

pathies and prayers of the Synod. On motion agreed the letter be courteously acknowledged and that any funds that may be sent in along with the \$10 on hand be forwarded along with the letter.

### TEMPERANCE.

The Report on Temperance was read by Rev. John MacLeod:

Your Committee regret that they cannot give a more favourable report regarding the decrease of intemperance, or the abatement of the causes by which it is produced. The manufacture, importation, sale and use of intoxicating liquors seem to have undergone no diminution during the past year. The drinking customs of society are still so largely patronized by all classes, under the terms "moderate," "respectable," and "occasional," that the power and influence of the evil are continually being manifested in the history of its victims, as it is ever bearing testimony to the divine declaration, that "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging, whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Your Committee regard the vice of intemperance as one of the greatest that exists in our land. It is a moral, a social, and a physical evil. Alcohol is declared by the best authorities to be a *cerebral poison*. It directly attacks the muscles and the brain when taken into the system. As a moral evil, therefore it differs from almost all other sins, and outstrips them in its disastrous results, because it is the only sin which is the direct and wilful extinction of reason. It is a social evil, because it is the main cause of poverty, crime, insanity, ignorance, and numerous other evils, tending to social debasement and personal demoralization. It is a physical disease, a fondness, a passion, a sort of madness for drink, produced by drink which grows and strengthens by indulgences, until the poor devotee, dead at length to all appeals, entreaties, and arguments, holds out the cup in palsied hand to cry, give, give; and finally yields to that current that bears health and property, wife and children, soul and body, down, down into one common and eternal ruin."

O., surely the kind hearts it is daily breaking, the happy homes it is blighting, the fair characters it is ruining, the innocent children it is beggaring, and starving, and murdering, the gray hairs it is bringing down with sorrow to the grave, and above all the precious souls it is sinking down to eternal perdition—surely all these proclaim it to be an evil of the most gigantic proportions, and call earnestly and loudly for the combined and continued and prayerful efforts of all great and good men.

We fearlessly charge intemperance with being the cause of more than one half of the crime, poverty and wretchedness that exist in the civilized world; with furnishing the largest number of inmates to our jails, asylums, and poor houses; with being one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of the gospel and one of the most powerful weapons in the hand of the great enemy for the ruin of precious souls. And yet this evil is upheld and protected by law, and patronized by a large proportion of the wealthy and fashionable of the world, and even, alas! by professing christians. Now we feel ourselves warranted in laying it down as a general principle that man has no right to legalize the sale of alcoholic drinks as a beverage, because, as such, it results only in evil to men, whether viewed as a physical, intellectual, moral or immortal being, and in this view we are supported by a large array of great and good men. We lay it down as another general principle that if the pure, self-sacrificing spirit of Christianity constrained the apostle Paul, lest his example should be a stumbling block to the weaker brethren, to adopt this magnanimous resolution, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no more flesh while the world stands, lest I make my brother to offend," Surely in this advanced age of the world's history the same unchanged and unchangeable principles render it obligatory on every Christian, not only for his own sake but for the sake of his weaker brethren to abstain entirely from the use of all intoxicating liquors and to use all legitimate means to reclaim the erring and to prevent others from falling victims to this tremendous evil.

Of course the first cause of intemperance is the depravity of human nature, and consequently the foremost of all remedies is the spread of the Word, and the faithful, earnest preaching of the gospel; but nevertheless, there are causes acting upon and through the depravity of our nature, which are the immediate causes of this evil, and which may be modified or prevented by means suited to their nature and origin. If then we look around us for the causes of the prevalence of intemperance, we shall find them to be principally, (1) False notions and estimates of the nature of intoxicating drinks; (2) The social fashions and usages of society; and (3) The great number of taverns and dram shops to be found in our cities, and towns, and villages, and throughout our whole land, presenting to young and old, temptations to indulgences, which alas! in many cases they are unable to resist. Did these dram shops and dens of hell give up their secrets as the sea does its drowned cast upon the beach we should have a roll, like the prophet's written