

and, perhaps, not on more than a dozen occasions even drunkenness mentioned, and then but as it were incidentally, notwithstanding it is universally known, both to ministers and people, that this is the prevalent vice of the day, and the most frequent and afflicting even in the churches. Can such reserve and silence be right? No, verily, but quite the reverse.

Again, some have objected to uniting with the societies, by reason, as they allege, that improper sentiments and sayings are frequently uttered by those who lecture or speak in the meetings. The writer can safely declare, that of the many hundreds of meetings in all which he has attended in his own country and here during nearly twenty years, he has but rarely indeed heard any sentiments expressed justly exceptionable either as to religion, morality, or decorum, and, he may be permitted to say, that there are not many who on this point are more particular or scrupulous than himself. But it may further be answered, that if such extremely fastidious objectors, especially professors of religion, would unite with the societies, and attend the public meetings, they would have it in their power to check and repress all such irregularities. Even merely their presence would to some extent do it; and by their reasonable warnings and advice they would at length be instrumental in altogether putting down or preventing them. Moreover, it may be remarked, that there are hundreds of ministers and other religious professors of unquestioned conscientiousness and piety belonging to the societies, and who more or less frequently attend the meetings, and yet advance no such general complaint or objection.

Another sweeping but utterly unfounded objection against the abstinence movement has occasionally been insinuated or urged, that it is of an anti-scriptural character. To this, in the first place, there is the following answer—If from the passages of Scripture set forth in these pages, and the remarks made upon them by way of illustration and comment, it has been shown that the use of those liquors is not only not sanctioned, but in fact is prohibited by the sacred records, the objection vanishes at once, as the movement will then prove to be in the strictest accordance with even the letter of that holy and infallible authority. Moreover, should it be denied that this prohibition is established, yet this further and conclusive answer may be given, that, as deducible from the Scriptures, it is plainly the design of our holy Christianity to show forth the glory of God, and to secure the happiness of mankind, both for time and eternity, and therefore all institutions and means not plainly contrary to the letter or spirit of the Scriptures, and tending directly to promote those holy and benevolent objects, must be in perfect harmony with those sacred records.

The means which are employed by the societies for effecting their objects, are also in perfect accordance with the same divine authority. The pledge against which a few cavillers object, is in reality no more than a good resolution committed to writing. Ministers and friends exhort to the forming of good resolutions, and we have the highest authority for voluntary vows or resolutions as to religious and virtuous conduct. "Vow and pay unto the Lord your God," is a divine command, and we have the high example of the

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