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**TEMPERANCE
THE SAFER WAY**

By
REV. JOHN A. O'BRIEN, Ph.D., LL.D.





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The University of Notre Dame



THE PAULIST PRESS

401 WEST 59TH STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y.

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ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur:

✠ FRANCIS J. SPELLMAN, D.D.,
Archbishop of New York.

New York, January 29, 1942.

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IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED IN THE U. S. A.
BY THE PAULIST PRESS, NEW YORK, N. Y.

WHY DRINK?

Temperance — the Safer Way

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WHY drink? Why expose yourself to the danger of intoxication, whether that danger be proximate or remote? When there is such urgent need for the possession of all of one's faculties, physical and mental, to wrestle with the complexities and the dangers of modern life, why dull your brain and handicap yourself by adding an artificial foe to the numerous ones born in our flesh and forever struggling for the mastery of our character.

These are the questions which I have presented to youth for the past twenty-five years. Because I have spent my whole life among youth and have seen the frightful toll in body, mind and soul taken by drink, I advise both young and old to follow the safer path and leave all intoxicating drink alone. Only recently I have seen the career of a gifted student ruined completely by the habit of drink which gained the mastery over him.

What agony was in his eyes as he cried his heart out, as he realized the ruin he had brought upon himself and the disgrace upon his family. "God!" he cried, "If I could say one thing to youth throughout the world, it would be: Stay away from drink! It has brought hell to me on earth and it

will bring hell to untold thousands of others unless they profit by the experience of others and leave drink alone.”

But I am getting ahead of my story. Let me tell you of the symbol of temperance which I saw in Ireland, and see if I can't interpret its significance for the people of America today.

* * * *

It is characteristic of every nation that it seeks to rescue from oblivion the memory of its illustrious men. We strive to stay the biting teeth of time and halt the swinging of his mowing scythe by enshrining the memory of our heroes in song and story, and freezing their likeness in sculptured granite and in enduring bronze. In obedience to that universal instinct the people of Ireland have enshrined in the nation's capital the memory of St. Patrick in the majestic cathedral which bears his name. Outside on Sackville Street, they have reared lofty monuments crowned with the figures of two of their great national heroes. One is the impressive monument to their great statesman, Daniel O'Connell, who played the leading role in the emancipation of Ireland from the galling yoke of English tyranny.

The other monument, a few blocks away, is to Father Mathew, the great Apostle of Temperance in Ireland. His right hand is held aloft as if

exhorting his hearers to rise above the bondage of drink and to take the pledge of temperance. Some idea of the difficulty of his task may be gained from the fact that in that very city there rises the vast Guinness establishment, one of the largest breweries in the world. Father Mathew went throughout Ireland and preached the cause of sobriety with such burning zeal and convincing eloquence that people enlisted by the thousands under his banner. They became Knights of Father Mathew and pledged themselves to total abstention from alcoholic liquor. He carried his crusade to America, and spread his organization for temperance throughout our land.

Today, outside of St. Patrick, few names are dearer to the Irish heart than that of Father Mathew. He will live not only in song and story, but in the grateful hearts of a grateful people. To this day, when the little Irish boy walks along upper Sackville Street in Dublin, he gazes upon the figure of the great Apostle of Temperance with sentiments of love and reverence.

An Urgent Need

That statue of Father Mathew with its silent plea for temperance symbolizes the need in America today. With the repeal of prohibition, breweries and distilleries are working night and day,

seeking to flood our land with intoxicating liquors of every description. Drinking parlors, road-houses, taverns, a new name for the old saloon, have sprung up like mushrooms over night. Drive along any of our hard roads and you will see with monotonous regularity, every few miles, the sign, "Dine and Dance." One of the worst features of these taverns, worse than the old saloon, is their combining drinking with dancing. Each separately has its dangers, which are more than doubled when combined. Added to this is the sinister practice of hiring persons of shady morals to stimulate business in both these lines.

A painstaking survey was conducted by the University of Chicago of public dance halls, with hired hostesses, called taxi dancers. It showed that vast numbers drifted subsequently into lives of commercial vice and shame. Losing all sense of modesty and decency, they became willing victims for the most sinister traffic in civilization, that of white slavery. Aroused public opinion clamored for the extinction of such dance halls. Now they are being smuggled back by tavern keepers who seek to evade the law by going outside the city limits. Persons who frequent road houses or taverns of doubtful reputation, where agents ply patrons with drinks even to intoxication, and corrupt their morals along other lines, will have an awful responsibility to answer for

when they stand before the judgment seat of Almighty God.

Multitudes of people who opposed Prohibition and voted for repeal are frankly disturbed over the turn events have taken. They fear the pendulum is swinging from one extreme to the other. The rapaciousness and greed of the liquor interests are once more in evidence. Standards of decency and public morality are openly flaunted. The same lack of foresight which made the old saloon so frequently a den of vice, and resulted in the demand for its abolition, may again sour the American public against the liquor traffic. The problem of devising measures to curb abuses and to prevent the dispensing of liquor from becoming a source of debauchment to our citizens and especially to our youth, is one of the most serious moral problems now confronting our nation.

A New Peril

The problem takes on added seriousness from the marked increase in auto accidents. With the increase of speed in the new cars, and the increase in the number of intoxicated drivers, the number of accidents has reached new heights. Thus in 1940 the number of people killed by automobiles reached the alarming total of 34,501. In 1924 the motor car brought death to 21,628. Since then the number of killings has mounted until at the

end of sixteen years, more than 500,000 men, women and children have been slaughtered by the automobile. The number of persons injured in auto accidents in 1940 was approximately 1,200,000, and the total for the last ten years will exceed 10,000,000.

It may help one to grasp the significance of these appalling figures by stating that in 1940 one person was killed every fifteen minutes, and one was crippled or maimed every twenty-four seconds in automobile accidents.

We think of war as the great killer of mankind, and rightly so. But the motor car in the hands of careless or tipsy drivers is running it a close race. Thus the United States lost 244,086 men from all causes in the World War. Of this number only 37,568 were killed in action. This means that in 1940 the motor car killed almost as many of our people as met death from action in the World War. It means likewise that in the last ten years the automobile has slain more of our people than the World War has done, directly or indirectly.

It is indeed startling to realize that more people were injured and killed in 1940 in America, a nation then at peace, than were injured and killed that same year by all the Nazi air raids over England, with bombs dropping night and day upon London's teeming millions.

Alcohol — The Killer



The most alarming feature of it all is that, in spite of all the warnings and safety measures, the slaughter of more than 30,000 people continues year after year. Instead of decreasing, it is mounting steadily. Thus the number killed in the first ten months of 1941 was 31,620 — a 16 per cent increase

over the ten-month 1940 figure of 27,210.

In how many auto fatalities does drinking figure? The most comprehensive investigation of this matter was conducted by the National Safety Council. Mr. J. A. Siple, statistician for the Council, informs the writer that careful research shows that drinking on the part of the driver or the pedestrian *occurred in one out of every five fatal accidents!* More dangerous to life and limb in America than the shotgun are the drinking driver and the drinking pedestrian. Alcohol has become the killer par excellence on the city streets.

Is it any wonder then that the Church cries out the solemn warning: The man who, while tipsy or semi-intoxicated, undertakes to drive an automobile on a public highway, endangers not only his own life and that of his passengers but menaces also the lives of other travelers as well. He will have an awful responsibility to answer for before the judgment seat of Almighty God. Common prudence and an elementary regard for the life and the welfare of others demand that a person should never undertake to drive a car on a public highway when he is even partially under the influence of liquor. One may be as guilty of murder with an automobile as with a revolver.

“Have a highball or a cocktail, Joe,” said the host to his brother. Joe was a young physician who had driven in from out of town to act as godfather at the baptism of his brother’s newly-born son. A little party was in process after that epochal event.

“Thanks, Bernard,” replied Joe, “but I’m driving back home shortly and I never drink, not even a glass of beer, when I know I’ll soon be handling a car on a busy highway.”

That is the procedure which all should follow. The time is approaching when carrying liquor in one’s brain cells while driving will be put in the same category as carrying concealed weapons, incendiarism, and other misdemeanors about which

there is no question in the public or official mind. That development will come through legislation, improved court procedure, adequate test methods and an aroused public opinion. It cannot come too soon, for it will mean the saving of thousands of human lives now annually massacred by the tipsy driver.

The Church is not an extremist. She does not condemn the use of liquor, but its abuse. Her ideal has not been prohibition but temperance. For individuals who, because of a peculiar type of nervous system or a defect of the will, cannot indulge with moderation, she counsels total abstinence. Drinking then becomes an occasion of grievous sin, and should be avoided. "He that loveth the danger," says Holy Writ, "shall perish in it."

The Church urges all young people to abstain completely until they are twenty-one. In the old days the pledge to this effect was given at the time of First Holy Communion in many parishes. Nowadays many pastors of long experience encourage young people to abstain from hard liquor until they are thirty. In the case of students I would encourage complete abstention. While admitting the lawfulness of an occasional glass of beer or wine, it is entirely unnecessary for young people, and they will be *better off and safer off, without it*. There are so many dangers at parties of drinking

too freely, of not wishing to be outdone by others, a sort of false bravado, that it is infinitely better to abstain entirely. There are so many appetites, hungers, and urges born in our nature, which we have to struggle desperately to control, that it seems a pity to add still another which may get out of hand and wreck us in body, mind and soul.

Evil of Intoxication

The vice of intoxication consists in the fact that it stultifies man's reason, and degrades him to the level of the beast. That immoderate drinking affects the intelligence, is notorious to all. Father Mathew was accustomed to illustrate its effect by the following story: Two men, both tipsy, were groping their way home one night. On coming to a corner lamp post, they began to argue.

One said, "That's the moon."

"No," said the other, "that's the sun."

Finally, seeing a man approaching, they decided to have him settle the argument. They were too obfuscated to notice that he also walked on unsteady legs.

Looking up at the lamp post, the man surveyed it carefully and then, with knitted brow, said:

"Gentlemen, you'll have to pardon me, I'm a stranger in these parts, too."

Artificial Craving

One of the dangers of alcoholic drink lies in the fact that with most people it sets up an artificial craving, which demands more and more to satisfy its thirst. With some it mounts to a raging passion, which overwhelms them and gives them no peace till it is satisfied. Before the individual can realize it, he has become a slave, bound hand and foot, to the most galling tyrant in the world. His sense of humor, of obligation to his family and friends, his oath of office, are all trampled under foot. The beast that is within us all gains the upper hand. He is more truly a slave than any prisoner with ball and chain in the penitentiary.

Some years ago I received a call at night to minister to a dying man. He was in a cheap lodging house downtown in the slum section of the city. After groping my way up a narrow stairs, I found him lying on a cot in a room that was almost bare. He was a man of about fifty, prematurely aged, his hair almost gray, and deep lines in his face. The pallor of death was on him, and he knew it. He had been on a prolonged spree, had gone through the throes of delirium tremens, an internal hemorrhage had occurred, and death was a matter of hours. I heard his confession and gave him the Last Sacraments.

“Father,” he said, “I have a wife and family back home in Bridgeport, Connecticut. I had a good job until I lost it through drink. Rather than bring further shame and disgrace upon my family, I left home. I have been roving about since like a tramp, exiled from all my friends and from the family whom I love, because I could not overcome the passion for drink.”

“Father,” he said, as I was leaving, “I would give anything in the world if I could but start again, free from this terrible habit which is pulling me down to a drunkard’s grave.”

If I could have gathered into that room all the young men and women who are starting the habit of drink, and have had them gaze upon the tragedy before me, a man wrecked in body, mind and soul, dying a drunkard’s death, would they not ask themselves: “Is it worth while? Am I not better off without it?”

As I went down the creaking stairs, out into the darkness of the winter night, the words of the dying man echoed in my ear. I prayed that God might protect my students and myself from the fate that had befallen him.

Harmful Effects

Dispassionate, scientific research has disclosed in recent years an increasing number of physical

and mental ills traceable to alcohol. Thus Dr. Karl M. Bowman of the Harvard Medical School traces to alcoholic psychosis a group of mental maladies including delirium tremens, pathological intoxication, acute hallucinosis, Korsakoff's psychosis, paranoid condition and chronic deterioration.

Dr. Lambert reports that alcohol tends to produce sterility. In an examination of twenty chronic alcoholics who came to autopsy, he found marked atrophy of the ovaries in ten instances.

Dr. Lawrence Kolb, Assistant Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, voices the public concern that is being felt over the growing evil of excessive drinking in our country. He reports that our nation has achieved less satisfaction from measures designed to combat alcoholism than any country in the so-called Western civilization.

In spite of the tendency to report deaths due to alcoholism under some other cause out of consideration for the feelings of the bereaved family, Dr. Kolb states that the figures for 1937 show "that alcohol caused more deaths than any one of thirty-one infectious diseases, some of which were formerly veritable scourges." It is indeed disturbing to learn that the recorded alcoholic death rates in the United States, in spite of wide areas

of prohibition, were higher from 1910 to 1930 than in the British Isles, the Scandinavian countries, Holland and Belgium.

Cause of Crime

Alcohol is the fertile breeding ground not only of physical and mental maladies, but of crime as well. Thus the Committee of Fifty, in an investigation of 13,402 convictions in seventeen prisons and reformatories in twelve States, concluded "that intemperance figured as one of the causes of crime in 50 per cent of the cases and was the sole cause in 16.87 per cent."¹

An even higher percentage is reported by Judge Joseph T. Zottoli of the Municipal Court of Boston. In an exhaustive study of the relation of alcoholism to crime, Judge Zottoli reports that 90 per cent of the adult population of prisons in Massachusetts, to which persons are sent for misdemeanors, are there because of offenses caused by drunkenness, and that about 50 per cent of prisoners receiving sentences to penal institutions have committed offenses related to alcoholism.²

Dr. Kolb reports that there are "at least 200,000 persons in the country whom alcohol has completely mastered, that is, who are chronic alcohol-

¹ Emerson, Haven: *Alcohol and Man*. Macmillan Co., 1932, p. 315.

² Public Health Reports, Vol. 56, No. 11. March 14, 1941, p. 493.

ics, or persons who cannot, or will not, control their drinking and who, as a result, have become serious problems to themselves, to their families, and to the community. It also may be safely assumed that at any one time there are in the country 1,000,000 or more persons who, because of excessive indulgence and special susceptibility, are in danger of becoming chronic alcoholics. It is not possible to make even a reasonable estimate of the number of additional persons who are exposing themselves to accidents, disease, and social hazards because of overindulgence in alcohol.”³

That the number would run into the millions, there is no doubt. Neither can there be any doubt that the prevalence of alcoholism, releasing, as it does, the inhibitions and destroying the controls of the individual, lies back of the high ratio of crime in our country. It throws a revealing light upon why America with all its boasted progress and freedom has gained the unenviable reputation of being the most lawless nation in the world.

Science Speaks

As the result of an exhaustive study of the effects of alcohol upon man,⁴ Dr. Haven Emerson of Columbia University reaches the conclusions:

1. “Alcohol is not essential to the health of any

³ *Ibid*, p. 494.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 100 ff.

normal persons, whatever their ages, or to the normal functioning of their life processes.

2. "Its use by healthy persons is compatible with continual health only if the alcohol is taken with due regard to its poisonous properties.

3. "Alcoholic beverages in all forms and strengths should be avoided by those who have not attained full maturity of body and a stable nervous system.

4. "Of all the physiologically undesirable habits in the use of alcohol, the cocktail before meals in the homes of fashion and the whisky before breakfast in the homes of alcohol addicts are the worst in their immediate and subsequent effect upon the health of the individual.

5. "Alcohol should never be used at any time by persons carrying responsibility for the safety or life of others, or by those who are likely at any time to be called upon unexpectedly for maximum exertion, skill, or judgment. Such persons as locomotive engineers, sea captains, aeroplane pilots, chauffeurs, firemen, policemen, physicians, nurses, life-guards, and others similarly related to their fellows should avoid alcohol in all forms, except possibly during their long vacation."

The above conclusions reflect not emotional feeling or wishful thinking but the calm, deliberate, dispassionate verdict of scientific research.

Coaches Speak

Not less appealing to the youth of America will be the testimony of the nation's outstanding coaches and athletic directors. Charged with the responsibility of guiding their athletes to a high point of physical efficiency, these experienced mentors know full well what happens when alcohol and athletic training collide.

Listen to the testimony of Major John L. Griffin, Commissioner of Athletics in the "Big Ten" Intercollegiate Conference:

"Something like a half-million boys are playing football in the schools and colleges this fall, and perhaps three million will play basketball this winter. I do not know of a single coach or trainer in an educational institution who believes that alcohol is beneficial to an athlete. In fact, it is safe to say that all of our school and college coaches insist that their boys and young men shall abstain entirely from the use of alcohol in any form.

"From my personal experience and observations, our athletes know full well that they cannot expect to succeed in athletics if they break training during the training season. By breaking training they understand this means smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, eating between meals or eating the foods that do not agree with them.

"I am convinced that if our young men learn

that they must be temperate in their habits if they are to succeed in athletics, the value of temperate living will be impressed upon them after their active athletic days are ended."

Listen to the testimony of the famous coach, Fielding H. Yost, Director of Athletics at the University of Michigan, himself a life-long total abstainer:

"During the past thirty years I have been connected as a player and coach with college athletics. I know the evil effects of alcohol on the moral and physical life of one who uses it. I have never observed any good from the use of it. I would not waste time trying to train or develop one who uses it. A boy or young man who drinks does not give himself a fair chance."

An Old Story

A few years ago I was walking around a golf course with four of the leading contestants for the State amateur championship. Suddenly a rainstorm came up. All made for the club house. A few hours later I met one of the four.

"Father," he said, "I knew my chances went glimmering when we headed for the club house with its bar. I am never at the peak of my game when I drink.

"I had a few highballs, and then when we re-

sumed play, I found that I had lost control of those delicate nerves and muscles which are necessary for accuracy in golf. The three drinks I took ruined whatever chances I had of winning the title."

It was the old, old story. It was true when the race began, and it will still be true at the crack of doom. Drink lowers efficiency and pulls one down from the peaks of skill and the eminence of ability to the foothills of mediocrity.

The young player who told me the above incident probably did not know that long before science began to formulate the specific harmful effects of alcohol, keen observers and thinkers among the ancients had sounded warnings against its dangers. Thus Plato observed: "I should prefer the Carthaginian law to the effect that nobody while on military duty must ever taste this drink, but must keep entirely to water the whole time; that in the city no slave, either male or female, must taste wine at any time; nor the presidents during their year of presidency; nor the helmsmen, nor the judges when on duty; neither must any one do so who is taking part in any deliberation of importance; nor, speaking generally, must any one drink during the day, save in view of physical exercise, or at night when he or she intends to procreate children. And many other occasions might be mentioned when intelligent peo-

ple possessed of a proper custom abstain from wine.”

Nerves: Ally of Enemy?

One does not become a drunkard over night. Like all other habits, it develops slowly and stealthily through the frequent repetition of single acts. Finally a groove is formed in the nervous system, with the result that a physiological thirst and a mental craving for alcoholic liquor are begotten. When one first detects the beginning of such a craving, he should recognize it as a danger signal.

It is saying: “The nerve cells are no longer neutral. They have developed an artificial thirst. Whether you are thirsty or not, they are clamoring to be satisfied. Pretty soon, they will be ruling you, instead of you ruling them.”

That is what the victim of every habit speedily learns. He has abdicated the sovereignty over his own life in favor of some habit which has sunk its tentacles deep into his nervous system. It is no longer what his mind and will and conscience decree, but what his nerves decree, that counts.

Probably no one else has depicted so clearly the neurological basis of habit and has pointed out so vividly the ethical implications of habit formation as has William James. In his classic chapter on Habit, he says:

“The physiological study of mental conditions is thus the most powerful ally of hortatory ethics. The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its ever so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson’s play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, ‘I won’t count this time!’

“Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work.”

Is It Worth While?

Each separate act sets up a tendency to be repeated. Since this is particularly true of the young, in whom new habits are most easily formed, it is important for every youth who is starting the practice of drinking to ask himself: Is it worth while to expose myself to the danger of becoming a habitual drinker with its menace to my physical, intellectual and moral welfare? Am I not better off to preserve my present freedom from the tyranny of such a habit that has spelt disaster to countless men and women? I have nothing to gain, and everything to lose. Why then should I run such a needless risk?

Social pressure is doubtless responsible for much of the drinking of young people. They go to parties where drinks are passed around. They feel that social custom and the spirit of good fellowship require them to indulge. They do not wish to assume the "holier than thou" attitude, or to appear out of step with their friends, or to throw a "wet blanket" on the gaiety of the party. Provided moderation is observed, no blame can be attached to social drinking.

The danger lies in the fact that the indulgence may easily pass the bounds of moderation under the temptation to outdo one another in conviviality and in so-called fun-making. A second danger is

that there may be enkindled a craving which will later drive the individual to extremes. This seems to be true particularly of persons of a certain type of nervous temperament which quivers with restlessness until the constantly expanding craving is completely satisfied. This leads to the tragedy of habitual intoxication.

A Dangerous Transition

The stealthy manner in which occasional social drinking passes over into habitual private indulgence is illustrated in the following incident.

"Father," said a young man to me recently, "I never dreamed that I would develop a passion for liquor. I never drank until after marriage. Then we began to attend parties where it was the custom for all to take a few highballs as an expression of good fellowship. At first I did it only under the compulsion of social custom.

"Gradually a liking for it developed. I began to take a bottle or two along in the car with me, as I am a traveling salesman. *Then I made the great mistake of my life. I began to drink alone.* While waiting for the man I was to see, I would take a drink or two to relieve the dreariness of a long wait.

"Before I realized it, the habit had a grip on me which I could not shake. Like all toppers, I imagined everyone else was tipsy except myself.

Then reports began to reach my employer that I was slipping, that I was becoming wobbly and unsteady. I had the fight of my life to quit. The craving tortured me and I suffered the agony of the lost.

“Thank God! I finally won. But if I could utter one warning to the youth and the men of America, it would be: Avoid the habit of drinking alone. It will get the best of every one.

“Social drinking is dangerous enough, but *private drinking is fatal.*”

The Safe Course

The Church encourages all young people to take the pledge until they are twenty-one. The advent of Prohibition has interrupted a custom that was widespread in the parishes of America—the custom of administering the pledge to children at the time of their first Holy Communion. Now with the repeal of Prohibition, this custom might well be renewed. Even after reaching the age of twenty-one, *it is highly praiseworthy to continue total abstention.* In the judgment of the writer, this is the safer and the wiser course for the majority to follow. If some indulgence is desired, it might well be confined to beer and light wines, to the complete exclusion of hard liquor loaded as it is with dynamite and with latent tragedy. The

health of the body and mind is better if one abstains completely. Total abstinence is good for the pocketbook, the health, the happiness, the efficiency, and the integrity of character of every man, woman and child. Why not choose the better, the safer and the nobler path?

If a person has become a victim of the habit of intemperance, then he should wage ceaseless war to exterminate it. He should avail himself of the valuable assistance which medical science affords. In addition he should have recourse to prayer, mortification, and the frequent reception of confession and Holy Communion.

If a person elicits the strong and sincere purpose of amendment which the valid and fruitful reception of confession requires, he will find that the frequent reception of this sacrament will put the axe to the root of his sinful habit and speedily eradicate it. The proper disposition of amendment implies the avoidance of all the near occasions of his previous downfalls.

The Church says with confidence therefore that the person who really wants to wean himself of this vicious habit will find in the frequent reception of penance and in frequent, even daily, Holy Communion a remedy of unfailing effectiveness. No person can maintain that he is sincere in his professed desire to conquer the habit of intemperance if he remains away for long periods

of time from the sacraments which Christ instituted for his rescue and regeneration. Sincerity implies the willingness to use the means necessary to achieve an end. A refusal to do so brands one as patently insincere.

Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization of former victims, now exists in many large cities and is doing excellent work in helping to rescue present victims. Their cardinal point is that the individual must acknowledge that drink has him whipped, that by himself he is hopeless, and that he must appeal to a higher Power to help him. This means essentially that he must pray to God for aid.

“Take Heed to Yourselves”

In conclusion, the Church holds before the people of the world the great ideal of temperance. To all to whom temperance might prove difficult to maintain, she counsels the safer path of complete abstinence. Many will agree with Samuel Johnson when he says “*Abstinence is as easy to me as temperance would be difficult.*” She urges young people to preserve the innocence of their youth unsullied by the habit of drink. She thunders in the ears of the mature the mighty mandate: “Be temperate or abstain altogether.”

She asks that when you ride along the hard roads, and see the innumerable taverns with their

signs, "Dine and Dance," that you think of that other sign which symbolizes the great moral need of America today—the figure of Father Mathew with his right arm raised aloft exhorting the people to take the pledge of temperance. It is the symbol of power and self-control, the symbol of voluntary, not compulsory, abstention from drink. That figure of the great Apostle of Temperance we hold up before the eyes of the people of America. On its pedestal we write the words of the Divine Master of Nazareth, Jesus Christ Himself: "Take heed to yourselves lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness . . . and that day come upon you suddenly."

Character Formation



A STORY OF HABITS AND IDEALS

• *Character Formation* is a pamphlet which was written to be sold—and sold big—for it reaches out and appeals to each one of us. It is unquestionably Father O'Brien's best pamphlet and he has written many.

• What do we mean by character? How can I build a strong character? How can I improve my character? How can I eliminate defects which are causing it to sag under the pressure of temptation and the strain of adversity? Father O'Brien answers these questions and others and shows the effect of heredity, environment, ideals and habit on the molding of character.

• An eight-lesson discussion club questionnaire is appended for the use of study clubs and classes. Single copy 10c, 100 copies \$6.25 postpaid. Published by The Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York, N. Y.



Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

presenting his new pamphlet says:

"If ever there was sounded an SOS for character, for ethical insight and moral stamina, a world in chaos and in agony is gasping that call now. The folly of trying to build a new world if we do not likewise improve the builder finds apt expression in the lines of Edwin H. Markham:

"We are all blind until we see
That in the human plan,
Nothing is worth the making
If it does not make the man.

"Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilt goes?
In vain we build the world unless
The builder also grows."

