

untold numbers, are becoming hardened by it, and weak brethren for whom Christ died are being seduced from the allegiance which they owe to their Divine Master.

A venerable ecclesiastical body, the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, has declared of intemperance that "next to the native depravity of the human heart, in which, like all other practical evils, it has its source, it is the most formidable obstacle to the success of religious instruction, and of the morals as well as the economical improvement of Society."

If this testimony be true, the subject which we submit demands the attention of every body of Christian office Bearers, met in the name of the Lord Jesus, and for the advancement of His kingdom; and we therefore appeal to your Christian principle and feeling, and submit the inquiry, Has all been done which is within your reach as a deliberative body, and also as individuals, to discountenance Intemperance and to remove its causes?

The vacant places of deceased inebriates are, alas, too rapidly filled up by a never failing supply, flowing (as it appears to us) from the *conventional usages of Society*, in reference to intoxicating drinks. So long as these are frequently used by all classes as a common beverage, their victims will be *Legion*, unless Science, history and experience unite in giving false testimony. Strong moral power, or other counteracting agencies, may often resist successfully, but when such power is weak, and other barriers feeble, *many will fall and perish*. Permit us then again to raise a question to be weighed and answered—Is it right in the Church to encourage, or even by her silence to tolerate usages fraught with such pernicious consequences; and can she safely recommend, to the young more especially, anything short of entire abstinence from that which inebriates?

The Church may pronounce her severest denunciations against drunkenness, and proceed to inflict her highest censures upon the intemperate. She may cut off members and cast out Office Bearers who have become vile through strong drink, but the question still recurs, and demands investigation. Is she not in a wrong position so long as she sanctions the unnecessary use of the productive source of all these evils?

In her membership we have a right to look for the "salt of the earth," and the "light of the world." What then must

be our disappointment, if these are found making gain out of the corruption of Society and the degradation of humanity? Is the prosecution of the liquor traffic, by the members of the Church, in these days of light, consistent with their avowed devotion to the service of God, and with the high ends of a religious Profession? And ought not the church, by wholesome discipline, to declare her conviction that such traffic is inimical to the cause of christianity?

For deliverance from these evils, we, in common with yourselves who are members of this Synod (or Conference or Association), look to the Gospel of Christ, and the blessing of the Holy Spirit on the application of Divine truth. Assured of the perfect adaptation of the Gospel to remove this and all other moral evils under the weight of which humanity now labours, our hope rests on Divine Power and Grace. Our Prayer is that this Heavenly Agency may be abundantly communicated, and it is because we believe that our own inconsistencies may deprive us of those spiritual influences which only can strengthen men to overcome the wicked one, and all his temptations, that we express our conviction, that extensive success in the application of the Gospel to the prevention and cure of Intemperance will not be realized, till its administrators themselves avoid, and teach their hearers to avoid, the unnecessary use of what has tempted, seduced and ruined myriads of our race.

Farther, as we look for deliverance from the Divine blessing on Divine truth, so also we anticipate that it will come through the Church, and will correspond with her zeal, piety and purity. Regarding her as Divine, and therefore immeasurably superior to merely human organizations, we consider the eradication of Intemperance as part of her legitimate work. Called as she is to testify against sin in all its forms, we would respectfully and earnestly invoke a more active "sympathy and co-operation" in the work of defending the young of this land from the seduction of the wine cup, and the fascination of strong drink.

May the Spirit of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Love, preside over all your deliberations; and on this subject guide you to such decisions as will give glory to God in the highest, produce peace on earth, and good will to men.

On behalf of the Committee,
J. M. CRAMP, Chairman.