

[R509 : page 6]

THE BREAD AND THE WINE.

EDITOR WATCH TOWER: – I read your article in the April number upon "The Passover," and am well pleased with it. I believe the Lord's Supper is the Christian's substitute for the Jewish Passover, and should be observed annually; but upon one point you did not speak out. I refer to the kind of wine to be used in this Supper. You suggested that "unleavened bread" be used, which I think is perfectly correct, but I ask, What kind of wine should be used? You teach correctly, I think, that leaven is the type of sin, etc., and therefore not a fit type of Christ's purity. I think the same of fermented, or leavened wine. It is not pure, and therefore not a fit emblem of Christ's blood! But you did not teach us that we ought to use fresh, pure wine instead of the kind that "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

Can any substance be a proper emblem of Christ's pure and precious blood after that substance has fermented and becomes poisonous? I conclude that good wine is just as important to a proper celebration of the Lord's Supper as unleavened bread. Hoping you will think and speak of these things, I am yours truly.

P. D. LANE.

OUR RESPONSE.

In our desire to do nothing to hinder the cause of Total Abstinence, with which we sympathize, we have heretofore refrained from commenting specially on the subject mentioned above, but a number of inquiries, recently, show that the subject is active and needs a reply.

We remark first, that there are many things about our climate and the restless, excited methods of our day, which almost inevitably lead men to excessive use of intoxicating liquors when once its use is commenced. Not only so, but it seems evident that most of the intoxicating liquors, manufactured at the present time, are drugged and adulterated in a manner that greatly increases the dangers and evils resulting from their use.

For these reasons we give the Prohibitionists our sympathy, either in the enforcement of the present laws against those who adulterate liquors, or we should rejoice if they be able (which we doubt) to procure the enactment of new laws which would entirely stop its manufacture and sale. But this, we think, will not be accomplished until the prince of this world – Satan – is bound.

But notwithstanding our sympathy – notwithstanding also our knowledge of the fact that the sympathies and prejudices, too, of a majority of our readers is on the side of Total Abstinence – yet, if we speak, it must be what we consider truth – truth, no matter whose idol is broken or whose theories suffer; and here it is:

The claim is often repeated by zealous temperance advocates, that the Bible never countenances the use of intoxicating wine. They say that the wine Jesus made and drank was simply grape juice and not wine, and that a different Greek word is used when referring to these different liquors. We answer that this is a mistake. The Greek word *gleukos*, which means grape juice or "new wine," occurs but once in the New Testament (Acts 2:13), and its use there indicates that, if used to excess, it would confuse the mind. The word from which wine is translated, in every other instance in the New Testament, is *oinos*, and signifies grape wine of the usual sort, which always intoxicates when used to excess.

As to whether oinos will intoxicate please note the following texts: "Be not drunk with wine, oinos, wherein is excess." Eph. 5:18. See also 1 Pet. 4:3; Luke 1:15 and 7:33,34.

But, it is suggested, that if wine contains the elements of leaven it would prove that it was not what Jesus used in instituting "the Supper." We will admit, that if this were so, it would prove what is claimed; but it is not so. Temperance orators may and do, make this statement, doubtless often ignorantly, but scientific men recognize quite a difference between alcoholic or vinous fermentation and putrefactive fermentation. The result of the former process is to cast out impurities and produce a sweet and pleasant liquid as in wine, while the other process produces sourness and ultimately rottenness. This last process is employed in leavening bread, the decay or fungus growth being arrested in its very early development by baking.

So far as the Jewish custom is concerned, it disproves instead of proves the claim that wine contains the leaven quality, for the Jews use wine at the Passover and put away leaven. They use the REAL wine. The claim that unfermented grape-juice was what the Lord used, we can see to be incorrect in another way: The vintage season in Palestine was September and October, and the Passover was about six months later. The wine made in October would of necessity be fermented before April.

The testimony of Jesus is that old wine is better than new (Luke 5:39; John 2:10); and the fact that the wine they used did ferment, is shown by the parable concerning the putting of new wine (in which alcoholic fermentation was not finished) into old bottles [skins] which had been used before, and, having lost their elasticity, would burst under the expansion of gasses caused by the ferment.

But, as before remarked, the circumstances, climate, etc., here, as well as the purity of the liquors, differ much from those of Jesus

and the Apostles; and if any one should feel himself endangered by tasting wine at the remembrance of our Lord's death, we would [R509 : page 7] recommend that such a one should use raisin-juice instead, which, though not wine, is certainly a "fruit of the vine." We provide the raisin-juice every year, but it was used by only one person at our last celebration of the Supper.
