

REPORT OF THE SYNOD'S COMMITTEE ON TEMPERANCE.

Your Committee on Temperance have to bring before you in an official manner only that which is well known to the members of Court, in their individual capacity. We are all in our pastoral duties brought daily into contact with the vice of intemperance in some of its varied forms. The desire for the indulgence of depraved appetites and vitiated tastes, forms perhaps the most marked feature of fallen human nature; and conspicuous among the depravities and vices of men is a thirst for stimulating agents such as Opium and Alcohol.

Your Committee do not feel called upon to furnish proof of the evil effects of intoxicating drinks, upon the physical constitution of man. Testimony to that effect has, through means of the press, been laid before the world, from the highest authorities in the Old World and in the New.

Nor do your Committee feel disposed to lay before you any minute statistics as to the actual waste of life attendant upon the excessive use of Alcoholic drinks. We have heard so frequently of the thousands in Great Britain and America who annually perish, the victims of insatiable lust of drink, that we have come familiar with the melancholy truth. But your Committee would remind the Synod that there exists amongst us an evil of no ordinary magnitude,—blighting the temporal and spiritual prospects of multitudes of our people—destroying the happiness of thousands of our families—wasting the resources of the country, and crippling the income of the Church.

Your Committee have given this matter their most serious consideration, and they are of opinion that special means should be adopted, in subordination to the word of God, to meet this tide of unmitigated evil. Under this conviction we have endeavoured, and with at least partial success, to impress on those with whom we were in Providence brought in contact, the great evil of countenancing the drinking habits of modern society. Within the bounds of the Presbytery of Georgetown, the members of which, with one exception, form the Committee, meetings have been held and lectures and sermons have been delivered in all the congregations with a view to stem the tide of Intemperance, and the result has been that hundreds have declared their resolution altogether to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage. Nor have your Committee been alone in this work. There is a rapid change taking place in the views of enlightened men, as to the propriety of habitually using alcoholic drinks. In several counties of this Province, the authorities have refused to license the traffic in ardent spirits, regarding the gains to the state arising therefrom as unhallowed, and a real loss to the community generally. Nor is your Committee prepared to acknowledge the right of any Government to legalize any traffic which can flourish only at the cost of the character, happiness and life of many of its own subjects.

While your Committee mark with pleasure the progress of habits of Abstinence, they still have to deplore the countenance given by men of respectability of all ranks, and of all official capacities, to the drinking habits of the present day—and to deplore also that men who call themselves Christians, and who seek and obtain admittance to the most sacred ordinances of the Christian Church, hesitate not in many instances, to live by the gains of this unhallowed traffic, as carried on at the present day.

Your Committee have had no funds at their disposal, and are not therefore required to give account of their stewardship in that respect.

Your Committee would earnestly recommend that ministers be enjoined to preach upon the subject of Temperance, as often as practicable; and that energetic efforts be put forth throughout the bounds of the Church to impress upon the minds of our people the necessity for carefully guarding against the improper use of these intoxicating agents, and the propriety of restricting them to their proper use as chemical preparations, and for medicinal and sacramental purposes.

All which is respectfully submitted.

NEIL McKAY, *Convener.*