

THE ABSTAINER.

ORGAN OF THE GRAND DIVISION OF THE
SONS OF TEMPERANCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

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Fidelity,--Union--Perseverance.

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Essays, &c.

NEAL DOW IN ENGLAND.

We cull a few extracts from the reports of Neal Dow's speeches during the first month of his English tour:—

THE THREE STAGES.

Most of you know, I suppose, that at the initiation of this matter in America, the good and great men who were engaged in it had no other idea but of moderation in the use of spirituous and intoxicating liquors of every sort. At first they saw darkly. Afterwards there came another stage, and that was the abstinence from the use of distilled liquors, with indulgence in the use of brewed ones. After that came the third stage, and that was total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. The adoption of this was resisted, I am sorry to say, not only by many great men amongst us, but by many good men, as you find out to your sorrow and cost here in Great Britain. Doctors of divinity resisted it, I am sorry to say; men who professed devotion to the great cause of the redemption of mankind from a fallen nature and a corrupt heart—men who ought to know—and did know, that indulgence in the use of intoxicating liquors does more to obstruct the progress of the gospel in the world than all other causes combined.—Yet sorry I am to say that this great impediment at that time was raised by great and good men amongst us, whilst men of humble position in society—men of the middling ranks—the farmers and working men, were exerting themselves to the utmost to procure protection to themselves and their children from the terrible evils resulting from the use of strong drinks. They were looked coldly upon, frowned upon, and resisted by great and good men, such as those whose opposition you have to encounter here in Great Britain. The cry was then—years and years ago—“Oh, too fast and too far; you will ruin the temperance cause by your fanaticism—sure to ruin it by over-excited zeal, by want of judgment and discretion and the wisdom which men ought to have in directing and controlling a movement like this.”

NO “HANGING ON BEHIND.”

I remember once, in the city of Portland, some years ago, at a great meeting like this—only not half so large—when an attempt was made to revive the temperance cause amongst us, efforts were made to procure the attendance of influential men, and particularly of clergymen—and glad I am to say that the temperance cause in the United States was inaugurated by clergymen, and exclusively

carried on by them for many years. Leading clergymen, Dr Edwards and many others, inaugurated the movement in our country, and carried it on. But great efforts were made for the purpose of stimulating influential men to do something to remove the evil. The opening speech at one of the meetings was made by a clergyman,—an old man, full of fire and of the love and fear of God! an energetic man he was, a man of progress; not afraid of going too fast or too far in the right direction, although he had judgment enough to know and feel sure he was in the right direction. Such was the speech he made, exhorting the people to be up and with one accord to exert themselves in procuring protection to themselves and their children from this tremendous evil, that he had all the hearts of the people with him, you might see it in their upturned faces and flashing eyes. The next speech was made by a most eloquent doctor of divinity—a most excellent man, but a conservative; and the tenor of his speech was to this effect, that his highly learned and reverend brother had proposed measures which he felt confident would result in great injury to the temperance cause; and he counselled caution,—feeling the way,—not being too fast—not being too resolute—not being in earnest—but being very cautious and very timid. He thought that was the right policy, and he referred to a custom with us down east,—among the farmers; which was this; when they came with a load of lumber to the brow of a hill, they take off all the oxen except the pair upon “the tongue,” and hook them on behind, to prevent the load from going down hill precipitately. The clergyman said to the meeting—“Now look; here is this immense load of lumber; it approaches the brow of a steep declivity; the oxen, hitched on behind, hang back with all their power, and the load passes safely down. Which then are most useful; the oxen on behind, or the oxen in front?” “Ah,” said the other clergyman, “but that is not our case. Our load is all uphill, and we don't want any hanging on behind.”

“STAND ASIDE!”

We approach this subject with no fanatical zeal. We approach the men whose pecuniary interests, whose appetites, or whose passions, are involved in this matter in opposition to us, with no unfriendly or unkindly feeling; but, God helping us, we will have protection for our children from that infernal traffic. In our country we tell these people, the traffickers in strong drink, whose lust for gold is such that they will clutch it if they can, although crusted with the heart's blood of the best and bravest amongst us,—we tell them we will have protection by law. I was out in Penn-

sylvania some time ago, and as we were riding along in the rural districts, a friend with me said, “There lives a Quaker there; some years ago, his father, who dwelt there, was awakened in the night by a noise, as he thought, of the opening of a window; and on listening he felt sure of it; and he stepped quietly out of bed, and taking his fowling piece, he opened the door quietly, looked out into the adjoining room, and thought he saw a dark form passing along slowly between his eye and the white wall on the opposite side of the kitchen; and, in his quiet gentle tones he said, ‘Friend, I advise thee to stand aside, because I am going to shoot right where thou standest.’” So we say to the traffickers in strong drink,—“Stand aside! we mean to show where you stand. If the ball finds you there, it is your fault, not ours; we give you fair warning.”

PROTECTION.

When the total abstinence principle was unanimously adopted by our temperance reformers, the veterans in the cause imagined that they might lay aside their harness and have peace, but they soon found to their cost that there was no peace to them in that war, for intemperance continued—not as before, indeed, for great progress had been made; but, nevertheless, intemperance continued—so the drunk traffic continued, and the grey hairs of fathers and mothers continued to go down with sorrow to the grave, grieving for the ruin of their children through that traffic. And these men began to say, How is this?—Cannot we be protected in our fire-sides?—Our property is protected; our horses, our swine, even, are protected; everything is protected by a stringent law, except our children whom we love more than all. Are we to stand by and see our children ruined before our faces, with no power to prevent it?—sent down to a drunkard's grave that a few men may make money of it? And the answer was, No, we have a right to protection; we will have protection. This was the fourth, and as we now regard it, the last stage in the temperance reformation. This new movement sprang up; some people called it prohibition; we called it protection to ourselves, our children, and our country in all its interests, from the terrible results of the traffic in strong drink. That traffic accomplishes no good results to the country, whilst the mischief's flowing from it are infinitely greater than those resulting from all other causes of evil combined. We declared that we would not endure it; we would have protection from this infernal business.

“RISKED MY LIFE.”

Very early in the history of the temperance reform some very able men were en-