

M. C. T. U. NOTES.

THE FIDELITY OF WOMAN.

Re. John W. Diggle, M. A.
A man gives up a sinking cause sooner than a woman does. The men ran away from the cross; the women were faithful unto death. Men like the winning side; women are champions of the desperate hope. Deborah saved Israel, and Joan of Arc delivered France when no man could be found to lead an enterprise so unpromising. The men outran one another to catch a glimpse of the risen and victorious Christ; but is doubtful whether they would have gone to the sepulchre at all simply for the sake of embalming the dead and defeated Christ.

Women, too, linger in memory over the past with a richer tenderness than men. Women are retrospective; men anticipative. Women tarry long, with a fidelity painful and sweet, over the recollections of their childhood and the little incidents of their betrothal and buried faces of their lost children.

JOAN OF ARC.

Rose E. Cleveland.
Unassisted by tradition, stripped of romance and invention, we find that a few simple pictures make the panorama of her life. A little peasant maiden doing lowly service in the cottage home at Domremy; a mail-clad maiden leading forth her soldiers from the gates of Orleans; two faithful feet on fogs at Rouen; a radiant face uplifted to the beckoning skies; a crucifix upheld in shriveling, flame-kissed hands; a wreath of smoke for shroud; a wreck of smoke for pall; a heap of ashes, and—a franchised soul.

The enduring quality of this wonderful figure of the centuries is the common quality. If I know anything for certain of the individual Joan, it is only because I know something for certain of her sisters of to-day. I see, indeed, in her, some characteristics of her age which must tinge her character, and which, not being characteristic of our age, cannot tinge ours. The monstrous superstitions of her times are broken bubbles of thin air in our agnostic century. The dense ignorance of her day cannot be repeated in any after time. The blind fanaticism of that age is wholly fled. And yet superstition, ignorance, fanaticism remain; and unless we can share in this our luminous century that one priceless gift of God, which, in this poor shepherd girl, along with her ignorance and superstition and fanaticism, was her power, and must be our power, if we have any, then we may well put this complex age, full of knowledge and discovery, into the balance against that age, and watch in vain for any turning of the scales in our favor.

Faith! faith! that was Joan's lever—the lever by which that little head moved the world—literally moved the world, for Orleans was France, and England was the world. Let no one dream that Joan was very clever; let no one dream that she was a military genius.

Her power was but the power which many another woman may have—the power of a buoyant, masterful faith in God, in herself, in humanity, and a will to come to the rescue. It is good to make acquaintance with her—with her, not with some wretched travesty of her. For in her we contemplate not military genius, not surpassing cleverness, not superhuman wisdom, but we do, if we will, contemplate goodness and purity.

We can no one of us afford to count the story of Joan of Arc an idle tale. Let what archives will be opened to contradict or alter dates, detail irrelevant facts, the essential truth which Joan's life stands for, the character which Joan's career reveals, remains unaltered and unalterable, of far greater significance to us as a spiritual truth than as the historical fact. Joan of Arc saved France, indeed, and raised the siege of Orleans, but this is not all her immortality. She has entered as a spiritual force into inheritance of the ages, and become a practical influence in human lives.

THE CHURCH AND PROHIBITION.

Gen. Clinton B. Fisk.
The Christian church ought to lead in this great reform. It is her peculiar province to do so; but as the liquor traffic belongs to the department of crimes, the strong arm of the law and legal force must be combined with moral force for its suppression. The state must write in its constitution, and on its tables of law, and thunder from its political Sinai, "Thou shalt not!" Now the state throws the mantle of respectability his calling; it permits him to walk your streets as the equal of your most respected citizen. He opens his door upon the public avenue, and in the open day drives his infamous business by the side of the merchant, the butcher and the baker. The saloon power has become defiant and contemptuous. It sits supreme in the national Congress. It is a governing power in the courts of justice. It makes the ministers of the law its lackeys. It sits by the editor at his desk, and dictates what he shall write. It tears the teachings of hygiene and the evil effects of drink from the school books of our children. It flaunts its contempt in the faces of our noble women, whose voices are raised all over this land that God may stay the devil. It would destroy this government of the people, by the people, for the people, and make in the government of the saloon, by the saloon; and then asks you and me with a sneer, "What are you going to do about it?" Let our answer be full and free, sounding afar, from pulpit and platform, from church and caucus, from the prayer-meeting and the ballot-box, and the agitation will not be outlawed by organic provisions ordained by the people, and shall cease to be a factor in our politics and a dishonor to our Christian civilization! Let us fling full in the face of the rum power our reliance of immediate absolute prohibition. The conflict will be sharp, but from the death grapple truth will rise unbruised and victorious, and the names of her defenders will be written in sublimity over the portals of a saved nation. All this is to be secured by the union of all good forces.

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