

alcoholic preparations as they are in the use of the drugs mentioned. More respectable women have acquired the liquor habit from its medicinal use than have ever become drunkards through social temptation. The use of liquor as a medical agent, or in the moderation of respectable social intercourse may be ethical or not, according to the ability of the individual to control himself, and be invariably able to say to himself "this far and no farther." Unfortunately no one can tell whether he has this ethical might until he has cast himself into the furnace of destruction and found himself wanting. Fortunately one scorching is sufficient to strengthen the ethical might of many. No one can tell, until he tries, whether he has that accursed weakness which it is only necessary to inflame into a fire of destruction by drinking one glass of liquor. Children of parents who have had that weakness should make "touch not, taste not, handle not" the ethical law of their lives.

Social Suicide.

While on the subject of some of the causes of alcoholism it may be well to touch on one that does not receive the attention it deserves. Unfortunately it is a cause that humanity has not yet intelligence enough to overcome. While careless good-fellowship does lead thousands to drink more or less liquor and often to dangerous over-indulgence, the number of chronic drunkards resulting therefrom is small in comparison to those made by the feverish excitement to drown self, to go somewhere, this cowardice to be alone, that results from the terrible struggle for existence due to the increase of the misfit and less fit in our population — imbecilically augmented by immigration. On top of this come those who have found themselves unable to stand up in the struggle for existence. Taken as a whole our city, town and village population may be said to be mad in two directions. They work like fiends to meet the struggle for existence, and then act like maniacs in search of excitement, or recreation in order to forget they live. Our present life may well be styled a suicidal struggle for life, and an equally suicidal struggle to destroy it. Ethical self-control is almost an unknown art in a moral armament of the people. The American people have gone sensually mad in their insane endeavors to bury themselves and forget that they live. The severity of the struggle for existence has made this. It is making drunkards faster than any other influence. Ethically speaking we are rapidly becoming a nation of working and sensual prostitutes. We ignore the law of self-preservation even in our laborious endeavors to fulfill it?

Individual Liberty.

The much vaunted individual liberty

to drink liquor is on a level with license in general. License instead of liberty, anarchy instead of law-abiding, are becoming American characteristics. License means to do as you please in utter disregard of the law. License and anarchy are identical. Freedom is not to do as you please. Civil Freedom is to comply with the law. Freedom is that walking in the law which feels it not. True Freedom is instinctive, not intellectual. The moment one does right because he feels it right to do it, that moment there is subjection. That may be liberty, but it is not freedom. As no one can drink liquor without intrenching on the ethical sensitiveness of the self-preserving compass, as no community can license the liquor business without menancing its ethical equilibrium, it is evident that this individual liberty doctrine collapses from innate immorality. Alcoholism is chronic suicide. It frequently leads to acute suicide. Freedom knoweth neither desire nor self-restraint. Apply that ethical principle to the liquor question in relation to the consumer.

The Consumer.

As ethics invariably considers all liabilities to weaken the self-preserving abilities, and as no one can say that he will not fall into the liquor habit, it is evident that the only ethical condition is absolute self-control, and taste not on your peril. He who indulges in the use of liquor, with self-control is the slave of his tastes. Should he lose self-control he becomes a martyr to his weakness. All and any use of liquor carries with it the possibility of martyrdom. All martyrs have been, are, and ever will be victims to their weakness. Martyrdom is never ethical. It is invariably immoral. What nonsense it is to enact laws against suicide and license the means to alcoholic suicide under the banner of individual liberty! Why not confine the alcoholic with other lunatics? It will be remembered that license has been defined as doing as you please in defiance of the laws. The public does this in defiance of the law of self-protection. It justifies the liquor consumers ignoring that of self-preservation. Both are guilty of slow suicide. Is not the liquor dealer the only moral factor in the business, if he tastes not his own poison? As under certain circumstances self-preservation is above all civil law, so there are conditions when self-preservation ceases to be the law. That is anarchy. The chronic drunkard is in that condition.

Public Suicide.

The public which permits him to be such is equally so. It is a serious question if a person ought not to commit suicide when he cannot support himself and is a burden on others who have all they can possibly do to support themselves. The drunkard often exceeds

that unethical condition. The public practically commits suicide and encourages it in others when it permits the chronic drunkard, who is peaceful within the limits of the law, to live at the expense of the very lives of wife or children. That is slow suicide and murder supported and licensed by the public. Is license anarchy or what is it? No matter what the cause the suicide has lost his ethical or self-preserving might. Has not the drunkard, has not the public which practically makes him such, lost all its self-preserving, or ethical integrity? Truly the "rum-seller" (who tastes not) should rise in estimation. The ethical might that preserves, is the centripetal force in the individual and the state. The centrifugal force is that which tends to individual and public disintegration. It is a study in ethics to see the public supporting centrifugalism in endorsing the individual's right to alcoholic suicide and in licensing the liquor business.

Civilization and Culture.

American civilization is often spoken of as "unprecedented in the world's history." Is it? What is civilization? Authority tells us that "civilization consists in what may be broadly called culture in a nation." Does it? In the whole history of Greece, never were there so many cultured people as after the cities had begun to decay and the people were fast becoming physical and moral wrecks. It was then that Greek culture was the strongest. So of Rome, so of France, so of the United States at present. Never has there been so much culture, never so much self-destroying madness. At the very acme of her culture, Athens never arrived at the civilization of Sparta. Lycurgus was greater than Plato. Civilization is the endeavor of man to find means to aid his self-preserving might through union with others. Culture is by no means necessary to civilization. It is a budding out of it. It is frequently a parasitic attachment to it. Culture is often antagonistic to true civilization. Culture is largely a means to hide dishonesty. Civilization might come under a one time definition of religion—"the effort of man to perfect himself." Civilization and true (cosmic) socialism are identical. There is but one standard to judge the degree of civilization of different peoples. It is the ethical. That is the most civilized people whose institutions produce the greatest number of self-maintaining individuals. It is a semi-barbaric people whose institutions produce and maintain a large number of criminals and unethical, non self-supporting people. Most so called "civilized nations" are fast descending into semi-barbarism. It is a question if Lacedaemonia under Lycurgus did not arrive at a higher stage of civilization than any people have yet attained to. It is no question that a people which licenses alcoholic suicide; that a people