

THE HISTORY OF THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT.

In the beginning of this century drunkenness prevailed to so alarming an extent in the United States, that it was feared the people would become a nation of drunkards. At that time the country was rapidly filling up with immigrants from Europe consisting largely of restless spirits who, finding themselves free from old world restraints, yielded to their evil propensities, and the Protestant Churches were not able to keep pace with the settlement of the land with a sufficient supply of gospel ordinances. The settlers, destitute of the sanctifying and elevating influences of the word of God, and the wise admonitions of Christian ministers, indulged in excesses, particularly drunkenness and accompanying vices. Some earnest people thought that the most effectual remedy for the evil was total abstinence from intoxicating drink. In 1808 a number of men holding that view formed themselves into a society at Moreau, county of Saratoga, in the State of New York. One of the rules of this society was as follows; "No member shall drink rum, gin, whiskey, wine, or any distilled liquors, or compositions of the same, or any of them, except by the advice of a physician, or in case of actual disease, (also excepting at public dinners), under the penalty of 25 cents, provided that this article shall not infringe on any religious rite." The society had other rules prohibiting members under penalties from offering any of the above liquors. It continued for fourteen years, but did not accomplish much good. Gradually ministers of the gospel and other philanthropists moved in the same direction and a society was formed in Boston in 1826, called "The American Temperance Society," to prevent the exces-