

# THE ABSTAINER.

ORGAN OF THE GRAND DIVISION OF THE  
SONS OF TEMPERANCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

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EDITOR.

Fidelity,--Union--Perseverance.

JAMES BARRATT, }  
PUBLISHER.

VOLUME I.

HALIFAX, N.S., NOVEMBER 15, 1856.

NO. 2.

## Essays, &c.

### GRAND DIVISION OF NOVA SCOTIA.

#### OFFICERS FOR 1856-7.

G.W.P.—REV. ALEX. McARTHUR, Pictou.  
G.W.A.—JAMES MOSHER, Esq., Windsor.  
G.Scribe.—MR. PATK. MONAGHAN, Halifax.  
G.T.—JOHN A. BELL, Esq., Halifax.  
G.Chaplain.—REV. S. N. BENTLY, Halifax.  
G.Conductor.—MR. R. M. BARRATT, Halifax.  
G.Sentinel.—MR. WM. MURRAY, Halifax.  
P.G.W.P.—REV. J.M. CRAMP, D.D., Wolfville.

THE Annual Session of the Grand Division was held at Halifax on Wednesday, Oct. 22d, and two following days. The following is a copy of the

#### GRAND WORTHY PATRIARCH'S REPORT.

TO THE GRAND DIVISION OF THE SONS OF TEMPERANCE OF THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

#### Officers and Brethren,—

At the close of my term of office it becomes my duty to review the transactions of the year, and to offer such suggestions as may appear to be conducive to the advancement of the interests of the Order.

You have observed with much regret, I doubt not, that the statistical returns presented by the Most Worthy Scribe at the last meeting of the National Division exhibit a great falling off in numbers. Our Order now comprises 41 Grand Divisions, 2,957 subordinate Divisions, and 99,172 members. There was a much larger number of members a few years ago. In attempting to account for this diminution various considerations have been adduced. Perhaps it is sufficient to refer to the experience of all benevolent enterprises, which commonly suffer a decline after the first fervours have subsided and the excitement of novelty has ceased, shewing the necessity of unremitting effort and watchful care lest the fire that has been kindled should die out for want of fuel. There is also a fact to be noticed which has exerted no small influence on our prosperity. I refer to the establishment of other Orders, which have won their way to patronage by the adoption of plans of operation of a more popular character, as is supposed, than our own arrangements. Adverting to these circumstances the Most Worthy Scribe suggested, in his Report to the National Division, the desirableness of certain changes which he regarded as necessary to the revival of the Order. I referred to them at the last Quarterly Session, and

now transcribe that portion of the Most Worthy Scribe's Report:—

"The M. W. Scribe respectfully suggests the following, as, in his judgment, the most suitable agencies:

"1. The full and unequivocal membership of the female sex.

"2. The extension of the minimum for the admission of youth, to twelve years of age.

"3. The extension of the initiation of non-beneficial numbers at the discretion of Divisions.

"4. The extension of the terms of office in Divisions to six months.

"5. The institution of an 'Honorary Badge,' for members of three years good standing, as recommended at the late session, by the Committee on Ceremonies and Regalia.

"6. The legal right to those entitled to Degree Regalia, to wear the same in Divisions.

"7. The election of one or more representatives annually to Grand Divisions from the body of members, not W. P.'s or P. W. P.'s."

With the exception of the first and second articles, which were partially adopted, the alterations recommended by the M. W. Scribe failed to obtain the sanction of the National Division. I have placed them before you for the purpose of consideration and discussion, that the views of the Grand Division on all or any of them, if judged advisable, may be conveyed to the National Division, at its next Annual Session, either by resolution or by instruction to your representatives. I take it for granted that some members of this body will attend that Annual Session, the appointed place of meeting (Providence, R. I.) being so near and so easy of access.

Our history during the past year may be soon told. The first event that saddened our hearts and cast a gloom over our prospects was the death of Brother William Scott, the late G. Scribe,—a brother whose attachment to Temperance principles was unswerving, and in whose removal the Order has sustained a very heavy loss. Then came the stoppage of the *Athenaeum* newspaper, a calamity as distressing as the paralysis of a warrior's right arm. The defeat of the Prohibitory Liquor Law, occurring at the same time, sorely added to our discouragement. That untoward circumstance has been followed by an increase of intemperance in most parts of the Province. The enemies of our cause have been greatly emboldened, while the misery-making, crime-producing traffic has acquired new energy, and pursues its destructive career, seldom checked by men in office, even when the existing law is manifestly broken, but too often encouraged and patronised. A fearful responsibility rests on those by whose efforts the progress of reform has been stayed.

These things would not have proved so disheartening if we had been able to procure the services of Lecturers, by whose efforts and appeals the desponding might have been re-assured, the wavering decided, and wanderers reclaimed. We have been entirely unsuccessful in our attempts in that direction, and consequently the Divisions have been left to their own resources. This disappointment, added to the want of a Temperance press, has operated prejudicially in a variety of respects. It would have been less painfully felt if your presiding officer could have visited the Divisions generally, for purposes of inspection and public advocacy. It was unable to do so. In mentioning this, I take the opportunity of submitting to the consideration of the Grand Division the importance of securing in one, at least, of its officers, a brother possessing qualifications for public labour, and who may command sufficient leisure to devote a portion of his time to the advancement of the Order.

Although I have received a larger number of Reports from Deputies since the last Quarterly Session than in any other part of the year, I am not so well prepared as could be wished to furnish a full and accurate account of the state of the Order in this Province.—Judging from the communications which have reached me I am compelled to admit that with but few exceptions the movement has been retrograde rather than otherwise. The G. Scribe's Report, I have reason to apprehend, will confirm that statement.

The city of Halifax is almost the only place in the Province in which there is an encouraging increase. The Divisions there are numerically stronger by 77 members than they were at this time last year. Their prosperity is doubtless owing to the zeal and activity of the brethren, their punctuality in attending the weekly meetings, and the numerous public gatherings at which our principles have been expounded and the co-operation of the friends of Temperance sought. Jun. 2. 56 Division, Hammond's Plains, is also working its way with steady success. There is nothing particular to report respecting the other Divisions in the county of Halifax.

Passing over to Cape Breton, the following extract of a letter from Brother Down, North Sydney, will be read with pleasure:—"Taking the Divisions together, both here and at Sydney, you will find a great increase since last January. There are numbers, not members of the Order, who through the influence of the Sons have become sober men and good members of society. Indeed, it is wonderful to see the influence the Order has had in the country, even among the shipping. Here you scarcely see a sailor on shore drunk, and