

establishing, on a firm foundation, that once degraded man." The teetotal pledge was the instrument. Had it not been for that, he might now be filling a drunkard's grave, or roving the wide world over, a wretched vagabond. But now he is a happy man, setting a godly example before the world, training up his household in the fear of the Lord, and persuading his fellow-men to forsake the ways of intemperance and ruin, to walk in the paths of wisdom, sobriety, and peace. He is taking the right course to save his young sons from ever being drawn into that dreadful vortex where he himself was once wrecked, and well nigh lost. But teetotalism has rescued even him. May he go on and prosper, be the means of diffusing a healthful influence all around him, remain steadfast in the faith, and in true temperance principles, hold out to the end, and at last receive a crown of glory!

Should his eye light on this, he will recognise his old friend and pastor,

JOEL FISK.

THE BEST MEN ARE SOMETIMES IN ERROR.

BY ARCHDEACON JEFFREYS.

The Presbyterian Church of Canada wrote a very affectionate letter of congratulation to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, presenting them with two hundred and forty pounds sterling, as a testimony of their good will. In this letter they took occasion to set before them the vast amount of good that had been done, both in the United States and in British America, by the temperance movement, and the many blessings, both temporal and spiritual, that had resulted from it. They proved, by satisfactory statistics, that all this good had been done, and that all these blessings had resulted from the spread of the principle of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks—and earnestly and affectionately entreated their assistance in the cause. This letter gave occasion to several very able reports and important concessions, and half movements, on the part of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

Among these documents, it is especially to a late able, and in many respects valuable, report, read by Dr. McFarlane before the General Assembly, that it is my present object to call the reader's attention. After enlarging with great ability upon the crime, domestic misery, and ruin produced in Scotland by intoxicating drinks, and after fully admitting the great good that has been done by the spread of Teetotalism, the report evades coming to the *remedy*, and excuses the church from lending her support and assistance to the *only* measure that has ever yet availed to stop the desolating scourge, in the following memorable words:—

'As a Church she cannot with propriety take any step except on moral and scriptural grounds. She may frankly admit, as was done in a former report, that much good has been done by temperance societies; and, in so far as she can approve their proceedings, she may, with perfect good feeling, bid them God speed. But her own movement must be *only* such as would admit of her prefixing to each injunction—"Thus saith the Lord."

Now it is amazing to me, how such great and good men as compose the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, should allow themselves to be dupes of such a miserable fallacy as the above excuse contains.

I have said 'great and good men,' because (though an archdeacon of the Church of England) I hope I may be permitted to express my sincere and settled conviction that they *are* great and good men, without giving offence to any.

But it is the more amazing to me how *such* men could take the most solemn, sacred, and awful words that can be uttered by the mouth of man—"Thus saith the Lord," and make them the instruments of a fallacy.

For let us ask the question, What do these words mean in the *connection* and for the *purpose* for which they are here used? If they mean any thing at all to the present purpose, they must mean—that the Church cannot lend her countenance and assistance to the temperance movement, without *express* and *particular* directions from the word of God for this *particular* mode of Christian benevolence. This (I had almost said) senseless objection, is nothing new to us; we have heard it again and again from *common minds*—"Show us a *command* in the *bible* for your teetotal societies, and then we will join you." I say we have heard this objection again and again from *common minds*; but how *such* men as compose the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland could ever think of such an objection, or listen to it for one moment, is to me most amazing. I can only say, alas! for poor human nature, and the deceiveableness of the human heart! In cases where custom, or prejudice, or appetite are concerned, no wisdom, no talent, no former integrity, can with *certainty* secure it from becoming the dupe of a fallacy!

One would think that it would be enough to remind these good men, that *none* of the various modes of Christian benevolence in the present day can claim the prefix, 'Thus saith the Lord,' in the *sense* in which they here demand it of our cause. They cannot show the *express* and *particular* command of God for Magdalen Hospitals, Church-building Societies, Religious Tract Societies, or even for the Bible and Missionary Societies, in the sense in which it is here demanded for the Temperance Society. And we do not ask for their assistance, in any other sense than they already give it to these societies, namely, by becoming themselves members, and encouraging others to do the same by their example and influence, and by speaking the truth in love. We do not ask for an "injunction," in any compulsory sense of the word injunction; we do not ask that it shall be made a constitution of church membership. We only ask their own *personal* self-denial and their hearty co-operation in this "*merciful*" enterprise—this labour of love. And we have as much warrant from Scripture for *our* labour of love and mercy, as they have for any of the societies to which they lend their countenance and support.

Indeed, if an *express* and *particular* command for any mode of benevolence be at all necessary to constitute Christian obligation, I have no hesitation in asserting that there *are* express and particular commands in Scripture which approach much *more* nearly to a command