

ABSTRACT OF ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN TEMPERANCE UNION.

We find a report of proceedings of the Twelfth Anniversary of the American Temperance Union, in their Journal, but our space precludes us doing more than giving the following abstract of the Report :

The executive Committee meet their patrons and friends on this, their twelfth anniversary, with feelings of gratitude for what God hath wrought, but with undisguised indignation and deepening distress at the desolating tide which still sweeps over us. In this most free, most happy, and most prosperous of all lands, the model for foreign States now bursting from centuries of iron bondage into life, a traffic exists, licensed by law, protected by Government, and even sustained by public sentiment, which turns thousands into idiots and fiends, burdens the community with unendurable taxation, fills jails and poor houses with miserable victims, and sweeps thousands prematurely and wretchedly from time to eternity. Twenty-three million gallons of pure alcohol, in various mixtures, here annually pass from vender to customer, and are consumed by less than 20 millions of people. In Great Britain, 24 million gallons of this most subtle and destructive poison are consumed by 25 millions of people. In Prussia, 15,900,000, by about 15 millions of people. And in France, gay, volatile, tragical France, 137 millions by 32 millions of people. In these five countries, according to official reports, are expended year by year 546 million dollars for intoxicating beverages. In the two most Christian nations, England and America, one hundred thousand persons perish annually from drunkenness. The alcoholic mania of the West and the opium of the East would soon, if unobstructed and unrestrained, make our world the dark abode of death and despair. The temperance reformation, as it checks and destroys the one, will ultimately check and destroy the other. Here is hope for man. Our amazement is that it rolls on no faster. Twenty years have done great things for us ; great things for Ireland—great things for Britain, Germany, Sweden, and the islands of the sea ; and we may this day tell of triumphs without a parallel in man's conflict with vice. But why move the wheels so slowly ? Why, when all departments of society, the domestic circle, the traveller on his journey, the navigator on the ocean, the mechanic in his shop, the agriculturist in the field, the merchant in his trade, the manufacturer amid his machinery, the minister in his flock, all see the value of temperance. Why, on every side, is there such a desperate struggle to move forward and to hold to-day what was gained yesterday ? But light is spreading. Revolutions, political and moral, succeed revolutions. The upheaving masses are seeking improvement. Man is becoming acquainted with his physical system. The delusion and darkness of past days is fleeing away, and the barbarous drinking customs of the middle leaden age must cease for ever. Then drunkenness will flee away. A manufacturer and vender of the poison can no more live in human society, than a savage tormentor who would sink his tomahawk daily into the head of his brethren.

The past year has been rendered signal by an antagonistical spirit in several Legislatures to the will of the people, expressed at the ballot box. The people have said in their sovereignty, we will no more license crime and the parent of crime. The politician, willing to please the vender, has said you shall no longer give such an expression to your feelings, and the very courts have decided that it is unconstitutional. The people can make no law. The State of New York after condemning the licensed traffic by a majority of 68,000 votes has again put on the yoke, and the vender pursues, unmolested, his business. In the State of Vermont, a majority of 8,000 of her hardy freemen had said, "Down with the tyrant !" but at a second election she has an even balance. In the Granite State, the people have instructed the Legislature by a vote of two to one to make a prohibitory statute. But whether the Legislature will dare obey the people remains to be seen. In Massachusetts the Legislature are this moment hesitating whether they shall strike for liberty or let the distillers and rich rumsellers lead her sons to the slaughter. Maine holds to her integrity and shuts out the traffic. Rhode Island is almost free. New Jersey has spoken well through the ballot box, but her voice has been silenced. In Pennsylvania and Delaware a reference of the law making power to the people has been pronounced unconstitutional by the courts, and the rum power triumphs. Ohio and the new States at the West are shaking off this worse than wild beast of the forest, but the struggle is desperate. Up every mighty river, stream, and rivulet is forced the poison. The rich man and the men of fashion ridicule our enterprise, and young men, hating restraint, will not be bound by its chains. The tide of foreign immigration and the war with Mexico have strengthened the manufacturer and the vender in the belief that they shall never want a market ; while the returning cargoes of gold and flesh from Africa, have made them clap their wings for joy in their horrid business ! Many reformed men have returned to their cups—not a matter of surprise in view of the strength of their appetite and the power of temptation. Rum tragedies of frightful character blacken almost every paper that issues from the press, till the very men who have been hostile to our movement and voted license have started back affrighted, and asked what shall we do ? The people demand protection, and protection they will have. No man has a right to carry on a business which is injurious to others ; and, though he may be held liable for damage, the voice of the people is, he shall do no damage. The Committee believe the legislation of the land is far behind the voice of the people. And if Legislatures could be chosen simply on the temperance question, there is scarce a State in the land which would not return a temperance legislature. The rum power creeps into the legislature through a thousand loop holes, and rules the nation.

Our cause has the active co-operation and support of many Governors of States, Judges of Courts, Senators and Representatives in Congress, Legislative Societies, Mayors of cities, Presidents of Colleges,