

First then;—

What has been Prevented by the Temperance Work of Fifty Years.

Our age is an intensely practical one. In this respect it is sharply distinguished from any preceding equal period of the world's history. To be severely practical and to eschew mere theorizing is the "one thing" desired by very many; and this desire sometimes leads its possessor to carry his notion to extremes, and he becomes the most impracticable of mortals. This over-practical man crops up in every department of life. At one time, he makes his appearance in the church. He asks for a conference with the pastor and deacons, and thus he talks:

"You see I am a practical man. Now I have belonged to this church for 25 years. I have done my share in attending its meetings, in singing and exhorting, in paying and in praying, and what good has been done? People lie and steal and swear and cheat, and do wrong things quite as much as ever they did, and often they come out of the very pews of our church to do it. You see, we are effecting nothing. Now I am a practical man; we are really accomplishing nothing, and henceforth you must count me out from your work."

What reply shall we give to such a man? The only sufficient reply is to make to him, in turn, a practical proposition, and thus apply, as the doctors do, a counter-irritant.

And this shall be our counter—practical proposition.

Suppose we pass a law covering our whole country, enacting that, from now and on for twenty-five years, every Bible shall be closed, every church door shall be closely barred, and every Sabbath School dismissed, and that for twenty-five years no public warning or teaching from all these sources shall be heard.

What does our practical friend think would be the state of society at the end of that time? If with all our Bible, Pulpit, and Sabbath School teaching we are no better than we are, in the name of goodness

What should we be

if all these influences had been silenced for the twenty-five years past!

Is not our practical friend fairly answered: and is it not easily seen that his mistake lay in failing to take into account the preserving and preventing influence of the church? So, also, one comes to us and says,—“I have been a temperance man for full twenty-five years. Here we have been working, speaking and writing, and yet people drink and sell and manu-