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PRAYER.

Some religious and devout men think that they can obtain results in matters over which they have no personal control by fervid and earnest prayers. And equally sensible and reverent men do not believe that supplication can be potential in getting results. Has prayer ever produced rain? If so, when and where? This is a statistical inquiry, and if, during the last five centuries, at any time, universal praying has brought about the down-pour of needed rain, church histories and church almanacs have certainly recorded the facts.

An argument in favor of the efficacy of prayer may be drawn from the general use of it. The greater part of mankind, during all historic ages, has been accustomed to pray for temporal advantages. How vain, it may be urged, must be the reasoning that ventures to oppose this mighty consensus of belief! Not so! The argument proves too much, and is consequently suicidal. It either compels us to make the monstrous admission that the prayers of pagans, of fetich worshippers, and of Tibetans who turn praying-wheels, are recompensed in the same way as those of orthodox believers; or else the consensus proves that it has no better foundation than the very general tendency of man to invest his God with the character of a human despot, who can be swayed by entreaties and mollified by supplications.

The collapse of this argument leaves us solely concerned with the simple statistical question: "Are prayers answered, or are they not?"

There are two lines of research, by

either of which we may pursue the inquiry. Let us follow that one which promises the most trustworthy results; that is, examine large classes of cases and be guided by broad averages. Do those who pray get the results they seek oftener than those of the same or similar ability and industry who do not pray attain their objects? THE CONSERVATIVE opens its columns to all who, with sincerity, desire to discuss the efficacy of prayer in producing rain, restoring health or bringing about any desired result in human affairs!

PROHIBITION.

The Patriot, of Lincoln, which is the authorized and aggressive mouth-piece of prohibition in Nebraska, in its issue of July 25th, has something to say about the editor of THE CONSERVATIVE, and his action as a mediator to bring about peace between beer-drinking and non-beer-drinking citizens, who have been litigating over Sunday laws and saloons with much asperity and bitterness. But the Patriot fails to tell the truth as to the danger of riot and blood-shed arising from the "spotters."

The "spotters" were men furnished with money, by the "Law and Order League" with which to lure saloonists to sell to them malt, vinous or spirituous liquors on Sunday. The rage against these hired spies made the danger, and the employers of the spies were the direct cause of the peril.

A man can not be called honest merely because he sees nothing to steal, nor temperate because he can get nothing to drink. Ninety men out of a hundred can taste or not taste, drink or not drink, as they will to do. Ten out of a hundred can not safely taste or drink any stimulant. Prohibition promises to make a law to save the ten, no matter how much it may inconvenience or wrong the ninety. Men can not be made honest by legislation, neither can legislation make them temperate. To abolish all horses because horse-stealing is such a common crime would be as logical as to abolish all stimulants because drunkenness is likewise a common crime. Because, in Utah, there was an epidemic of polygamous matrimony, and some saints had the very delirium tremens of uxoriousness is no reason for prohibiting marriage. But our prohibition friends reason in such a way that, logically and consist-

ently, they would prohibit anything which, under any possible conditions, can bring, by its abuse, harm, crime or sorrow to the human race.

No law-making can confer brain and will-power upon those born without it. As free agents, men may drink to drunkenness or not drink to drunkenness. When they do get drunk nature puts the penalty of head-aches, sickness and crime upon them. Nature grants no pardons. Nature commutes no sentences for the violator of her laws. Prohibitionists propose to punish those who do not get drunk, by taking from them all beverages containing alcoholic stimulants, thus to prevent from drinking those who do get drunk. The drunkard, say the prohibitionists, is not to blame. Society is to blame. The social structure is imperfect. We divide on the drink habit into two classes. One class can and does use but never abuse stimulants. Another class does abuse them and get drunk and commit crime, and according to prohibition doctrines, the class which does not get drunk is the cause of the class which does get drunk.

BOWLBY IRRIGATION.

The paper by Col. Bowlby in favor of the storage of the spring surplus of water in the state of Nebraska, for irrigation purposes, is getting more and more approval as the hot sun and unmitigated drouth continue to wither the hopes of the farmers and their corn fields.

Col. Bowlby wrote wisely and well. His plans can easily be carried out by nine farmers out of ten in Otoe county and, by a very large proportion of farmers throughout the entire state. Water storage in every gully and gulch should henceforth be provided by every farmer who can control a water-shed and save its rain-catch in these natural reservoirs.

WATER.

Many populists believe that the great drouth prevailing throughout the north-west and, in fact, all over the United States, is caused by the big financial combines and corporations called "trusts." They have used all the "water" in getting their stocks sufficiently irrigated to sell to grangers and other lambs who occasionally stray into Wall Street.