

selves pure. It was now an ascertained fact, that drunkenness, while it was not itself a vice punishable by law, was the parent and the source of the long train of crimes that were so punishable. If they examined the registers of the police offices—if they investigated the cases which came before the Sheriff and higher courts—they found invariably that, even where drunkenness had not been the primary, it had yet been a principal cause of the long train of disorders that lead ultimately to ruin—if not the originating cause, it had been the auxiliary, the propelling cause. They invariably found that there was no form of vice with which intemperance was not associated. What was it that caused the household brawls, the ferocious assaults and murders, the barbarity and brutality that overwhelmed all the domestic affections? What was it that caused the ruin of the families of the poor, the neglect and perversion of education, the defiance of decency, the neglect and abuse of the Sabbath? What was it that made the demand for ragged schools—what was it that filled their jails and workhouses, that demoralized and degraded so large a portion of the population? Did it not all arise from this prevailing vice, and from the innumerable vices associated with it? No one could deny that either directly, or by some intervening link, this degradation of our people took its rise from intoxicating liquors. How came it to pass that there was so many police offences committed between Saturday night and Monday morning? Was it not because this was the time specially devoted to this debauchery—the time when ordinary work ceased, and gave place to voluntary occupation and enjoyments—the time when the labourer had money in his hands, and when the call to duty was overborne by the force of temptation? In the city where he resided, he understood that somewhere about £100,000 was annually expended in Sabbath public house drinking. It was distressing to think that whilst bread and other provisions must be laid in on Saturday night, in order that the shops and stores might be shut up on Sabbath, there was an exception in favour of spirituous liquors. It was found lately, on an investigation in Edinburgh, that 400 public houses were on the Sabbath plying their customary trade, as if dram-drinking were an ordinance of religion, and as if it were part of the means by which the Sabbath was to be sanctified. He understood that the city of Glasgow expended £1,200,000 sterling annually in intoxicating liquors. Now, a million of this certainly went out of the pockets of the poor. What a history did this reveal of the present state of things! How bountiful was God, and oh, how ungrateful and perverse was man! This money, rightly economised and properly employed, would go far to feed and clothe, to house and educate, to relieve and render comfortable all the poor of the city, and change a mass of corruption and abomination into a well-conducted, peaceful, and happy community. What measures were they to take for the repression of this evil, and for its ultimate extirpation? No single panacea could be found to cure the disease in all its phases. They advocated to the full the benefits of education, of moral discipline, of Christian instruction, of economic measures for giving employment to the poor, and the means of subsistence, of improving the dwellings of the poor, and making them such as would contribute to decency and to health—he said they advocated to the full all such measures. The want of this was deeply to be deplored; but after all, if they could not destroy this vice, all those evils would spring up again like the heads of the Hydra. This monster vice was favoured and fostered by their own habits and customs—it was supported by the specious opinions and popular practices of the country—it was encouraged by the respectability of those who drank. But what was to be done? Something, he believed, might be done by a powerful Government, if sustained by Christian principle. He did not see why the Government might not issue such orders and make such laws as greatly to reduce the number of public houses. In place of allowing one public house for every half dozen, or dozen, or score of other houses, Government might not allow more than one public-house to a hundred ordinary dwellings.

The Rev. Mr. McCorkle next addressed the meeting.

Mr. Douglas, on being introduced, was very warmly received. After some introductory remarks, he said they were progressing most favorably. They had now 66 Free Church ministers as members of their body—and he had that day received letters from two more—one of whom was not quite satisfied with their constitution, but he was going to attend their next meeting, and would then perhaps join them; the other was to be at his residence to-morrow, and they would then consult regarding the sub-

ject. A minister in the North had lately resolved to join, and he now wrote to say that he hoped to bring all his presbytery along with him. He might also inform them that their ranks had received a powerful accession in the person of Mr. Peter Drummond of Stirling, who he (Mr. Douglas) was sure would prove a most energetic and efficient member. Altogether, there were many most encouraging and gratifying symptoms attending them, and curious, too, some of them were. For instance, the first thing charged against them was that they were a parcel of hot-headed young men. Now, it was pleasant to know that they had the five oldest ministers of the Free Church upon their side. They had ministers members in almost every Synod, and they were represented in 32 Presbyteries. He believed that there were about 30 ministers who, though they had not joined them, were at present practising abstinence, trying as it were, how it would agree with their constitution. Their doctors told them that a little wine did them good, and they were afraid to go against their advice. His experience, however, led him to disbelieve the accuracy of their statement; for he found himself much better, stronger, and healthier, since he practised abstinence than before. Certain ladies had joined their ranks, and done good service, and it was of singular importance to obtain to the widest possible extent, their good-will and active aid in this undertaking which falls peculiarly within their domestic empire. Mr. Douglas concluded his address by appealing to the friends of the movement to support it by their contributions, and enable them to get at the sources of power.

The Rev. Mr. Arnot, on rising, was very cordially received.—He said he attended this meeting as he did the previous one, in order to take his share of any difficulty of responsibility that might attach to the proceedings, as well as of getting his portion of any honor that might be a going. A very dear, eminent, and esteemed friend of his, in speaking to him on the subject, had dissented from this view. He said he could not join the society without committing himself to many similar bodies—alleging that there existed just as much need for a society against extravagance in dress. He (Mr. Arnot), if any one was there whose better half was given to wearing too much lace, could only suggest that he should keep the purse strings tight, and if the lady had a fortune of her own, she must, he supposed, be allowed to do as she pleased. It was very evident, however, that as regards dress they could not adopt the principles of total abstinence. He could argue against the objection in no other way, because the cases were too way analogous.—When extravagance in dress came, like extravagance in drinking, to be the cause of the largest portion of the crime and misery of the country, then they might proceed to institute some sort of a society against it. He did not undertake to say which was the greatest comparative sin in the sight of God; it was not for him to declare or even imagine that, but it was evident that such an objection was altogether irrelevant and beside the question. There was occasionally some muttering among their Free Church friends as to the increase in their number of schemes; it was said they were multiplying and bringing in too many schemes, and that the effect of soliciting contributions for a new one would be to limit those given to the rest. He thought it manifestly and demonstrably true, that even in asking money contributions for this scheme they might increase the ability to support the others. If their principles were diffused over all the adherents of the Free Church, there would be a deal of money saved; and even though one-fourth of it were given to the Abstinence Society proper, there would still be a great overplus for the other schemes. He deemed it an encouraging fact that there existed now far less of gross and outrageous drunkenness among the refined and opulent classes than there was in the last generation. This was gratifying, because fashions, whether good or evil in their nature, gravitated downwards—they reached the lowest classes after having been abandoned by the highest. Even in the matter of a spring bonnet, the Queen set the fashion, and it went down and down, till at last the poorest would be found dashing away with that exact shape long after her Majesty had got another. Like as a steamer when passing through a lake, raised a deal of splutter and ferment just where she was passing, which afterwards became quite smooth and calm, while the agitation which had been caused spent itself in lashing the shore; so the higher classes were now quiet and calm, but the example they had set was raging among the lower classes; and he asked if the former were not called upon to come down and allay the troubles they had caused? There were some of his friends who said to him that it was quite