

### The Temperance Cause.

At the annual meeting of the Total Abstinence Section of the Church of England Temperance Society, held at Exeter Hall, London, England, the Bishop of London (Dr. Temple) was presented with an address expressive of the feelings of thankfulness with which the Society had hailed the appointment to the See of London of one who was already a chosen champion, a known leader of men in the temperance cause, and assuring him of the goodwill with which all temperance workers would co-operate to aid in making his episcopate a turning-point of victory in their particular branch of Church effort.

After the reading of the report, the Bishop made a most eloquent speech, from which we take the following extract, from "Church Bells"—

Amidst this general work for the whole diocese I cannot devote to Temperance so much time as I hope to devote by-and-by. One reason why, though I was unwilling on many accounts to leave my friends in the West—I yet accepted the Bishopric of London, was, that I hoped by this step to come into more direct contact with the masses of my fellow-countrymen, and to find greater opportunities for fulfilling the mission which the Church laid upon me when I was consecrated Bishop, that I should always have regard for the poor—poor in this world, but specially marked out for honour by our Lord and our Heavenly Father. Now the cause of temperance is the cause of the people. True, intemperance is an evil which spreads through all ranks; there are sinners, and sinners of this special sort, in even the highest classes; there is much in all ranks to be severely blamed; there is enough to make the preaching of temperance still a most important part of the work of the Christian ministry. But the poor suffer more than any other class from the presence of the evil amongst them. Intemperance brutalises poverty it separates it from the consolations of religion. The poor themselves feel that from this, and in many cases from this alone, a great portion of their sufferings is derived. Of all things which can be done to elevate the labouring classes, nothing is to be compared with the work of those who, by their sympathy and encouragement, and by sharing if need be in the sacrifices which must necessarily be made, do their best to induce men to cast away this temptation far from them, and to seek to elevate their positions, their families, their own souls, by rising above all the associations of intemperance. It is not that the poor are more intemperate than the rich, but that intemperance has a more certain and deadly effect on their condition; so that, even if others may be left to face the consequences of their folly, the working man is in a position which calls on all around to help him if they can. If I could do anything by labouring amongst the poor to make them find it easier to attain a high religious and moral standpoint by casting out this temptation entirely, I should feel that I was doing a Bishop's work. The religious life of the people at large is deepened through temperance; and

the work of a Bishop should therefore be to encourage his clergy to pursue it; he should set them the example, and, if there are sacrifices to be made, he should be the first to make them. There is not now, however, the same demand for sacrifice that there was formerly. The numbers here present are proof of this. The first men who took the total abstinence pledge,—because they believed it to be, as it has since been proved to be, the main instrument in battling against the great evil,—those men had much to face and much to fight. They had to bear the scorn of their neighbours, and they did bear it, that they might shelter from the same scorn their weaker brethren. To be a total abstainer then required courage. Those days have long gone by. I can claim no part in them. When I became a total abstainer, from the conviction that a necessity to become such was laid upon me by God, it was comparatively easy to abstain. We had to face two or three unpleasant meetings; men sometimes grew angry, and tried to terrify the speakers by threats, which might have come to something if those on the platform had been cowardly enough to run away; but that was a small matter to face, and as soon as it became known that a large number of people were prepared to claim their Christian liberty, very little was said against those who asserted that right, and declined to share in those intoxicating liquors said by some to be amongst the delights of life. Total abstainers now find that abstinence is no great matter as regards society, and no great matter either as regards personal enjoyment. Some, like myself, may occasionally fancy that they would like a glass of wine or beer; many can remember days when they did like it; but most of those who have abstained even for six months will confess that they have given up small for far greater enjoyments; the enjoyment of being at ease, not troubled in conscience as to whether or not they ought to take this step; the enjoyment of feeling that they are taking part in the resistance that is being made to one of the greatest evils assailing their fellow-men. And if you take body for body,—in spite of the remarks sometimes made that abstainers look pale and thin, and as if they were drawn from the unwholesome portions of society,—I do not think that you will find that you have really lost anything in the way either of enjoyment or of health by your total abstinence. Lord Bramwell calls upon us not to interfere with the pleasure of so many of our people. I say that, if you take an equal number of abstainers and non-abstainers, I doubt if we abstainers would not be found to have the larger amount of pleasure. We who belong to the Church of England Temperance Society recognize the liberty of every man to walk by the light of his own conscience, and to judge for himself what he ought to do; we work hand in hand with non-abstainers, if they are ready by all other means to try to stop this evil which is doing such terrible mischief; we bear in mind that there are other sides as well as our own; and we hail as fellow-workers those who do not quite agree with our opinions.

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