

Temperance Column.

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH TEMPERANCE WORK.

THE PLEDGE.—Continued.

The pledge of total abstinence in the Temperance Society is the drunkard's first answer to this. It is the flocking together of the frightened sheep in the first moment of their terror, when they see that the wolf is upon them, and when they are looking to every quarter for help. It is for the shepherd of the flock to lay hold of them there, and to draw them into the fold of Christ. The Temperance Society, rightly viewed, is the recruiting ground for the Church, just as the drinking saloons have become the recruiting grounds for Satan. It is when the evil spirit has lost for a time the advantage over the man which the drink gave him, when for the time being he is in his right mind, that we can tell him of the Good Shepherd, and lead him on step by step, till, by the persevering use of the appointed means of grace, he can realize in his own person the blessed truth: "Stronger is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." The pledge of abstinence has been the door through which he is admitted to the Master's presence; but all his salvation, from first to last, will have been through Him.

TEMPERANCE AND TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

The ground upon which a temperate man, as distinguished from a total abstainer, may be asked to join our society is not as a measure of asceticism, as though there were anything meritorious in renouncing this or that indulgence; but solely on the ground of expediency again—in the face of a great "present distress"—and in this liberty to abstain for ourselves, we recognize the same right of Christian liberty in our brother man; we have no word of condemnation, no pharisaic assertion of superiority for our own practice, if he walks by a different rule. But we invite him nevertheless, first and above all, in view of the kind of temptation he will be exposed to, we invite the young to grow up in ignorance of the taste—generally an acquired one—for intoxicants, and then other Christian men and women to come and take part with us in fighting the Lord's battle against the national sin.

WORKING BASIS.

After this statement of first principles the question arises as to what is the best method of application. We have on our side at the outset the fact that the Sunday-school system and the parochial organizations of the Church provide exactly the machinery we need. This is emphatically a Church work, to be carried on upon Church lines and by Church methods.

The first imperative object to be gained is a conviction on the part of the clergymen of the parish of the needfulness of the work. This

step gained, initial difficulties speedily disappear. The next necessity is to call a meeting of parishioners, rich and poor alike, and explain to them their Christian duty of abstinence for the sake of others. The effective way to begin is first to reach the young.

Remember that all these Juvenile pledges are taken with the consent of parents; that they continue only so long as the card of membership is retained, and that when the young person reaches the age of sixteen, or the time of Confirmation, he or she may elect to belong to the total or the partial abstinence section of the society. The importance of this action will be seen from the fact that since the formation of the society in England almost a new generation has arisen who have not acquired the taste for intoxicants. Now, in England, there are 500,000 juvenile members, and an almost equal number of adult members. The nation's drink bill has been reduced by \$125,000,000, and 5,000 clergy and 9 Bishops are pledged total abstainers. In America the society has received the adherence of 54 Bishops, and there are organizations in 31 dioceses.

THE SCOPE OF THE SOCIETY.

Going to the broader basis of the society, we have endeavored to make this question not only a matter of Christian duty but one appealing to all citizens. We have to endeavor not only to reach and to rescue the individual man, which can only be done and can be best done by personal effort, but we have by combination to meet that infamous extension of licenses which in the city of New York has opened 10,000 places of legalized temptation, and in the city of Philadelphia an equal, if not a larger, number in proportion. Clearly in carrying out this second line of action you can utilize the influence of all citizens, whether abstainers or not, and it is mainly because of the infinite value which such a broad and representative public opinion bears that we claim the wisdom of the two-fold organization of the Society.

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