

The Temperance Cause.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting was held in the Library at Lambeth Palace, last month, the Bishop of Dover presiding for his Grace the Archbishop. The report, which was read by the Rev. G. H. Wright, superintendent, gave a return (partly estimated) of the present membership of the society, the sum of the figures being 607,074, to which must be added 50,510 for departmental branches (including Seamen's Mission), making a total of 657,584, an increase of 104,432 as compared with the total of last year. The Church of Ireland Temperance Society reported 625 branches, and at least 5,000 members. Although no definite returns of membership could be given, ample evidence was forthcoming from time to time of the growth of the society in India, Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and other parts, while it was a striking fact that almost every new colonial Bishop was found to be a staunch member and worker. To this rule the nomination of the Rev. W. T. Thornhill Webber, vicar of St. John's, Red Lion-square, to the see of Brisbane, was no exception, and the Council tendered him their warm congratulations. The total number of coffee taverns known to exist in the kingdom is 1,244, together with a large number of other agencies such as clubs, reading-rooms, burial guilds, and the like. The society's income had been 5,097, an increase on the year of 476. In the course of their remarks the Council made the following reference to "Signs of the Times":—

"Very noteworthy, by all friends of Church Defence, is the testimony of an esteemed Welsh Nonconformist lately given to the vicar of Brecon. 'I was asked,' he said, 'to preside at a meeting for disestablishment, and I would ten years ago have at once consented to do so, but knowing what the Church is doing on behalf of temperance I refused, and used my influence to stop that and similar meetings.'"

In opening the proceedings Bishop Parry warmly commended the step which was taken at the instigation of Canon Ellison about twelve years ago, when the Church of England Temperance Society ceased to be a total abstinence society and adopted the double basis. The right rev. prelate said that personally he had never taken any total abstinence pledge, but for the last six or seven years he had been a total abstainer.

The annual meeting of the Total Abstinence Section was held on Wednesday evening at Exeter Hall, which was crowded in every part. The Bishop of London, who presided, took occasion in the course of his address to say:—"One reason why I have accepted the office of Bishop of London is the hope that that office might bring me into more direct contact with the great masses of my fellow countrymen, and that I might find more opportunity of fulfilling the mission which the Church laid upon me when I was consecrated a Bishop—namely, that I should always have special regard to the poor. The

cause of this society is emphatically the cause of the great mass of the people. It is not that the poor are more intemperate than others, but it is that intemperance has a more certain and a more deadly effect upon them and upon their position. If by laboring amongst the poor I could make them in the slightest degree to find it easier to win for themselves a more religious and more moral condition by casting out all the temptation and the provocations of temptation entirely, then, indeed, I should feel I was doing a Bishop's work, a true superintendence of the religious life of the people at large; a work which the Bishop is bound to encourage and his clergy to pursue.

The day was when those who took up the cause of total abstinence believed as they did so, and as experience has since proved, that this is and necessarily must be the main instrument to be used in fighting this great evil. Those were days when to be a total abstainer required some little courage. In the work of those days I cannot say that I took any part; in those days I cannot say that there was any honor or glory in which I could claim a share; and when I became a total abstainer, from the conviction of the necessity which, as it seemed to me, God had laid upon me already, it was a comparatively easy thing. I had no doubt once or twice to face an unpleasant meeting; once or twice I have seen men get rather angry about it, and I have seen attempts made to terrify all the speakers on the platform by all sorts of threats which likely enough might have come to something if those on the platform had been cowards enough to run away from them.

But after all this was a very small matter to face, as already it was so well understood that in this matter there were a very large number indeed who were prepared to claim their Christian liberty of total abstinence. As time has gone on, the total abstainers have not only found that the sacrifice which they have been called upon to make is after all no such very great matter in the face of society; they have found also by experience that it is no very great matter as regards their personal enjoyment. No doubt amongst their ranks there are many like myself who would feel some sort of pleasure in a glass of wine now and then; no doubt there are many who would still enjoy a glass of beer; and no doubt a great many remember the time when they did enjoy it and can recall when it was a real pleasure.

THE

Weather is now growing warmer, and the extreme languid feeling, want of appetite, dulness, languor and lassitude, effects ninetenths of the human family and often BOILS, BLACQUES, etc., that have been lying dormant in the blood for months past now make their appearance, all caused by your blood not being in proper condition. It is impossible to throw off these impurities without the proper remedy, and the most reliable medicine is Estey's Iron and Quinine Tonic. Sold by all druggists. Price 50c., six bottles for \$2.50.

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