

## THE TEMPERANCE CONFERENCE.

CONFERENCES called in the interest of a movement of some years activity, partake much of the nature of a consultation between expert physicians and the family doctor over an anxious case. In these days of open vision when every man prophecies, wherein a silent, *thinking* citizen is a curiosity, there can be but little chance of calling out any new wisdom for experimental guidance. Of Conference utterances it may usually be said, "What is new is not true, and what is true is not new." Most of the speakers and audience will be found to have often delivered themselves on the topics discussed, or read widely the ephemeral literature to which they have given birth. Still the holding of such gatherings is desirable, as taking "sweet counsel together" is a pleasant break in life's monotony, and the hearts of earnest, loving, self-sacrificing toilers, such as the temperance movement inspires, are cheered by the sympathy of friendly faces, and braced up for pursuance of the journey of duty.

It is the fate of all moral movements outside the Church to spring up like gourds and wither away. The very existence of the Church is a demonstration of its Divine nature, for nothing human under such conditions could have lasted so long. The inference is plain that God has given to His Church the task of regenerating mankind, and He will not allow this duty and glory to be shared by any man-made society. Whatever Conferences may be held, or elaborate organisations founded, whatever eloquence and enthusiasm may be evoked, still the eternal fact remains that the *work of the Church must be done by the Church*, and whoever and whatever longs for divinely sustained vitality, must come into vital union with the Body of Christ. Still we are in full sympathy with every such effort as the proposed Temperance Congress, as such gatherings, even when failures, are fruitful in experience. The first one held by the C. E. T. S., taught a very old, but hard lesson, that initial enthusiasm is no pledge of sustained success. It would seem from a thoughtful letter, in our last issue, from the Rev. Richard Harrison, that the dual basis of the C. E. T. S., is causing friction in management. The fiery steed, "*Total Abstinence*," does not work well in the shafts with the more sedate roadster, "*Temperance*," and the impetuous animal has several times already run away with the vehicle. Mr. Harrison thinks the teetotalers must be bridled or the team will have to be broken up. The difficulty is a natural one and inevitable. Those who become total abstinents are prone to extremes in either indulgence or abstinence, those who are temperate are more self-possessed. To the former class, drink is a terrible temptation, it is an enemy to be slain by or to be slain. To the latter class, drink is no temptation at all, or one too trivial to excite alarm. Those who are blessed with constitutional temperance may admire their weaker brother's enthusiasm in battling with his especial foe, but in the nature of things they cannot share it. Their attitude

is too calm, too confident, to inspire oratory. Hence in large assemblies gathered for the enjoyment of eloquent speaking, which is becoming a popular form of intemperate excitement, men of temperate habits and speech necessarily must play second fiddle to their excitable brethren, the total abstinents. They demand, imperiously, that in order to follow the Apostolic rule, we must abstain wholly from that which causes our brother to offend. We reply, quite so, with exceptions. Now, the fact of exceptions existing has been overlooked. For instance, there are myriads of men to whom sin comes from the eyes of every woman they see. Are we therefore to banish the fair sex, or pass a Scott Act prohibiting any mixed assemblages of the two sexes? The celebrated physician, Sir William Thomson, one of the principal authorities against the use of alcohol, in his treatise on Diet, tells us that over-eating produces more mischief than over-drinking. We therefore are put in a bad fix by the teetotalers' plea, for to avoid offence we must discontinue eating our dinners, as that habit makes the glutton to offend, and to guard others from offence all females must be kept in even closer seclusion than they are in Eastern climes. What, too, of the use of money? Is that cause of offence to be shunned?

There is a question yet to be dealt with by the Church, which is: "How far does excessive attention to efforts for the suppression of one vice tend to increase or to leave others unchecked? It is notorious that since the era dawned of special moral reforms, certain vices have come to be less obnoxious than of old. Lying, for instance, is no disgrace, as it used to be, newspapers "lie for their bread and butter," as the *Presbyterian Review* said of the clerical editor of the *Globe*, and christian men see no harm in this. The temperance agitation has no little responsibility in this matter, for teetotal platforms are strewn with fanciful statistics and factless assertions. The question of Prohibition might be usefully looked at in this light—that, *where Prohibition commences, Temperance terminates*.

In dealing with the Coffee House question, it would be well to recognise that *Canada is not England*, as here social ideas and conditions happily prevail, such as are serious hindrances to this movement—a fact which has been too much ignored so far. The Conference will do wisely if it recognises the forces comprehended in the words "*human nature*," forces which, when disregarded, have a quiet way of practically repealing any laws which ignore them.

We trust the speakers will try to keep within the lines of common sense and charity. Vehement denunciation, passionate appeals to sentiment, lurid word painting, statistics drawn from nowhere, "God I thank thee" boasting, Bible passages distorted so as to contradict biblical, scientific and historical facts, the presentation of teetotalism as the whole and sole moral duty of man, these have scandalized the temperance cause too long.

We trust the Conference will be pervaded and governed by such a spirit of reasonableness, earnestness and breadth and kindliness,

that fanaticism will find no voice in its counsels. Especially, we trust that the limitations of such a gathering will be admitted, and the grand, basal, vital, truth recognised that the Church of God has been given for the healing of the nations.

## LIFE IN THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. DYSON HAGUE, M.A.

## NUMBER I.

NO religious body offers so many possibilities of power as the English Church, when consistently and faithfully represented. By this I mean, that when the services of the Church of England are rescued from formality and invested with reality; when her prayers are understood and uttered by believing hearts; when her offices, Communion, Baptismal, Confirmation, are participated in by real believers, and administered in true and living faith; when every expression is used in the fulness of its meaning, and every thing performed solemnly as in the sight of God, there is found to be in her a power, that, to those who associate with her services the idea of deadness and formality, is simply incredible. In many cases the vast store of energy which resides in her inherently is going to waste for want of use, or fails to attract and quicken, through persistent and long-continued misuse. She is like a splendid engine, beautifully constructed, without steam enough on to move her. But, when she does move, that which through custom was formal and dead, becomes living and life giving.

What the Church needs is that abundant life which Christ came to bestow. The power of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. For this, every true Churchman should unceasingly pray, for God alone can give it. Life in the individual members by personal faith in the living Lord; life in the clergy by the indwelling and anointing of the Holy Ghost; life in the services of the Church by the infusion of reality and energy into that which custom makes dead and formal.

In this and succeeding articles, I desire to suggest, in a simple manner, from a practical rather than from a spiritual stand-point, how life may be infused into the Church and all her services. That all spiritual life is of the Holy Ghost, must be recognized as the underlying principle in what follows, though not expressly mentioned.

How may life be infused into the church?

I would say 1st, let her be what she is. That is, allow her to manifest her reality to the world. By earnestness, zeal, faith, infuse into her incomparable body the spirit of life. Even when dead her body is majestic and attractive. There is a beauty and a winsomeness in her liturgy, even from an intellectual and literary view-point. With careless clergy and worldly people, she still attracts. But when the spirit fills the outward frame, she is, indeed, all glorious within. Then that which has been made forceless through familiarity becomes real and powerful. Then her words

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