

TEMPERANCE.

For the Colonial Churchman.

Messrs. Editors,

On Wednesday, October 24th, a most interesting meeting of the Aylesford Temperance Society was held, and attended by several influential members of the adjoining Societies. The meeting was addressed by Dr. Van Buren of Cornwallis, whose permission has been obtained for the publication of the Address in the Colonial Churchman.

There is much cause to fear that the negligence of the friends of the Temperance Cause is opening a wide door for the return of evil habits throughout the Province: a fact which may render the publication of the accompanying address peculiarly useful at the present period.

In the hope that this may be the case, I remain, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

HENRY L. OWEN,
President of the Society.

Aylesford, October 26th, 1838.

"It is not my design on this occasion to go minutely into the rise and progress of Temperance Societies; with this I may suppose you to be perfectly familiar: nor shall I dwell on the incalculable benefits that have resulted from their institution;—these are, many of them palpably evident, and within the recollection of all present. Nor will it be requisite at this time, to depict the baneful and ruinous consequences of its opposite, Intemperance: with these I must conclude you are sufficiently conversant, and need no argument to convince you that it brings down to train all the fiendish propensities so congenial to man depravity, and eventually, unless a stronger than ours interpose, leads to the chambers of death and dark despair; the unhappy victim sinks into the grave with all the horror of accumulated guilt unpitied and unlamented.—But let us rise from these general heads, leaving them for more mature reflection, and subsequent consideration, and proceed to execute the purpose for which we are at this time convened, viz:—To revive our good cause, and procure for it a new impetus, and so to arm its advocates that they may become invincible, and ultimately triumph in the achievement of a complete and glorious victory.

Some time since I enjoyed the privilege of addressing you on the same subject of Temperance, when expatiated on its hallowed influence, and portrayed its happy effects on the community at large. At this time I would appear before you in the way of duty, to revive if possible this slumbering cause, by personal conviction of its imperious demands, not only by the obligation we are under of enforcing its principles in all their energy on members of Temperance Societies generally, but by laudable and unflinching effort to enlighten and convince the understanding of those who are yet without the pale of the Society, that they too may be brought within its salutary influence, and exercise their powers and abilities in the extension of its benevolent principles and promulgation of its numbers; thereby evincing to a gainsaying world, that we are advocating the claim of humanity, that we are espousing a virtuous cause which is now lying prostrate, and that we are especially endeavouring to rescue coming generations from impending ruin, and if possible to usher them into an atmosphere unimpregnated with the fumes of noxious distillation, where they may imbibe and cultivate all the moral virtues, emulous to excel in the dignified principles of philanthropy, diffusing happiness to all around by living in conformity with the dictates of an enlightened conscience, imparting the comforts of an elevated humanity, and enjoying all the comforts incidental to a well ordered life and conversation. As this great good (so far as man is con-

cerned) cannot efficiently be accomplished until alcohol with all its mixtures is abolished, and thereby brought into disuse, I have hastily thrown together a few promiscuous and scattered hints, without regard to method, hoping thereby, 1st—to fully satisfy those who are already members, that duty calls upon them to be active in the furtherance of so great an object, indefatigable in bringing it to a happy issue; and 2dly. to convince, if the thing be possible, those who have not yet enlisted under our banner, that they are called upon to aid us by their united energies, and that if they do not come forward, they refuse absolute duty, and must abide the awful consequences in the day of final retribution; but it is my intention to be brief, in order that those better qualified, may have time for an exhibition of their sentiments and views on this inexhaustible subject.

In the first place, I would address myself to those who are members of a Temperance Institution. It is a fact well known to every ordinary capacity, that a Society is composed of individuals, and that each individual sustains a relative part of its functions; and in order that it may be happily cemented, the whole must act in unison, and keep their concentrated energies in lively operation; and as each has his sphere of action assigned him, and is authoritatively required to do all the good he can in his day and generation in order to fulfil his responsibility thus arising from his relative situation; we are continually reminded that we have a duty to discharge, and that we should perform it in reference to our own comfort, and to the enjoyment of those with whom we are connected by the more immediate ties of consanguinity and friendship, or by the common bonds of society. Now we must reasonably conclude, that every man is in pursuit of happiness, and that it is the primary object of all to obtain it, however diversified the means, and that no man can be said to be rationally happy who does not aim to impart the same blessing to others; and as there is a mutual dependence in himself, independent of this social connexion, he is induced to look for its origin abroad, and having put his ingenuity and reason to the test, discovers it issuing apparently from various quarters and brought to a focus in himself; possibly conscious in some small degree of the inexhaustible source of all his blessings. Now, having discovered this great good, and that it did not commence with him, we must suppose him particularly solicitous to impart the boon to others; and unless he is privileged so to do, his own happiness and comfort is lessened in proportion.

But a few years since Intemperance was desolating the land, was mowing with gigantic strides from one extremity to the other, destroying by thousands the fairest portion of omnipotent creation: a few of the wise and good stood forth in arrest of the general devastation; they deliberated, they devised the way of frustrating the enemy, and effecting an escape from his destructive grasp. Temperance Societies have been formed and put in operation; through their instrumentality an amount of good has been accomplished beyond computation; a minus of that good has been apparent to us all. For a time, society appeared to be reorganized; every thing assumed a new aspect; the social and moral virtues were extensively cultivated, and man began to walk erect: but as time advanced, and we were not on the alert, we are now taken as it were by surprise, finding to our astonishment that the enemy was not subdued, but had sought safety in retreat, and has again erected his formidable crest to wage destructive war with his slumbering and improvident adversary. He is rapidly advancing to the charge with all his hostile forces, and exultingly challenges us to the combat. Shall we give back, and shrink from the attack, armed as we are with truth, reason, conscience, and above all with the sword of the Spirit? Shall we not rather concentrate our forces, and he-

roically advance to his ultimate defeat and final extirpation! Methinks I hear you exclaim with one voice, Let us awake from our lethargy, gird on our armour, advance in the strength and under the auspices of Omnipotent approbation, conquering and to conquer, until every trace of the enemy with the ravages he has committed be completely and forever obliterated from the earth. Will any rational being in the moment of sober reflection say, that we are not imperiously called upon to make an active and increasing effort for the accomplishment of this great moral renovation? Will he not rather say—conviction obliges, duty calls, and conscience impels me to put forth my energies for the general good, by a zealous advocacy of this sterling cause, and disseminating its principles, encouraging its members, augmenting its numbers, strengthening its bonds? Inasmuch as he is under the benign influence of hallowed feelings and principles, he will be constrained to answer in the affirmative, and evince by his conduct that he is solicitous for the general welfare, by putting forth his powers in ameliorating their sufferings, by removing the cause far from them. When I cast my eye over this assembly and see the persons of influence of which it is composed, I feel fully persuaded, that much, very much might be accomplished by putting your talents and your influence into active operation; and I am equally conscious, that there is not a person within the sound of my voice, but most unhesitatingly say, that it is unequivocally the imperative duty of all members of temperance societies thus to exert themselves in order to redeem their pledge. Now, as we have been certified by ocular and mental demonstration, in innumerable instances, that as Temperance prevailed and its fundamental principles were imparted, just so far did the Society wear a new and pleasing aspect; and in proportion as members relaxed in promulgating their tenets—advocating their demands, and sustaining their promises by a uniformity of consistent conduct, I would say, that in like proportion have our societies retrograded;—these considerations, apart from any thing that has on this occasion been said, should of themselves be amply sufficient to call up our vigilant attention to the object of this meeting, which is, to revive the cause in all its energies and extensiveness.—Duty does not whisper, it calls aloud, and speaks emphatically and indiscriminately to us all, to be at our posts, and acquit ourselves like men in vindication and support of the claims of injured humanity.—I would not be understood to say, that I deem coercive measures efficient; far from it, I rather think they would have a repelling influence; but I would advocate and earnestly instil the superior advantages of persuasion and consistency; that the understanding may be enlightened, the reason informed, and the whole man be brought to a full adoption of our principles, from a strong conviction of duty. Much might be urged in vindication and support of this sentiment; but being apprehensive that I may exceed the prescribed limits, and thus trespass on your time and patience, not leaving room for those better qualified, and who are to succeed me—I will pass on to address myself concisely to such are yet standing aloof.

Some are probably halting between two opinions; others resolutely determined to resist every effort we put forth for the advancement of the cause, and promulgation of its benign principles. To you I would say, (if any such be present) pause and deliberate; consider yourselves as men placed on earth in a probationary state for some wise purpose;—know that you are accountable beings, amenable to a superior Power for your conduct, not for a part, but for the whole;—recollect there is a monitor within you to reprove; and as often as that monitor exclaims against you, be assured you are transgressing the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and must give account to Him who implanted that hallowed