

THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE

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A NINETY YEARS OLD LEADER.

'I have long wished' writes Frances E. Willard, in connection with the approaching ninetieth birthday of the grand old man of Prohibition, 'that we had a temperance 'Auld Lang Syne' song.' Here is a grand opportunity for our writers to give us a song of universal adaptation that shall signalize the birthday of our noble chief. All over the world, this month, temperance societies are celebrating the ninetieth birthday of the Hon. Neal Dow, the father of the Prohibition movement. Although now of so great an age the General wrote recently that he was in splendid health, that he rises at five o'clock in the morning, as has been his life long custom; walks three miles a day, and in pleasant weather rides fifteen to twenty.'

In physical contour the General is slight of stature, but firmly and solidly built. His face is strongly Roman, with all the daring aggressiveness indicated that this type of character represents. There is evidently no cowardice in his nature. He is not the man to hesitate when a hard blow is to be struck. Yet mingled with all this fiery hatred of wrong, there beams a resplendent sympathy that betokens the man of marked moral endowment. His sympathy incites; his conscience dares, and these elements of ethical force, fortified by a vigorous intellect have made him the St. Simon of the prohibition movement throughout the civilized world.

Neal Dow was born on the 20th of March, 1804. His parents were Friends, as were all his ancestors, paternal and maternal, as far back as anything is known of them. They were all well-to-do farmers: sober, industrious, thrifty workers; living peaceful lives; good citizens with no embroilments of any kind with neighbors or others. Neal Dow's education was first at dames' schools, afterwards at a town school, Moses Hale, principal; after that at private schools, one of them Rev. Mr. Weston, principal; of the other Rev. Joshua Taylor, principal. Then for three years Portland Academy, Bosalee Cushman, principal; then at Friends' Academy, at New Bedford, Mass., Thos. A. Greene, principal. From that he was put into the tannery of his father to learn the art and mystery of converting the raw skins of animals into material required for the various needs of civilized life. At his majority his father received him as partner in his business.

He became interested early in life in the temperance cause and temperance work, largely under the teaching of Rev. Justin Edwards, D.D., who devoted several years of his life to temperance missionary work among the churches throughout the country. It was soon manifested to Mr. Dow that no permanent improvement could be expected in the condition of the

people while grog-shops were permitted to spread before them temptations to intemperance. In those days the liquor traffic was everywhere in Maine as it is now in many of the States. Very soon after his enlistment in the temperance cause, he gave his attention mostly to the work of enlightening public opinion as to the essential wickedness of that trade, showing that it was inconsistent with the public welfare, and sought, therefore, to put it into the category of forbidden occupations.

He received a note one day from a lady whom he knew, expressing a wish to see him. Her husband was a graduate of Harvard, and had an important office in

family would be at once without resources.

'It is my business to sell rum,' he replied; 'I have a license to sell rum; I shall sell it to any one who wants it and has the money to pay for it; I support my family by selling rum; I want none of your advice; when I want it I'll send for you; until then, keep it to yourself.'

'You have a license to sell rum, have you?' Mr. Dow replied. 'You will sell it to any one who can pay for it, will you? You support your family by destroying the families of others, do you? Heaven helping me, I'll see if I cannot change all that.'

Taking Mr. Blank by the arm, Mr. Dow led him home, and from that day began a

inevitable cause of a very large proportion of the poverty, pauperism, crime of the country, and almost all the misery and wretchedness of the people; that it inflicts more mischief to the State and more misery to the people than are produced by all other sources of mischief combined. By constant, unceasing work among the people along the lines, by a large majority, they came to it as Mr. Dow and his helpers wished them to do. In all these excursions a large quantity of temperance tracts were taken along with them, and these were thrown out at the doors of houses as they passed along; and especially they were freely distributed among the children at the school-houses, and among the people at the meetings.

In the spring of 1851, Mr. Dow was Mayor of Portland; the Legislation was in session. With an anti-liquor bill in his pocket, carefully drawn by him, he went to Augusta and had a public hearing in the Representatives' Hall, crowded to its utmost capacity. At the close of the hearing the Special Joint Committee unanimously adopted the bill as presented by Mr. Dow. It was reported to the legislature the next morning, the last day of the session, and was enacted on that day without change by a vote of 18 to 10 in the Senate, and 86 to 40 in the House. That was Saturday, the last day of May. It was approved by the Governor on Monday, the 2nd of June, and took effect immediately upon its signature by him. That bill thus passed is known everywhere as 'The Maine Law.' Mr. Dow was twice Mayor of Portland. Prohibition in Maine, originating in the adoption of that bill, yet remains, stronger than ever in the public opinion of the State. In 1884, it was put into the Constitution by a majority vote of 47,075 the affirmative three times larger than the negative.

'In 1857, Mr. Dow went to England, at the invitation of the United Kingdom Alliance, for the immediate legal prohibition of the liquor traffic.' In 1866 and 1873, he went there again as the guest of the Alliance, and attended many prohibition meetings in almost every part of the Kingdom. All his work in the United Kingdom was gratuitous and in all occupied him about three years. In the summer, unfavorable for great meetings, he spent the time on the Continent, travelling in France, Belgium, Holland, Prussia, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

In 1861, Mr. Dow raised a regiment of infantry of one thousand men, and by special permission of the Secretary of War, he raised also a battery of artillery. He went in midwinter of 1861-2 directly to the Department of the Gulf, as Colonel of the 13th Maine Volunteers, and soon after his arrival at Ship Island, he received from President Lincoln a commission as Briga-



THE HON. NEAL DOW.

the U. S. Service. He was a dipsomaniac. There was a large family whose only dependence was upon the salary of the father. His chief had warned him that he could not retain his position unless he improved his habits. His wife said he went only to one shop for his drink and if the keeper would not sell him any she could keep him in the house until fit to appear again at the office. Dr. Dow went directly to the rum shop and said: 'is Mr. Blank here?' 'No,' said the runseller; but hearing voices in the back shop, Mr. Dow opened the door, and seeing Mr. Blank in the group of drinkers, pulled him out and stated the case to the proprietor and begged him to sell no more to this man, otherwise he would certainly lose his situation and his

war of extermination of the grog-shops. Winter and summer, hot and cold, wet and dry, he made for ten years missionary tours through the State, taking always one friend with him in his carriage, (Mr. Shirley, now of Brooklyn, N. Y.), often taking two, sometimes three with him, paying all expenses. Series of meetings were arranged before-hand. Often these missionaries arriving at a town, had nothing to do but to drive up to the Country Town House, church or road-side school house, finding them already crowded with farmers, their wives, sons and daughters, waiting for the coming of these crusaders.

It was the purpose of this work to lay out before the people the true character of the liquor traffic, being the direct and