



Temperance Department.

THE CLERGY AND TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

The League Journal gives the following report of a recent speech by Canon Wilberforce at St. Mary's Hall, Coventry—

Coming to the question of personal abstinence the lecturer said he believed many clergymen were held back by the fear of what people would infer from it and he eloquently enforced the principle that as Christian men they must if they would do their Lord's work like Him, be prepared to be "numbered with the transgressors." He believed that total abstinence was the only remedy for drunkenness. There were many who were completely at the mercy of the foe, and the pledge, and their example of total abstinence was a shield thrown over and covering their weak brother. Speaking from personal experience, he could say that the results accruing from personal abstinence fully compensated for any little self-denial involved. He had, since he became a teetotaler, pledged about 1,000 workmen, and he was glad to say that a large proportion of these had stood firm. Scarcely a ship went forth from their port but contained at least one of these men, and generally when the ship returned this missionary would bring one or more of his mates to sign. Only a few days before he had received a letter from Tasmania, enclosing a £5 note for his church restoration fund, from some men who had gone out from Southampton, where they had met with him and had signed the pledge. They said in the letter it was to buy a "teetotal stone." Speaking of moderation, Mr. Wilberforce asked what was it? It seemed to him to be anything between a thimble-full and a bucket-full. Much of the mischief and wrong done through drink was done by persons who were not drunk. The high-spirited youths at Oxford who break windows, &c., were not drunk, and their mothers would indignantly resent the allegation that they were, but they were excited by drink. These and many other noble fellows got muddled and fuddled by the use of alcohol, and then when some time came that it was very needful they should be "all there" they were not, and they failed to do the right, and perhaps did some wrong and foolish thing. Speaking of the matter of influence, he said they all had it, and if, as Newman Hall once said, it was only a farthing rushlight, they should let that rushlight shine. There was, he said, a young delicate lady, who, after hearing a friend of his lecture on this subject, went home and after thought and prayer signed the pledge. A year afterwards she saw the clergyman, and she said she was disheartened, as she could not see she had done any good. The clergyman said, "Oh, keep on, you don't know what good you are doing." Just after she dined at a mansion near Apsley House. The wine was offered her, but she politely but firmly declined to take any. Subsequently a young man—a soldier home in disgrace through drink from India—came to this young lady, and to her astonishment, seized her hand and said, "Oh, Miss—, I felt I must thank you, for you have saved my soul. I had got into disgrace through drink, but I had signed the pledge of abstinence, and was recovering myself. But the banter of friends and of my club had made me feel desperate, and I had resolved that at this dinner I would break my pledge. But when I saw you refuse, I thought if that delicate young lady can dare to keep her pledge and refuse the drink, then surely I, a soldier, can, and I will. And so, Miss, you have saved me." Was that not worth living for? He would appeal to their better nature, let the arguments alone, they could be dealt with a thousand years hence, but now he would charge them as before the throne of God, that they owed it to themselves, and to Christ, that they abstain from these drinks. As to the clergy, why were they not abstainers? Not from self-indulgence, but from defective scientific teaching. They were afraid if they gave up the drink they would not be able to do the Lord's work so well, but he was convinced this was a mistake. He never knew a real case of break-down through abstinence, and speaking personally, he said he had, when a drinker, fainted in the pulpit, but since becoming an abstainer, never. Let them ask the governors of their galleys if people die or are ill through abstinence? Their reply would be never. He hoped he might again visit them, and if he did he might promise this, that he would give £5 to every person signing the pledge that night who was as a consequence then ill, if everyone who was well would give 20s towards the res-

toration of his church. Referring to the objection that the Bible was against them, he challenged the closest examination. For every passage which they could produce favoring drinking, he would find two in favor of slavery, and yet Christian civilization had shaken slavery as a viper from its hand. His advice to Timothy to take a little for his stomach's sake was to him proof conclusive that there was at this time a clerical total abstinence society, and the Bishop of Bristol and Gloucester had told him that the Greek word used meant water-drinker. Then there was the marriage at Cana. But Augustine had said that there Christ did suddenly what God is doing constantly by the slow process of nature, turned water into the juice of the grape. But even if he did not take his stand there, he would say that the Bible must not be taken as giving any hard rules as to the usages of the civilized life of every age. What may have been quite right in the Saviour's day might be altogether wrong in the 19th century. They must deal with the Bible wisely and broadly. The lecturer eloquently spoke of the broken unity of the Church of Christ, but said that in this movement was a rallying point, for here all Christians could, and did, join heart and hand to deliver men from sin, and their country from the curse of drinking. After some more apt illustrations and tellingly put points, Mr. Wilberforce alluded to the working men and the franchise. He said he expected that that great Radical, Lord Beaconsfield—would some day give the country working men the vote, and then when they demanded suppressive liquor trade legislation, he would say, "Oh, yea, it has always been the dearest object of my life." His own position was that he would vote alone for the man who was prepared to vote for the Permissive Bill. He had been told that in doing so he, as a clergyman, was joining himself with those who were seeking the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church. His reply was that firmly as he believed in the rightness and use of an Establishment, and strong as was his conviction that the union of the Church and the State was for the good of the nation, he was prepared to see the Establishment go if only by that sacrifice his country could be redeemed from the curse of drunkenness. He concluded by imploring Christian men to look at this question in the light of the cross of Christ, and by the blood of that cross he claimed every one of them as soldiers in this battle against drink. In the great American war a man was drawn to serve in one of the Northern armies, but he being ill, and fever being in his house, a neighbor said, "I'll go for you." He went, and in the first engagement he was shot through the body and killed. Some time afterwards the man for whom he had volunteered to be a substitute was seen dressing a green grave in the burying place. A person seeing the tender care with which he was discharging this duty, said, "Ah, the grave of father, or brother, or child?" "No," said the man with suppressed emotion, "this man became my substitute in the war, and he was killed, and I have come 400 miles in order that I may place on his grave these words, 'He died for me.'" Oh, if human love could thus move a human heart, should not they be moved for whom Jesus Christ has died? And would they not all write the words, "He died for me," as their inspiring motto, and, feeling they were no longer their own, come and consecrate themselves to the great temperance enterprise.—Canon Wilberforce at St. Mary's Hall, Coventry.

HALF-AN-HOUR IN AN OMNIBUS.

Two ladies were talking, and seemed not to mind that I was opposite them. One, dressed elegantly but quietly, was perfectly a lady, and tears were in her eyes and voice as she said "They tell me I ought not to feel it so keenly, ought not to let it wear upon me so, but I cannot help it. He is a perfect wreck, and he was all I could ask or wish." "And a man of such fine talent." "Yea, and has been so honored, and now to see him so degraded. He feels it all, and is as mortified as his friends are." "Why don't he try to reform?" "He has tried again and again, but it never lasts. And Doctor— has done all he can to reform him." "Wasn't it the doctor's fault?" "The doctor's mistake, entirely so; he never drank until it was proscribed him." After hearing some little more, I rose and went to bed, and said: "Pardon me, but I could not help hearing you. I had a dear friend, who was wild in college, but soon after he left he joined a temperance club, and never drank again until over forty years old. On recovering from a severe sickness, brandy was proscribed for him. He commenced drinking and never left off, but at fifty-one died of delirium tremens. Hearing you say your friend fell from a physician's prescription, I wish to hear just as much more as you are willing to tell me."

He was a lawyer in this city, and if I were to give you his name you would know it well. He commenced as partner of—. When the war broke out he left his large practice and went to the field. There he contracted muscular rheumatism. He came home and had the best physicians of the city, but for two years was a great sufferer, much of the time confined to his bed. Then Dr.—prescribed whiskey, telling him he would soon be well. In three months he was out on crutches, and in six without them. But he would continue the medicine until stronger, and then refused to stop it. So the doctor saved him, and ruined him. Body and brain are wrecked, and he would willingly take back the disease, if he could get rid of the appetite." "How distressing!" "More, a great deal, than you can imagine." "I understand you to say he never drank before?" "Never. And he was not only very temperate, but honorable, generous, and kind, a man of fine principles, and esteemed by everybody, and one who would have left an honored name if he had died ten years ago. And he feels it bitterly." "I am growing to feel that physicians should be very careful to whom they prescribe liquor." "They are getting to be. A lady friend of mine seemed weak and ailing, and I asked a physician if a little port wine would not give her strength, and he replied, 'In my early practice I should have ordered it. But when I look around and see the ladies I have made drunkards, I am appalled, and now I never order liquor in any form. It is often a good thing, sometimes very good, but I dare not take the risk of what may follow.'" "Will you permit me to use this?" I asked. "If it will do one person good, I shall be very glad. Only omit names." As the truth, unadorned, is the greatest power earth can know, I have not changed a sentence, I do not know that I have changed one word, in the above conversation.—Mrs. Lucy E. Sanford.

TWO SIDES TO THE QUESTION.

On the question whether alcohol is or is not a food, it is only fair to say that it has two sides. James Parton once said, in the Atlantic Monthly, that as soon as a drop of alcohol was taken into the system every organ it touched went to work to expel it. This statement was all very well, but that clever smoker, drinker, and materialist, Mr. John Fiske, at once proceeded to remark in reply that the same thing was equally true of a drop of water. Dr. B. W. Richardson maintains that alcohol is not, properly speaking, a food under any circumstances; while Professor Robert T. Edes, of Harvard, in the last number of the Penn Monthly, brings up a formidable array of statistics to show that it is a food, and that a considerable per centum of the quantity taken into the system remains unexpended. But while these eminent men disagree on this question, they are agreed in saying that any but a very minute dose of alcohol is decidedly injurious. Professor Edes distinctly states that a healthy man needs none at all.

Now the majority of temperance advocates in our day do not maintain that alcohol is a uniform poison, a single particle of which causes effects which are never wholly removed. But the beer-guzzlers and brandy-drinkers can get small comfort from modern science, unless it be of the amateur style of John Fiske. Alcohol is a food, they say; therefore let us use it freely. Well, what if it is a food? A glass of porter, the strongest and most nutritious of malt liquors, is less capable of maintaining life than a glass of milk. Were the alcoholic properties removed, it would be but thin and unsatisfactory stuff. With spirituous and vinous beverages this is still more true. A nourishing dose of alcohol is a minute one; a sarcoptic dose is the one taken in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. Inebriation is no more stimulus than the visionary elevation caused by opium. Drinking men take refuge behind a flimsy excuse when they ask science to help them. Alcohol, says modern research, is not necessarily deadly in its effects when taken in very small doses, and at meals. Very true, replies the chorus of tipplers; therefore let us drink and be merry, when and where we choose.

It is among this semi-intelligent class of persons who delight to call themselves "moderate drinkers" that we hope the new revival will work. It is bad enough for the laborer to waste a quarter of his wages on crazing whiskey; but it is still worse for intelligent persons, in the upper ranks, to get entangled in the chains of a habit which at best is most treacherous. The educated part of the community is most in danger. The poor man must keep sober during the day, or lose his small wages, the intellectual laborer can drink when he chooses. A few clergymen, many lawyers and doctors, and most journalists,

are habitual drinkers, and since, with all their professions of freedom, they pass no day without the use of liquor to get themselves in working trim, they ought rather to be called habitual drunkards. Men who know the truth of what they affirm declare that not one twentieth of the men who write on the New York morning papers, for instance, go through the twenty-four hours without the use of intoxicating drinks. What becomes of these bright journalists may be found out by anybody who chooses to hunt up the record of the "Bohemians" of 1860, as able a set of young writers as ever gathered in New York. It is all very well for such men to say that they can stop, and that moderate drinking is not delirium tremens. It is enough to reply that they do not stop, and that they very well know that their practice is far worse than their principles. Grant that downright teetotalism is unnecessary, we would simply ask each of our readers how many drinking men they know who do not drink too much, and betray their excesses by reddened countenance or increased poverty, or greater indifference to religious and social duties. Every man who finds liquor in any degree an alleviation of the day's discomforts is in a perilous state, whether he knows it or not. He needs, as the new reformers so constantly urge, not only the good influence of his friends, but an act of inflexible and sanctified will, backed up by all the remedial machinery of the Christian Church.—S. S. Times.

—Dr. Holland has a good word for total abstainers, in Scribner for July, by way of comment on the new activity in the direction of temperance by clergymen and others, in England and this country, who are so very persistent in reiterating what was never questioned—namely, that they are opposed to total abstinence. He says: "It is really very encouraging to see wine-bibbling clergymen and church-member trying, in a moderate way, to counteract the legitimate effects of their own pernicious example. It is a trifle irritating to listen to their disclaimers of sympathy with the 'extremists,' who have made temperance a hissing and a by-word among respectable people. It is a bit grasping to the original Adam in an old-fashioned teetotaler, who has denied himself that he might save his fellows, to be told that he is looked upon by the people of the new departure as a fanatic, but he understands exactly what that means, and should forgive it and forget it. It is a comfort and encouragement to know that the results of intemperance have become so well appreciated that 'men of moderate views' cannot keep on with their wine-drinking without doing something against their consciences. It is even amusing to see them hold to their wine-guzzles with one hand, while they gesture furiously with the other about the abuses of the excise law, and stand upon their rights as freemen, gentlemen, and Christians, with one foot, while the other is lively in kicking the illegal rum-seller. But we would not make fun of them, for, however much they may be blinded as to their own position and the position of those whose principles and policy they have derided for so many years, they are to be congratulated that they have awakened to the fact that something must be done, and that they have a duty to discharge in the matter. Nay, we are willing to go farther than this, if they prove themselves to be in earnest. We will follow their lead, knowing of course, where an earnestly pursued purpose will conduct them. All the earnest workers for temperance land in a common conclusion and the total abstainer may be sure that if these men are in earnest they will soon be in his company. There is no help for it, as he has thoroughly learned by experience and observation.—S. S. Times.

ACROSS OF TOBACCO ON THE SYSTEM.—Some years ago the French Government directed the Academy of Medicine to enquire into the influence of tobacco on the human system. The report of the commission appointed by the Academy states that a large number of the diseases of the nervous system and of the heart, noticed in the cases of those affected with paralysis or insanity, were to be regarded as the sequence of excessive indulgence in the use of this article; and it is remarked that tobacco seems primarily to act upon the organic nervous system, depressing the faculties and influencing the nutrition of the body, the circulation of the blood, and the number of red corpuscles in the blood. Attention is also called to the bad digestion, benumbed intelligence, and clouded memory of those who use tobacco to excess.

Best in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Psa. 37: 7.