

eral welfare. This subject has given rise to endless debate, and the opposite views that exist find able partisans.

The temperance reformers, for instance, claim that the liquor traffic should be controlled by a prohibitory law; their opponents dispute this. They say that government may with equal justice apply a prohibitory law in the case of tea and coffee. The principle implied is that the personal habits and the appetite of man are not proper subjects for legislative control. This leads us directly to the question; what is the sphere of government? To answer it, we must look at the nature and source of government.

It does not require much argument to prove that man is made for society. Nothing more than utter savagism could result from the absence of social ties. But the existence of communities is a fact beyond human control. It results from a tendency which is inherent in man.

Absolute personal freedom is therefore an impossibility. It implies that each man may infringe without limit upon the rights of any other. Man is morally imperfect. He is so constituted that his individual feelings are stronger than his social attachments. In case of conflict, he gives the preference to the former. A restraining power is therefore indispensable to the existence of society. This is government, and it has its source in the nature of man.

To determine the sphere of government one can scarcely do better than to glance at the beginnings of democracy in our land. The Puritan "Blue Laws" are familiar to the student of early New England history. To us, the restraints they imposed upon personal manners seem to have been absurd and uncalled for. Does it not provoke a smile to read that in Connecticut no man could use tobacco more than once a day, and that he must then be ten miles from any house? A persons expenditures were even regulated. Now can we suppose that any people would submit to such laws unless these are dic-

tated by the general sense of the community? We have outgrown this nonsense as we say; to put it more philosophically, our altered social conditions have caused the change.

From this illustration we see that when the community is small, and thus resembles a family, its laws are determined by its habits and customs which prevail. The rigid code of the Puritans was simply a reflection of their belief. They strove to maintain universal morality, and if the means they employed were not the best, they at least set up strong barriers against the corrupting influences of vice. The "Blue Laws" no longer exist. Very true. The increase of population, which makes it difficult to retain a system of laws touching extensively on manners, has combined with the disorganizing influence of the Revolution to overturn them.

As population increases, there seems to arise the idea that government is a personified power which stands aloof from the people and dictates what they shall and shall not do. This is a fiction. The character of the government represents the collective sense of the community. In being a law-abiding citizen, a man is simply submitting to self-control for what the people as a whole think is his best good. Civil law is the restraint which a man submits to in order to be secure in the enjoyment of such rights as do not conflict with the general welfare.

Then is there any well defined line between the interests of the individual and those of the people as a mass? From the illustration we have just given, it may be seen that the connection is quite evident in the early stages of society. With the generalization of the laws, which accompanies national growth, the relation is obscured yet the principle remains. In our day, this same relation comes to the surface as a factor in many a vexed question. It not only appears in prohibitory legislation and in laws for compulsory education, but also in other questions in social economy that are now being agitated. We may re-