

this case it has been moral not physical power. Though something may have been accomplished by individual efforts previous to the general formation of societies—though here and there were found those who practiced and inculcated temperance, no great impression was made upon the public mind. True, some may have been induced to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks, &c. was there no apparent diminution of those drinks in society; the effect of this conduct on the part of some of its scattered members was not felt by the mass of community. When, however, a combination of these individual forces was brought about, important results followed. The principle for which they had contended singly, now presented itself to others in a different aspect; it carried with it weight and power, and was more sensibly regarded; thus proving that the exertions and examples even of a few, when associated, are more available in the furtherance of an object than many acting disjointly. Before, they lacked sympathy and encouragement—now, they experience both; before, they felt themselves alone—now, they know that others are ready to countenance and assist; hence they become bold, and labor with a greater stimulus. Thus has it been in relation to this cause. The uniting of its friends into associations has been for its good; it has given it a name and a position which it could not have attained in any other way.

Still further. To dispense with a custom so general as was formerly, the use of ardent spirits—to go contrary to this essential part of good manners, required an effort of which those who have grown up under this temperance dispensation can have only an imperfect conception. To be regarded as mean, to be spoken of disrespectfully, to have one's motives impugned, would be the consequence, and who could abide it?—Though convinced of the injurious tendency of the custom—or, at any rate, of its usefulness—few would be willing to brave public opinion by renouncing it entirely. But when some dared to act out their convictions, resolving to be free from the thralldom of custom, and the more effectually to operate against it, formed associations of those friendly to such an object, then the vacillating and timid, seeing they would not be alone in singularity, united themselves with the movement, thereby not only receiving strength themselves, but imparting power to the cause.

The moral power of these associations stopped not here. Inquiry was aroused, a desire created to know what these things meant, what these new notions were.—Hence, when meetings were called, many attended from mere curiosity, some of whom, from the words spoken, were convinced of their duty, and enrolled themselves in the ranks. The news of these combinations being disseminated, it led to similar movements elsewhere. In places at a considerable remove from the first effort, there were those who, on hearing of the same, said—we, too, will unite—we will have a society—and thus strive to do something for the benefit of our fellow-men. These things could not fail of attracting the observation of the traffickers in strong drink, some of whom were induced to reflection on the subject, and feeling the evil they were producing, renounced their business, and gave themselves to the cause, preferring poverty to unjust gold—hard labor, with an approving conscience, to ease and luxury with a disquieted mind.

Thus, by closing the avenues to intemperance the cause was advanced.

Numbers always impress the mind. When the people assemble in large bodies, in conventions, the influence of their numbers is always felt, and some who are ever desirous of being with the majority, persuaded by the force of the numbers alone, easily fall in with what appears to them to be the popular current. As has been said by a distinguished scholar, "Most men either cannot, or will not, reason at all. There are hundreds of thousands of well-meaning persons whose minds are so constructed that they are argument proof. The soundest and the clearest arguments have no more effect upon them than light upon the blind eye, or music upon the deaf ear. But though they are proof against argument, they cannot stand the moral force of a majority against their opinions; nay, even a local majority in the place where they are at the time, will sometimes convert them." Doubtless it has been thus in the temperance movement, and many may have become its friends solely from the reason that it appeared to them to be making progress, becoming popular; seeing their friends and neighbors connecting themselves with it, they followed also. As they have looked in upon the association, and noticed the members composing it, an influence has been produced sufficiently powerful to cause them to follow in the same course.

A brief observation as to the influence of Temperance Associations on public sentiment, must suffice. The importance of a sound public sentiment upon the temperance question, in order to its complete triumph, cannot be doubted. From the first, the friends of the movement have had to combat public opinion, and great and important changes have been brought about. In effecting this revolution in the sentiment of the people, not only as to the use, but in many places the traffic in intoxicating drinks, the part enacted by the associations has not been insignificant. In fact, it may be said with truth, that to them we are vastly indebted for the present healthy sentiment on the subject. If, then, we would keep firmly the position to which we have attained, we must not forget how great has been the service rendered by combination in the advancement of the cause. The sentiment of the people must not be disregarded, lest we lose the ground we have gained. With the friends united, with societies in every city, town, and hamlet, the friends all actuated by the same great purpose, of inflexible hostility to all that intoxicates, with a steady perseverance, a zeal which knows no flagging, and all is sure; the cause must and will prevail.

J. M. L.

Prohibition—Pro and Con.

While in our office this morning, an old acquaintance of ours, from a different part of the State, casually stepped in, and, after the natural inquiries respecting the leading events of the last twelve or eighteen years, he inquired of us what we were now "driving at." We replied, that we were, as usual, still prescribing for the bodies of our fellow men; and, in addition to that, were doing something in conjunction with our co-laborer (who was sitting by), in the great business of *doctoring the social system*—that is, we explained, we are editing a *Temperance Paper*. At the mention of this, he drew back, as though he had seen some reptile which was both dangerous and disgusting,