

## Temperance.

THE Report of the committee on Temperance which was submitted to the General Assembly was not in printed form, which may account to some extent for the desultory and upon the whole unsatisfactory discussion which took place in regard to it. It may, or it may not be printed in the Assembly minutes, but even if it is, it will only be seen by a limited number. Whatever views individuals may choose to entertain regarding it, there is no doubt the question is one of vital importance and worthy of candid and careful investigation. Against Temperance there is no law. Every consideration, indeed, points to it as the correct thing, and it were a waste of words to argue in favour of that which instinctively commends itself to every thinking mind. The evils arising from intemperance cannot be overstated. Beyond a doubt they constitute the greatest drawback to the moral and social welfare of humanity and, practically, the most difficult problem of the age.

Our attention has been drawn to this subject at present by the receipt of a pamphlet entitled, "Facts and Figures on the Temperance Question," by Rev. R. Wallace of Toronto, published under the auspices of the Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance. From this carefully prepared and forcibly put document we shall in the meantime only make a few extracts leaving it to the reader to apply the lesson of these statistics and to form his own judgment regarding them. "The extent and expense of the liquor traffic in Great Britain, the United States and Canada is enormous. About one-seventh of the grain of Great Britain is wasted on this traffic, when thousands of the people are on the verge of starvation and living in abject poverty. In the United Kingdom, 52,659,000 bushels of grain are destroyed yearly to make beer. 100,000,000 bushels of grain are annually destroyed in the Anglo-Saxon world, which would give two barrels of flour to every family in England, the United States and Canada during the year. During the last seven years the large total has been spent of £987,000,000, or £200,000,000 more than the national debt of Great Britain. And this was not all, for it cost at least £100,000,000 more to pay for the mischief that it caused. That gave a cost of £241,000,000, or about \$1,200,000,000 yearly for their drink bill! It said that there are about 200,000 places in Great Britain where liquor is sold, and these are probably doing more to hinder God's cause than the 40,000 ministers of religion can do to advance it. As the result, mainly of intemperance, they have

nearly 3,000,000 applying yearly for parish relief in that wealthy country; 85,000 inmates in their asylums; 60,000 convicted of crime; at least 250,000 vagrants roaming about the country; and about 120,000 brought annually to a premature grave. And these liquor shops are sanctioned by law to lead away the people from God, from happiness and heaven. Thus the liquor traffic of Great Britain costs as much as would support 600,000 missionaries at \$1,200 a year; 500,000 schoolmasters at \$500; build 5,000 churches at \$10,000; 5,000 school-houses at \$4,000; would give to the world 200,000,000 of bibles at twenty-five cents each; and 500,000,000 of tracts at \$1 per 100; would give 100,000 widows \$100 a year; and 200,000 poor families, \$50 a year. In short, would provide a machinery that would evangelize the world in a short time, or pay off the national debt in four years. In the United States there are 175,000 places where intoxicating liquor was sold, involving a direct outlay and waste of not less than \$700,000,000, and an indirect loss to the country, by crime, pauperism, &c., of \$700,000,000 more; and this results in the destruction of 100,000 lives yearly. In the State of Maine, before prohibition, there was one drunkard for every fifty-five of the population, and one million gallons of spirits were distilled annually, while the liquor bill amounted to \$10,000,000. Since prohibition there is not a distillery or brewery in the state, the recent sale of liquor amounting to the mere fraction of the former quantity sold; whereas the death rate had been reduced to one in 300 of her population.

In 1881 there were in operation in the United States 3,210 distilleries. These consumed 31,291,130 bushels of grain, with an aggregate production of 117,728,150 gallons of proof spirits. For the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1881, the total amount of revenue to the national treasury from distilled spirits was \$67,153,974.83; for the same period the total revenue from fermented liquors amounted to \$13,700,241.21. The beer production for the year ending 30th June, was 14,311,028 bushels, or at thirty-one gallons per bushel the enormous aggregate of 434,641,868 gallons. A brewer's authority gives the number of breweries at 2,830, and estimates that there are 1,681,670 acres of land under cultivation for barley and hops. If sown with wheat, at thirty bushels per acre, this land would provide 50,456,000 bushels, or about one bushel for every man, woman and child in the United States. It has been declared on authority of an official census that the liquor traffic during the last ten years has sent 100,000 children to the poor houses in the United States; has committed at least 150,000 to prisons and workhouses; has made at least 10,000 insane; has determined at least 2,000 suicides; has