

In accordance with the terms of this deliverance we desire earnestly and affectionately to greet you in the Lord, and to commend to your prayerful consideration the entire question to which it refers.

The subject is one of no ordinary importance and interest at the present time. It has occupied the attention of the highest ecclesiastical courts of other Churches as well as our own, and the united testimony of all is that the general use of intoxicating beverages is a great and terrible evil, and presents a powerful obstacle to the progress of pure religion and the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

The vice of intemperance is alarmingly prevalent, and exerts its insidious and malign influence among all classes of society. Its baneful effects are seen not only among the poor, the ignorant, the degraded and immoral, but also among the wealthy, the influential, the respectable, and the professedly religious. Neither age nor sex, rank nor class, station nor profession, is exempt. It ruthlessly drags its hopeless victims from every quarter, and its malignant reign casts its shadow over us all; no man is free from danger, no home secure from invasion. The vast army which, under its fatal spell, marches on through indigence, vice, impurity, profanity, recklessness and ruin, to a dishonoured grave and a hopeless future, is being ever recruited from the homes of the happy, the prosperous, and the moral, as well as from the hovels of the wretched, the outcast, and the vile.

It is utterly impossible fully to estimate the extent and magnitude of the evils—financial, social, moral and spiritual—which either accompany or flow from the use of alcoholic beverages, nor need we attempt the task, for many of them are patent to every observer, and few indeed, if any, are not called bitterly to grieve over them, and to suffer directly or indirectly in their persons or homes, their fame or fortune. Who of us has not had to weep over the folly, the fatuity, or the fall of some one over whom our hearts lovingly yearned?

The effects of the traffic in intoxicating liquors on the national industry, wealth, and prosperity, are most pernicious, in the loss of life, labour, capital, time and skill, which it involves, and in the pauperism, crime, waste and expenditure which it incurs or increases. Long ago one of England's greatest thinkers and most sagacious statesmen declared that "all the crimes on the earth do not destroy so many of the human race, nor alienate so much property, as drunkenness," a statement, the truth of which prolonged experience and wider observation only confirm. Indeed, so strikingly obvious are the blighting effects of drunkenness upon the welfare of a people, that few will be found to question the position that poverty, destitution and distress, in any community, will be found to be in proportion to the facilities furnished for the sale and consumption of intoxicating drinks. Nor are the injurious and ruinous effects of the traffic less marked upon the intelligence and morals of a people. The learned and pious Judge Hale remarked in his day that *four-fifths* of all the murders, manslaughters, burglaries, robberies, riots, tumults, and other enormities perpetrated by the vicious and punished by the law, were caused by excessive drinking, and were the result of tavern and alehouse meetings. The same thing may be truthfully averred to-day. Competent authorities declare, and common observation confirms the declaration, that a very large proportion of the crime, pauperism, and misery, the ignorance, squalor and wretchedness, the juvenile vagrancy, homelessness, and depravity exhibited in our streets, revealed in our police courts, confined in our jails, recorded in the columns of our daily journals, is the necessary and