

ing all such cases, principles that are of general and easy application, and we are to apply these principles and act upon them in what we do. Total abstinence principles from the use of intoxicating liquors were practised with the sanction and approbation of the Word of God. These principles are taught us in the Word of God and the whole spirit of God's Word, and the spirit of the religion it teaches and enjoins is opposed to the use of that which leads to so much evil as the use of intoxicating liquors. Hence our Assembly says: "That the general traffic in intoxicating liquors is contrary to the teaching of Scripture and the spirit of the Christian religion," and if the traffic is wrong the countenancing of the traffic in any way is wrong also. And the evils of intemperance are so enormous and so terrible that we, as ministers and members of the Church, cannot be too careful in avoiding everything that countenances these evils, that we may be free from the blood of those who perish through this terrible evil.

I believe that the position which the Church should take on the temperance question is the position of total abstinence. I believe that every member of the Church should be a total abstainer from all the intoxicants, not from legislation by the Church, because the Church has no right to legislate with regard to such a matter, but from the power of the truth taught us in God's Word, and from the spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice the Christian lives manifested and enjoined in the religion that he has revealed. In fact, it has always been a wonder to me how those professing to be followers of Christ and to have imbibed His Spirit can act in any other way with regard to the use of that which leads to such enormous evils.

This is one position the Church should take on the temperance question and I am glad to say that our Church has taken that position, because amongst the resolutions the Assembly adopted are these:—

1. That the faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel is the first and essential element in the work of building up a temperate, prosperous and godly nation.
2. That the office-bearers and members of the Church be urged to practice and inculcate total abstinence as the only absolutely safe course to be followed.

That position of the Church is all right so far as resolutions are concerned, but it is one thing to pass resolutions of that kind and another thing altogether to have them carried out, and if these resolutions were carried out by all members of our Church in the spirit in which they are passed, a great step would be taken to the doing away with the evils of intemperance, but many, very many, of the members of our Church come far short of the requirements of these resolutions, and the question is how to get them to come up to them. I believe the one way to do that is to have the truth bearing on temperance and total abstinence principles more frequently and more earnestly proclaimed, pressed upon people's attention, and applied to their consciences to show them the great evils of intemperance and their duty to oppose and overcome these evils. I believe in the power of moral suasion. Much has already been accomplished by it, and much more remains yet to be done. Let us keep on trying to persuade men to abstain from all that leads to these great evils referred to in the resolution of our Assembly already quoted and at the same time to do all in their power to arrest and remove these evils. And we find that another resolution of our Assembly is: "That the importance of 'moral suasion' in promoting the temperance reform be emphasized, and that its continued and increased use be recommended." There is great power in "moral suasion," and let us use the power. It has accomplished much for other reforms, and it will accomplish much for this. The use of it, along with other means, will cause the temperance sentiment so to rise in the Church that she will be surprised and ashamed at the position she once occupied with regard to this matter, at her coldness and apathy in the presence of the great evils of intemperance. That has been the case with regard to other things, and we believe that it will yet be the case with regard to the temperance question. It was not very long since there were those in the Church who supported and advocated and defended the system of human slavery, but the system on this continent at least has been swept out of existence by the occurrence of important events, and how few will stand up for it and defend it now, and we hope that such may soon be the case with regard also to the evils of intemperance.

But is the Church to do no more than vigorously to proclaim the truth of God with regard to the subject of temperance and try by moral suasion to keep men from all the evils of intemperance? She has been doing that largely, and great good has been done, but the evils of intemperance have hardly visibly been lessened, because there are so many agencies at work for the producing of these evils in the extensive manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. There is no use trying to empty a cistern so long as there is as much water coming into it as you take out of it. And that is the way with drunkenness; you cannot cure it so long as there are so many manufactories of drunkards in active operation. So long as liquors are manufactured and sold as they are, they will be used, and so long as they are used there will be drunkenness and all the evils attending it. I think a very extensive experience has shown that. It seems almost like labour in vain to try to rescue the drunkard and prevent others becoming drunkards when there are so many means allowed to propagate all the evils of intemperance. Do away effectually with these means and you will soon do away with drunkenness and all its evils. Stop the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors and you will soon stop all the evils of intemperance.

Cut off the great sources of the evil and the evil will naturally cease. I have seen the efforts of temperance workers illustrated in this way. They are like people living on the banks of a river down which people are constantly seen floating and in danger of losing their lives. These people are kept busy in trying to rescue those that are in danger; but the thought comes to them, where do all these people that are in the river come from? They go away up the river in search of the cause of the state of things that produces so much anxiety and so much effort and they find that there are other people employed in casting their fellow-creatures into the river. They stop this wicked procedure, and then they have no more anxiety and are no more troubled in rescuing drowning people from the river. If we could stop those who are making drunkards by manufacturing and selling liquor we would be no more troubled in rescuing drunkards and trying to stop the evils that flow from drunkenness. Therefore the Church should aim at the total prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors and that is another position she has taken by resolution of the General Assembly. That, inasmuch as many are, through the influence of the liquor traffic, hardened to the appeals of the Gospel and the arguments of "moral suasion," and are made indifferent to the true interests of their fellow-men, or the welfare of their country, it is necessary, in order to protect the young, the weak and unwary from temptation and ruin and to restrain the lawless to invoke the aid of the law, so as to reduce and, if possible, extinguish these evils by wise legislation.

7. "That whilst the restriction of prohibitory features of existing liquor laws are gratefully acknowledged and should be persistently utilized, it is the conviction of this Assembly that no legislation short of prohibition, rigidly enforced by the proper civil authorities, will ever be sufficient to free our land from the terrible evils of intemperance, and that it is the duty of the Dominion Parliament to enact such a law." And if it is the duty of the Dominion Parliament to enact such a law, it is at the same time the duty of the people to do all in their power to get the Dominion Parliament to pass such a law.

But some one will say why appeal to the arm of the law; is not that to lose faith in the power of the Gospel to counteract and overcome, and overthrow all the evils that prevail? Not by any means. We have a command in the Word of God against stealing, but at the same time we have human laws to help to enforce the command of God against stealing. We have a command against murder, but at the same time we have human laws to help to enforce the command. We have a command Remember the Sabbath Day, etc., and at the same time we have human laws to help the proper observance of the Sabbath, but that is not to lose faith in the power of the Gospel, and why lose faith in the power of the Gospel when we ask the law to help us to do away with all the evils of intemperance. It seems to me to be a very wrong and short-sighted policy to maintain by authority of law the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors from which so many terrible evils result, and then to spend thousands upon thousands of dollars in punishing the crimes resulting from, in caring for the sickness caused, and in attending to the poverty arising from these things. Cut off the cause of so much crime and poverty and sickness and you will soon have none of these things to attend to. Some object to prohibitory legislation as interfering with personal liberty and so on—but the liberty of exposing ourselves to danger, and possibly leading others into evil, is no great sacrifice for the good of society. Society has the undoubted right to protect itself from such evils as those which flow from intemperance by prohibiting the cause of these evils. And society prohibits things from which no such evils flow as from intemperance.

Dr. Herrick Johnston has undoubtedly the best of legal authority when he says: "The legal prohibition of an act is solely on the ground of its evil effects upon society, and not at all on the ground of the inherent evil of the act itself." "The rightfulness or wrongfulness of an act has nothing whatever to do with prohibition of it by law. The amount and character of the evil effects upon others are what determines whether any given thing shall be prohibited or not. If the evils are open, public, imperilling public interests, disturbing public order, endangering property or human life, then the ground is furnished for prohibition." And surely the evils of intemperance are sufficient as a ground for the prohibition of all that leads to it. If these evils are not sufficient as such a ground, then no ground can ever be furnished for the prohibition of anything that is not wrong in itself.

It is easy to speak of prohibition, and to show it to be correct in principle, but it is a very difficult thing to get society to protect itself from the evils of intemperance by the prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, because, the traffic has been tolerated so long, has grown to such dimensions, because, there is so much money invested in it, and because, when prohibition is spoken of, those engaged in the business know their craft and their gains are in danger, and because society has become so apathetic and seems to look so leniently on the evils of intemperance. It will require a great deal of effort in the face of these things to which we have referred to get society to protect itself from evils to which it is exposed by prohibition. But the sentiment of prohibition is growing, and changes are brought about, and reforms advance more rapidly than they did formerly, so that before very long we may see the manufacture and sale of liquor prohibited by law. The position the Church should take on the temperance question is the position of total abstinence, and total prohibition by law. The advocacy of the one

helps the other. The Church has already taken these positions by resolution.

The next thing is to get the members of the Church to carry out these resolutions in their daily lives, to be total abstainers, and to use all proper efforts for the attaining of total prohibition. And if that were the case would it not be better in many respects for the Church and would not the abolition of the evils of intemperance be near its complete attainment. And may the Lord through the earnest and persevering efforts of His people and by His blessing hasten on such a glorious consummation.

X.

Alma, March 16, 1891.

#### TRIALS OF A HOME MISSIONARY.

MR. EDITOR,—Your readers were much pained a few weeks ago in reading of the trials, the losses and perils of our dear brethren, Macgillivray and McClure in Honan. Very few ever think that missionaries in the home field may have trials as severe in degree though different in kind. One such came under my notice recently and quite incidentally. Being treasurer for the Presbytery of Quebec I issued notices to the various congregations and mission stations calling for the quota due from each for the Synod and Presbytery Fund. From one of our ordained missionaries I received a letter in which he said among other things: "As regards the \$4 for the Synod, etc., I am sorry to say there is no money in the treasury. I have been now well nigh six months here, and all the money I received is \$40. We are almost in starvation. It was all right for Mr. —, who was here before me; he had means and could wait until the people and the Home Mission Committee paid him; but I have nothing but what the people and the Home Mission give. I would certainly have gone to the meeting of Presbytery, but I could not pay for my railway fare."

So far as contributions from the people are concerned, this dear brother, with a large family, must suffer until May, for such are the circumstances of the field that nothing can be expected until then. Doubtless there are other missionaries and ministers in weak congregations in other parts of Quebec, in Manitoba and the North-West—and possibly in Ontario—who endure like privations, of whose necessities the Church at large hears nothing. I leave the above quotation—which was never intended to come under the public eye—to speak for itself, and I suggest that it be read at missionary meetings, etc.

J. R. MACLEOD.

Kingsbury, Quebec, March, 1891.

#### GREAT NEED OF A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

MR. EDITOR,—Nine miles north of this town, in the Bruce Peninsula, in the Presbytery of Owen Sound, is a district called Couch Settlement, where the people have begun an effort to have a Presbyterian Church erected this coming summer. The people are new settlers and most of them are poor. Yet they are anxious to have a Church, are very appreciative listeners to the Gospel, and are friendly, polite people. For years they have worshipped in a log school-house, which is the only place of worship. They have supply in summer, in connection with other stations, by a Presbyterian student. The nearest church building of any kind is six miles south; the nearest Presbyterian Church is in Wiarton. In winter, when there is no student in the field, the people keep up a service of their own. Last summer I conducted a communion service there. The school-house was thronged. There was a very earnest spirit among the people. Nine new communicants were received, six of them by profession of faith. Near the school-house, on a hill, a piece of ground covered with maple trees has been chosen as a site for a church. Mr. James Anderson, of St. Andrew's Church, Guelph, has donated an acre of this ground for the purpose, and appointed three men among the people there to hold the ground in trust, besides contributing money. At his suggestion I write this statement for the information of Presbyterian people throughout Canada. Mrs. Couch has been down to Guelph and has collected \$65 from Mr. Anderson's friends. From there she has gone among some of her own relatives near Port Hope to solicit aid. The people of the settlement are ready to get out timber, haul it to the mill to be sawn into lumber, convey the lumber to the site, haul stone, lime, sand, and do all in their power to lessen the amount of actual money needed, of which they have not much. If they could get about \$200 in money, their own labour and materials would do the rest, and they could have their own church home under the spreading maples. There is real need there, the people are worthy, and no Presbyterian could help a much more deserving object. Let us help those who are trying to help themselves. If any will send contributions to me by mail I will publish names with amounts in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, and will faithfully account for the sums to the trustees appointed. I have a book of designs for a church, published by the Board of Church Erection of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, from which a plan of architectural beauty for a frame or even a log building, seated in circular form, and very cheap, can be selected.

GEORGE A. YEOMANS,

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Warton, County Bruce, Ont. P. O. Box 276.  
Warton, Ont., March 28, 1891.