

religious character. Besides, if the unbelief or heretical opinion is not declared or admitted, none have a right to judge or uncharitably conclude that it is really entertained.

But further, many thousands in all of ministers, both of piety and intelligence, and very many thousands of members of evangelical churches, now belong to such societies, and many of them holding principal offices, and all these are as much opposed as any of their brethren to every species of infidelity and heresy. Surely then the course which these have adopted is justly entitled to much consideration and weight, and should be permitted to produce its appropriate influence and effect. Moreover it may here be remarked, that it is highly probable there were as many of these characters objected to in the old merely temperance societies, some of which are still in operation, and in these there were, and still are, many ministers of religion, as well as other professors. In the principal society of that description, even nine or more Bishops of the English Establishment were at one time among its Vice-Presidents, and yet against those societies this objection of infidelity, as far as the writer has heard, has never been advanced. It would therefore seem, that it is only since the despised and hated total abstinence principle has so extensively succeeded, that the convenient objection has been discovered.

Should it be admitted, that the tendency and operations of the societies merely availed for effecting these moral and benevolent purposes—to reclaim the drunkard and prevent the offence—to prevent the waste, and direct the proper application of property—to prevent pauperism and wretchedness, and to promote the comfort of families—to prevent crime, and disease, and death, and by preventing death to secure for the wretched inebriate a longer period in which to repent, and to seek and obtain mercy, and the further purposes of preventing the contagious influence of the evil example, and withholding from the fatal dangers and snares of the use of strong drink—if these, we say, were the only objects sought and effected, without any more direct reference to religious views and purposes, it would most assuredly and plainly be the duty of all ministers and other religious professors to sanction and forward our movement. Surely there cannot be a doubt, that all moral and benevolent objects ought to be favoured and promoted by those who profess to be the followers of Him who continually went about doing good, and who requires us, “as we have opportunity,” to “do good unto all men.” But most especially when it is remembered, that the chief hindrance to the progress and triumph of divine truth, and the salvation of souls in many countries called Christian, is the use of strong liquors, as admitted by all, then surely to you, Rev. Sirs, and all other professors of religion, the highest possible motive is held forth to require the employment of all available means for removing or diminishing such hindrance.

But even if the constitution or composition of the societies is not fully approved of, but the objects are admitted to be excellent, as none will deny, then, Rev. Sirs and Brethren, as you are fully aware of the manifold and afflicting evils of the use of strong liquors, surely you are urgently required to employ some, or all other available means in your power, to diminish

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