

The Victoria Warder FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1888.

The Temperance Question.

From the Phoenix Journal.

With the solitary exception of the terrible and eternal Irish question, the temperance question is perhaps the most venerable political problem at present before the public. In some form or other, it has been in existence since this troubled nineteenth century began its course, and even the "oldest inhabitant" must have before it in point of antiquity...

Even, however, to the mind of the most meditative and critical philosopher there is much sound reason in the cry for legislation which is raised by the temperance reformers, and which has now been taken up by the public generally. The evil of multiplying licensed houses, especially in the districts where poverty and vice prevail, is an evil which is now almost universally recognized...

Children Cry for

scrip in many of the churches, and here in Scotland an attempt was lately made in a leading religious body to insist upon office-bearers being pledged abstainers. Dissenting ministers, with that ever-near zeal and narrowness which...

We cannot here do more than merely glance at the moral question involved in this conflict—the question of what is the duty of the individual in present circumstances as regards the use of intoxicants. Totalitarians, of course, maintain that for the sake of others as well as for their own safety, it is the duty of all to avoid danger by total abstinence. In answer to the latter reason for such a course being adopted, it may be fairly pointed out that the great majority of able-bodied men, with that belief in their moral power which ought to characterize true manhood, will never be led to admit that their brute appetites are stronger than their free will, and the wiser section of totalitarians show their recognition of the force of this argument by refraining from urging personal safety as an inducement to the renunciation of the social glass.

Swipes and Sunday Funerals. DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Will you kindly permit the undersigned to revert to one or two sentences in the communication headed "Justice on Swipes and Temperance," in your issue of Feb. 23, 1888. The sentence reads as follows:—"Some of the clergy, who are glad not all, are so particular in regard to Sabbath observance, that they will not attend the funeral of some unfortunate who had so little regard for Sunday as to die at a time when it would be necessary that he should be buried on that day. To bid up the broken heart of the mourner, comfort the afflicted, and improve a solemn occasion by pointing to a spectacle so convincing of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, is a work of too secular a nature to be attended to on the Lord's day."

Now, Mr. Editor, as I am one of those who object to the attendance at funerals on the Sabbath I want you to be so kind as to permit me to give my reasons for the existence of those objections in my own case, which I will venture to say will voice mine out of every ten of the same profession who are troubled with the same scruples of conscience on that matter.

It is not because we consider the clergyman's part of the funeral service to be "a work of too secular a nature to be attended to on the Lord's day." Now, sir, I am not a novice in the work of the Christian ministry, this being my twentieth year in the work of the sacred office, during which years I have attended many funeral services on the Sabbath, waiving my own private feelings again and again for the sake of the accommodation of others, many of whom never enter a church door from one end of the year to the other, unless brought there by a funeral. Now my experience of 20 years has led me to arrive at the following conclusions:

1. It is not the act of the man who has died that causes a funeral to be on the Sabbath day. Nine-tenths of such funerals are crowded on to the Sabbath not by the dead but by the living. The funeral which should be on Saturday afternoon is again and again held over until Sunday, and again the funeral which should be on Monday forenoon is hurried on so as to have it held on the Sabbath.

not in one case out of many reduced to the minimum. I have seen men with my own eyes stake out the grave and die it on Sunday morning, thereby giving one or two men a half day of hard, steady toil stirred in regular working days. Surely if a funeral must be held on the Sabbath, the manual labor could at any rate be confined to the filling of the grave, there being no necessity to dig it out on Sabbath morning.

4. The Sabbath funeral calls out the attendance of many persons who would not, I am convinced, attend the same funeral were it held either on the Saturday before or the Monday after. Do those persons come through respect for the person gone, or those who remain? Of course such is the appearance, but do not they really come because they can do so without taking a day from their business? Then does not this large gathering at a Sunday funeral make a great deal of extra work for women, maids, Lord's day, with scissors, needles, thimbles, etc., etc.?

5. Then again, Sunday funerals are not planned with much regard for the convenience of the minister or his work. For example, the majority of ministers outside towns or cities have their services to attend to on each Sabbath, generally at the hours of 10.30 a.m.—2.30 p.m., and 6.30 p.m., with long drives between. Now suppose a family that never comes next or near the church the year round, at the appointment where the hour is 10.30 a.m., wants the minister to attend a funeral on Sabbath morning. In such cases out of ten some one from the family wanting said funeral, or some one for them, will call at the parsonage late Saturday evening and say that they want the minister to attend said funeral at 8 p.m. to-morrow. Now what does this call for a complete rearrangement of the 10.30 a.m. appointment, because the people of that community are intending to attend the funeral. It means the congregation at the 2.30 p.m. appointment meet, and are disappointed because the minister is expected to be at the place where he should have been the morning service, and the funeral, and if he refuses, hard words are said and written about him. I have known congregations of over two hundred hearers to have been disappointed in this way by the minister being called to the funeral of some man who, himself and his family, never perhaps in a whole year previous to said funeral entered the church. If you remonstrate with them and show them how their arrangement will disorganize the Sabbath work of the minister they will in many cases at as though the minister's work on the Sabbath was of no importance at all. They will say, "We demand is everything. If you ask them why they could not have the funeral at the hour at which the service was to be held at that appointment, perhaps all in the world they will say is, "It will not suit," but it must suit the minister to have no service at all. The people will not come to church owing to funeral coming off in the afternoon; then for him to disappoint the afternoon congregation to attend the funeral where he should have been in the morning, and then drive off with funeral procession perhaps 8 or 10 miles to a church which renders it almost impossible for him to get back to his service in the evening; and often for such a day's work a cent of remuneration is not offered him, no matter what may be his financial loss caused by the jarring in his regular work.

Now, Mr. Editor, do not say this is an overdrawn picture. It is not. I could corroborate it by giving names, places, dates, etc.; but such is not necessary to the explanation of the reason why many clergymen are conscientiously opposed to funerals on the Sabbath. Now, Mr. Editor, I hope that as we as a class have been thus publicly attacked, because we refuse to attend a funeral of the "unfortunate," we speak of. Of course when he comes to die he can get one of those clergymen included in the "not all" to attend his funeral, bind up the broken heart of the mourner and comfort the afflicted, by committing his remains to mother earth upon the Sabbath.

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