

questions put to probationers by congregations, and thus a false standard of ministerial qualifications and worth will be set up in the place of the standard of the Bible.

Having said so much in opposition to extremists, I consider it proper to state that I have laboured for years in the temperance work, and mean to do so to the end of my life, but I claim the right to do it in my own way. I once did consider the pledge lawful, and induced others to sign it, but I see it to be a snare and therefore improper. As for prohibition, I decidedly object to it; for if a Christian is free to use wine, he has a right to buy it; and if he has a right to buy it, another has a right to sell it, nor do I see that any one has a right to prevent his doing so, not even the Legislature. O but, says one, the Legislature may restrict the liberty of some for the benefit of the whole community. Yes, I admit that it has the power, but not the moral right to do so any more than it has the right to put some to death for the benefit of all the people. This would be murder, and that is tyranny, the philosophy of Caiaphas, when in his cruelty and cowardice he said, "It is expedient for us, that one should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." It is false philosophy and morality to deprive any of their God-given rights for the benefit of either few or many. I am persuaded that this movement is unsound, and prejudicial to the interests of true religion. It is kindred to the asceticism that the apostle predicted, "commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth," 1st Tim. iv. 3. Of this system the Romish Church made a terrible use, nor are there wanting indications of her doing so again by turning this new ascetic movement to her own advantage, for already priests, bishops and cardinals are moving in this direction. They discover that total abstinence is in accord with the spirit and principles of their religious system. Why then, say some, should not the Protestant Churches fight with the same weapons? No, the Church of God must use not the carnal, but the spiritual weapons provided for her by her Head. What then should be done to arrest the pro-