinance, then he did not have intoxicating wine; for the wine used at the Passover was must, or the juice of grapes that had not been permitted to ferment, mixed with an equal quantity of warm water. Believing this to have been the contents of the cup used by the Savior, the early Christians so observed the Lord's Supper till the time of Justin the Martyr. See his "Apology for Christianity." Vol. I. page 65.

But Paul said to Timothy: “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.” 1 Tim. 5:23. The original would indicate not that Paul would have Timothy to drink no more water, but use wine in its place; not that, but that he should put wine with the water which he used. The paraphrase of Dr. James Macknight sets forth the thought of the passage in great clearness. He says:

“Thy health being of great importance to the Church, no longer drink pure water, but mix a little wine with it, on account of the disorder of thy stomach, and thy many other bodily infirmities.”

Let us note a few facts on the very surface of this passage:

1. Timothy was of delicate constitution, was a physical sufferer, and needed medicine.
2. So far he had practiced total abstinence, in that he drank nothing but water.
3. Paul makes a medical prescription for his benefit.
4. He was so radical in his convictions on this subject that it required apostolic authority to induce him to use any quantity of any kind of wine.
5. Paul does not reprove Timothy for his total abstinence convictions and habits.
6. Paul recommends only the use of a little wine, which would be a fearful comment if it had been addressed to a great many ministers who have lived since then.
7. Paul would have that little mixed with water.
8. As it is not necessary to suppose that Paul meant alcoholic wine, and as Timothy from his abstinence stand-point would certainly refuse fermented wine, as Paul knows this, and

as we know *now* that alcoholic wine would have been injurious, it is quite evident that must, or the unfermented wine, was intended.

We find, then, that the word of God everywhere condemns drunkenness, or the use of that which is capable of intoxicating. The Lord will not only at last consign the drunkard to eternal banishment from his presence, but those who keep his company, that eat and drink with the drunken, shall have a portion with the hypocrites. And the word of the Lord pronounces a woe against every man who giveth his neighbor drink, who putteth the bottle to him and maketh him drunken also.

CHAPTER IV

THE COST OF ALCOHOL

The revenue derived from the liquor traffic is a strong argument in its favor in the minds of many persons. There are those who claim that it really increases business, and that it is, therefore, a financial benefit to the country. The license fees will help defray the expenses of the city schools; it will assist in the construction of sidewalks, and pay for other public improvements.

If all they claim in the respect of finances were granted, still the objections to the licensing of saloons for the sale of intoxicating liquors would remain insuperable. He who so far forgets the real needs and interests of humanity as to put every physical, mental and moral question out of sight, and base his calculation alone upon financial issues, is incompetent to give the subject that investigation which its importance demands.

Some have said that we must license this traffic or we will lose business and impoverish the city; the men that we now have will go elsewhere, and the thrift and energy of the place will be impaired. And, further, we now derive the handsome revenue of \$600, \$200 from each beer saloon in the place.

This wisdom is wholly financial. It does not stop at the thought of building our sidewalks in the blood of our brothers and sons; of educating our children from the tears and wails of the broken-hearted! Let this mighty car of prosperity rush on. What care these engineers if a thousand lifeless forms bestrew the track behind them! Peace may be taken from the earth, a thousand pale-faced, care worn, poverty-stricken women may pray them with uplifted hands to stop ere they crush to powder all their hearts hold dear; the children may cry, "*Father is on the track! father is on the track!*" but it is nothing to them. Give them money and they are satisfied!

RATHER DIE THAN INFLUENCE OTHERS TO DRINK

J. W. McGARVEY (1829-1911)

[Editor's Note: The following is a brief excerpt from a sketch about Robert Milligan (1814-1875) – a gospel preacher, writer, and professor. It was written by his close friend J. W. McGarvey and was included in Milligan's commentary on Hebrews, published posthumously in 1876. It explains why Milligan conscientiously refused to drink alcohol, even when he was advised by doctors to use it to help with his persistent ailments.]

For a long period he had borne that heavy burden of feeble health which so often excited our pity. It fell on him first in the year 1842, in the form of a violent attack of inflammatory rheumatism, which came near proving fatal, and which left his system enfeebled and exposed to other forms of disease. This was followed by neuralgia of the brain, which affected the optic nerve, and rendered his eyes exceedingly sensitive to the light. The sudden flashing of light upon them was like piercing them with a knife. It was this which caused him always, in conversation, to keep his eyes directed toward the floor, leading strangers to wonder why he did not look them in the face. For some years previous to his death, he did not pretend to read or write by gaslight or lamplight, but was dependent on the light of the sun for all his labor; and even in the daytime he spared his eyes as much as he well could by having members of his family read to him. He was affected with frequent returns both of neuralgia of the brain and rheumatism; and besides this, his digestion was imperfect, and his

throat and lungs were somewhat involved in the general prostration. He told us several years ago that he could not pass a day without the use of medicine, and this necessity continued until his last sickness.

In this connection we must mention a circumstance to which we invite the special attention of all young men. He consulted many eminent physicians in regard to his maladies, and he was repeatedly urged to drink daily a portion of strong whisky or brandy, with the assurance that it would add at least ten years to his life. But he steadfastly refused to do so, and said that he would rather die ten years earlier than to live by the daily use of intoxicating liquor. And this was not so much because he feared the effects on himself, as because he dreaded the influence it would have on others, and especially on young men, to know that from any cause he kept up such a habit.

BROTHER SHAW AND BLUE DICK

WILLIAM BAXTER (1820-1880)

[Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from the biography of Knowles Shaw (1834-1878), *The Singing Evangelist*, published in 1879. Brother Shaw had an ability to connect with people – even those who were looked down upon by others – and was a strong proponent of the Temperance movement. These two characteristics show themselves in this account of Shaw's meeting with a man who had ruined his reputation in the community due to his alcohol use.]

Brother Shaw was an enthusiast, but his enthusiasm was the farthest possible remove from fanaticism. It had its origin in deep and earnest convictions, which found an outlet in ceaseless effort for the welfare of humanity. The world lying in wickedness was not a mere theory; to him it was a solemn, an awful fact. He realized the danger of his fellow-men, and warned them of their peril, and strove to snatch them as brands from the burning. Every human soul was, in his eyes, a gem of priceless worth—condition and circumstances went for nothing—under all surroundings, favorable or otherwise, he saw an immortal soul to be saved or lost. Where others saw only a helpless, wretched, hopeless outcast, he saw one for whom Christ died, who, under the influence of the gospel, might be cleansed from sin, have fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. He remembered that the Master came to seek and save the lost; that his condescension led him to

seek and lift up the lowly, and this led him to care for the souls of those for whom none else on earth seemed to care.

Sometimes his brethren, with less faith in God and humanity than himself, would discourage his attempts to reform and save some who seemed utterly abandoned and vile; but such opposition only added to his zeal, and made him increase his efforts in behalf of those whom men had forsaken, and who deemed themselves forsaken of God.

Among those who called forth his deep sympathy was one who is still living—changed beyond all that was at one time thought possible, and whom we trust will be one of the brightest stars in Brother Shaw’s crown of rejoicing. He was holding a meeting at some point on the Ohio River, where it was necessary for him to cross frequently. The first night of his meeting he went down to the river, but found the only ferryman to be a poor, ragged, besotted wretch, no hat on his head, his hair matted, his whole person filthy in the extreme, and giving evidence that he was even then under the influence of drink. His appearance was so forbidding, and his condition such that he was doubtful as to whether it would be safe to intrust himself in a frail skiff with such a ferryman, and had there been any other and safer means of getting across he would have availed himself of it. But there was no other chance, and with some misgivings as to the result he entered the boat. He soon found that, though under the influence of liquor, he knew how to manage his skiff, and feeling at ease on that matter, he began to talk with him. He asked him his name.

“Blue Dick,” was the reply.

“But,” said Shaw, “that is not really your name.”

“Well,” said he, “if I have any other, it has been so long since I heard it, I have almost forgotten what it is.”

Changing the subject abruptly, he asked, "Why don't you quit drinking?"

"I can't," said the poor wretch."

"Yes, you can," replied Shaw.

Wondering that a stranger should take any interest in him, he said, "Mister, do you think I could?"

"Of course you can," said Shaw, in a kind and assuring manner.

The poor fellow sat for some time in silence. It was long since any word of sympathy, interest or encouragement had fallen upon his ear, and the kind words of the stranger reached the heart which all his neighbors thought had ceased to feel. Deeply moved, he looked up and said, earnestly:

"Mister, do you really think I could quit drinking?"

"Have you a wife and children?"

In a voice choked with emotion, and weeping bitterly, he said that he had. The way was now open, Shaw told him he was a preacher, and asked him to come and hear him.

"Why," said he, "you would not let such a one as me come; and if *you* were willing, others would not like to see me there."

Shaw urged him to come, assured him that he should be welcome; that instead of being out of the reach of mercy, that it was such as he that Jesus came to save. Tenderly and earnestly he besought him to change his course, until the poor ferryman began to think that there might be hope even for him. On reaching the other side, Shaw paid him his fare, and, as he did so, he pointed

to a saloon that was near, and said, "I do not like the idea of this money going to such a place as that; can't you promise me that you will not drink any to-night, and I will come back, and you shall take me over the river again." Blue Dick gave the required promise and they parted; the preacher going to the house of God, and the ferryman, with emotions such as had not stirred in his heart for years, standing in deep thought by the rapid river under the watching stars. After meeting, Brother Shaw went down to the river, found Blue Dick waiting for him, showing by his manner that he had kept his promise not to drink. He gave him a few words of encouragement, and obtained his promise that he would come and hear him preach the following night. Great was the astonishment of many to see Blue Dick at church, and greater still to see the preacher, who had seen him come in and drop into the first empty seat that he found near the door, come up to him, take him by the hand, speak a few kind words to him, and ask him to come again. Night after night he came, and the warm hand of the preacher never failed to give that of Blue Dick a friendly grasp, and the fitting words spoken did not fail to strengthen the new purposes that were beginning to take shape in his mind. The coming of the one, and the marked attention shown him by the preacher, led some of the brethren to fear, yes fear, that this poor outcast might offer himself for membership; and they even expressed their fears to Brother Shaw, and predicted that it would ruin the church if one such as he should attempt to enter the fold. Brother Shaw, however, did not fail to show, in their loveliest colors, the tenderness and compassion of Him who came to give hope to the hopeless, to seek and to save the lost. The lost sheep, and the wayward, wretched, ruined prodigal seemed to point to Blue Dick, and Blue Dick himself began to think they meant him; and one night, when the preacher, with even more than his wonted earnestness, urged the despairing and lost to come to Christ as their only hope, Blue Dick rose to come forward and accept the gospel offer. The preacher went half-way down the aisle to meet him; angels doubtless, too, at that moment gave expression to their joy in glad song, and He who died to save

the lost was, doubtless, glad to see that the lost was found. But, alas! while there was joy in heaven, the coming of poor Blue Dick to confess his Lord, to strive to lead a better life, did not send a thrill of joy through the church; some there were who, like the elder son in the parable, thought that the returned wanderer would never be other than a disgrace to the family, thought that Blue Dick had gone too far to retrace his steps, and that his newly-formed resolutions would be broken on the very first invitation to take a drink, and that he would soon sink to even a lower depth, if possible, than before. Such was the feeling of opposition with regard to him that Brother Shaw did not take his confession and baptize him for several days, feeling, doubtless, that until he could change their views on the subject, that their coolness would repel and discourage, rather than help and save. Before the meeting closed, to the wonder of the whole community. Blue Dick made a public confession of his faith in Christ, was baptized, and by his consistent life soon disarmed whatever of objection remained, and was regarded as a standing proof of the power of the gospel.

Years passed by; the faithful evangelist revisited the same place. Blue Dick was no longer there; he was transformed into Brother George M., one of the best members of the church; he was living in a comfortable home, surrounded by a loving and happy family, with every mark of neatness and thrift about them. As soon as Brother Shaw had entered this happy Christian home he who had been Blue Dick said: "Brother Shaw, kneel down and thank God for what he has done for me, that I, who when you met me was a poor, miserable, drunken sinner, have been lifted up, and, by the mercy of God, am what I am to-day." Down they knelt; preacher, husband, wife, and children, all, all wept; but they were tears of joy; and when they parted it was in the glad hope of meeting in that blessed land where no partings shall be.

The fact that Shaw, at one period of his life, had contracted a taste for strong drink, and had strength and resolution enough to

abandon at once and for ever that which had so nearly been his ruin, gave him great power over such as had been enslaved by the same appetite. His own escape from the snare made him feel great interest and hope for the escape of others; and to such his own case was a proof that, though they had wandered so long and far in the path of criminal self-indulgence, a return was not impossible. He not only approved the various temperance reforms which sprang up, but became a bold and fearless advocate of them. He did not wait for them to become popular, but was always in the advance of every movement upon that question. His labors in the temperance cause alone would have made him a man of mark, and yet his work in that field was only an episode in the labors of his life. He was quite prominent in what is known as the Murphy Movement." Indeed, few men did more to further it than he. He was never more at home than when before immense temperance mass meetings; hundreds have signed the pledge under the influence of one of his impassioned appeals. In quite a number of places, North and South, he inaugurated the "Murphy Movement," and thousands under his labors were led to renounce the rule of the demon drink. During the last few months of his life he enlisted about fifteen hundred persons into the temperance army; gaining one hundred and fifty at a single meeting only a few days before his death.

While engaged in a meeting in Kentucky he was greatly prostrated by his excessive labors. The sister at whose house he was stopping urged him to take some brandy, but he declined to touch it. The lady had some sent to his room and placed in his reach while he was asleep. When he awoke and found it so near him his old desire came back with fearful violence; he arose from his bed, fell upon his knees, and asked God for strength to overcome it, and, taking the bottle to the lady, told her how his long-slumbering appetite had been aroused, and begged her never again to place such a temptation in the way of any one who had ever been under the influence of that monster evil.

Being able to hold in check the fearful craving that early indulgence had created, gave him great power in persuading others, who had lost all confidence in their ability to control their appetites, to make a struggle to do so; and not a few did so successfully. Many of his religious converts were persons who had fallen into this fearful vice, but in his esteem none were so fallen as to be beyond hope of recovery; and many such to-day are worthy and useful members of the church, who attribute their present condition, under God, to the earnest and unselfish labors of him who had aroused them to make an endeavor to escape when hope had almost died in their hearts. He seldom held a protracted meeting without delivering during its progress one or more spirited temperance lectures, which in many cases proved to be a preparative for the successful sowing in many hearts the good seed of the kingdom of God. Much of this temperance work was performed in the open air, in public squares and like places, where large crowds, who seldom visited churches, could be reached. Some of these gatherings, as for instance at the Capitol grounds in Jackson, Mississippi, and Lafayette Square, New Orleans, were such as never had been collected before for a similar purpose, and impressions were made such as will never fade away.

This is a sample of the material contained in
*Rum & Ruin: A Collection of Writings on the Issue of Alcohol
from Preachers Associated with the Restoration Movement*
Edited by Andy Sochor

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