

→‡ OUR BANNER. ‡←

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FIFTY YEARS OF COVENANTER HISTORY.

AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, PA.*

BY THE PASTOR, REV. T. P. STEVENSON.

TEXT: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts."—Ps. cxlv. 4.

These words are not only a prediction, but a command. They declare God's will that each generation shall instruct the next concerning his being, his perfections and his works. This principle rules in many other departments of human life as well as in religion. About three times in a century the accumulated wealth of the world, its governments and all social institutions, its schools and literature, its stately edifices, its storied monuments, its cherished archives, are transferred to the care and possession of other hands. Every generation stands, therefore, as a mediator between the generation past and that which is to come, and its office is to receive, to improve, and to transmit to its successor, the accumulated results of all the past labors and achievements of the human race, like a well-tilled farm which descends from father to son, and increases in value and beauty through successive generations.

Among the treasures thus to be preserved and handed down, unspeakably the most important is the knowledge of the true religion. If no provision had been made for the transmission of this trust, the knowledge of God and of the way of life would die with those who possess it, and would require to be revealed anew to each generation. But God never repeats his revelations. Successive revelations, indeed, there have been, but each was the complement, not the repetition, of those which went before, and each one, once made, was to suffice forever. The law was given at Sinai for all humanity through all

*The Second and Third congregations, Philadelphia, united with the First in the services of this occasion.

wiser and more zealous effort, these numbers might have been greatly increased. Let us resolve to day that whatever zeal and patience and fidelity and self sacrifice can do, shall be done in this city for the promotion of the whole cause of Christ, and of that part of his work which is specially committed to our hands.

*FIFTY YEARS OF TEMPERANCE WORK.**

BY THE REV. J. C. K. MILLIGAN, NEW YORK.

You deserve the commendations and gratulations of brethren. For fifty years your organization has stood, and is now three bands. You have labored against the ordinary difficulties of a Christian Church, and also against the greater opposition to a witnessing Church contending for the sovereign claims of Jesus over the nations, and when the nation and church unite in their rejection. You have done this with unwavering integrity, and without abating jot or tittle of your covenanted principles. Others have done virtuously, but who can show a better record than yours?

In this memorial service I am asked to speak on "Fifty Years of Temperance." It is an appropriate theme; for Temperance is a fruit of the Spirit, is essential to the welfare of all to whom the Gospel comes, and has been a "faithful contending" of this Church in all its history. But the subject is too vast for an hour's discussion; and only the barest outline can here be given of a few prominent points.

Has there been progress? and what is it? In the answer we must remember that progress is a relative term. It may exist where there is apparent retrogression, and may have been great where others have far exceeded it. Like the frog in the well, the friends of Temperance may have slipped backward every night, but by daily gains be nearing their goal. The pendulum moves both ways equally, yet the hands go steadily forward. The ship always zigzags, and is often driven back; but at last reaches the haven. The driving wheel of an engine may move in an opposite direction from its propelling force, and "the likeness as the appearance of a man" on the throne above the wheels of Divine Providence, reveals One who can and will secure moral and spiritual progress, even though the wings, and eyes, and hands, and the living creatures running and returning as the appearance of lightning, seem in the prophet's vision an infinite tangle and contrariety of motion. All history is the record of the Redeemer's progress, and illustrates the riddle of Samson: "Out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong comes forth sweetness."

The Temperance cause has had its vicissitudes; here and in one

* Abstract of Address delivered at the Semi-Centennial celebration of the First Reformed Presbyterian church, Philadelphia.

phase progress, there and in another phase retrogression; one effort may have failed, but only to be followed by others more effective for the end. If we look at the liquor power, the number of buyers and sellers, the money invested and its profits, the grip it keeps on politicians and parties, and government, and its officials; if we consider the mourning, desolation and woe that follow in its train, and the host who annually go to ruin and enter the drunkard's eternity; if we judge from the indifference and opposition of the majority of men, we may conclude that there is little progress. But looking at the reform, there is great progress: the cause is maintained on higher ground, the friends are better organized, the divisions in sentiment only secure a greater variety of work and a larger host of workers, and the foes are driven to action that leaves them deserted of all but the worst classes. The *New York Retailer*, a liquor organ, says: "Everywhere the liquor question is pushed to the front; it is not dragged in by politicians, but forces itself in spite of them. It is prohibition in one place, taxation in another, and Sunday suppression in a third. Under the general head of Temperance this now foremost question is breaking through party lines, overruling time-serving politicians, and demanding to be heard." By such wails let us be encouraged.

Fifty years ago the doctrine and pledge of Temperance was "Moderation." Among the ministry and membership of the churches, and among active Temperance workers, were many who taught and practiced total abstinence as a theory; but to require this was hardly thought of. At the close of 1832, General Lewis Cass, Secretary of War, issued an order prohibiting liquors at any army post, and its sale by any sutler; the Secretary of the navy made a similar order for the navy; and a Congressional Temperance Society was formed in February, 1833, which in 1834 was strong enough to pass a bill forbidding the traffic among the Indians of Florida. There were in 1833, 5,000 societies, with 1,500,000 members in the United States pledged to moderation; and by their efforts, 4,000 distilleries had been closed, and 6,000 liquor-sellers had left the business. Yet many Christians drank moderately, even ministers drank and advocated its moderate use; few Christians and fewer churches, engaged in temperance work; many opposed it and championed drinking; at raisings, huskings, parties, weddings and funerals, the social glass was expected and generally participated in; and drunkenness prevailed in society and was frequent in the churches, though less common than it would be now with the same amount of drinking, as liquors then were not so adulterated with poisoned drugs.

In May, 1833, Luther Jackson, of New York, prepared and circulated a total abstinence pledge, and received over 1,000 signatures. The first National Temperance Convention met in Philadelphia at the close of the same month; there were 440 delegates from nineteen states, who, after three days' discussion, condemned the liquor traffic

as morally wrong, and recommended the early adoption of the total abstinence pledge. The Rev. Albert Barnes, of Philadelphia, preached and published two sermons that exerted a powerful influence. Mr. Delavan, of New York, labored for the new doctrine with great zeal and liberality. Dr. Cheever, then in Connecticut, published a little book, "Deacon Giles' Distillery," which brought upon him fines and imprisonment, but re-acted powerfully in favor of total abstinence, and as with a whip of scorpions drove out the traffic from Christian circles. The Temperance societies rapidly adopted the total abstinence pledge, and by 1839, all had done so or disbanded. The "Washingtonians," or reformed drunkard movement, originated in 1840 with a club of six drinking men in a tavern in Baltimore. They were moved to appoint one of their number to go and hear a noted temperance lecturer and report; the result was discussion, a quarrel with the landlord, and the organization of "The Washington Society," to promote abstinence among drinking men. John B. Gough was an early convert, saved in the midst of a drunken debauch, and soon became an earnest Christian and the foremost temperance orator of the world. The new movement became a mighty tidal wave, indifferent Christians were aroused to zeal and consecration, a hundred and fifty thousand drunkards were reformed, many of these spoke on the platform with evident power from on high, and in a short time the rum traffic and drinking customs were reduced to the lowest point yet reached in this country.

The Maine law movement, started by Neal Dow, was agitated before 1840, grew up by discussion, in 1846 was framed into a partially prohibitory law, and in 1851 was perfected substantially as it is to-day. Then the liquor used in Maine equalled *three gallons* for each inhabitant, and at this rate the United States revenue from the sale to-day would be \$3,000,000; but now the amount used is less than *a gill* for each inhabitant, and the United States revenue there is only \$36,000, which shows that prohibition does prohibit. Other states made similar enactments, and with similar results. Vermont for thirty years has almost annihilated the traffic. Massachusetts, with Boston against her, has steadily repressed the sale and use. The legislature of Kansas in 1866, providentially preserved from an invasion of roughs by a flood that swept away the bridge and filled the river with floating ice, passed a prohibitory law; and in 1880 it was made into a constitutional amendment and is sustained, against superhuman efforts, as a part of her governmental life. Iowa, by 30,000 majority, followed Kansas in the adoption of a prohibitory amendment to her Constitution; but a blunder of the legislature gave her supreme court an excuse for nullifying it. Ohio, the distillery state, this year in spite of political trickery cast over 321,000 votes for Prohibition, which is a majority of the whole vote of last year, and it is believed that, with a fair count, it would have been a majority this year. Politicians may well stand aghast; for this "sound of a going" heralds the advance of the

army of the Lord to crush the demon of intemperance between the millstones of his righteous indignation.

The Woman's Crusade in 1873 was started by Dr. Dio Lewis, relating in a temperance lecture the touching story of his mother's pleading with the liquor-sellers not to sell drink to her husband, of her success with them, and the subsequent conversion of his father. The Christian women who heard him, after earnest wrestling with God for guidance, resolved to go and plead with liquor-sellers to cease their unholy business. In scores and hundreds, through many of the Western states, passing from one dram-shop to another, with no other weapons than prayers, and tears, and hymns, Christian mothers, wives and daughters labored through the winter, and succeeded in closing many saloons, and in inducing many to abandon the liquor traffic. There were mistakes made by these devoted ladies; but the outgrowth of it is the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which is a most efficient agency for good, and has abundant proofs of the Spirit of God among them. The recent victories for Prohibition in Kansas, Iowa and Ohio were chiefly the result of their active and prayerful efforts. Woman's soul has felt the deepest thrusts of the drink demon's sword; Christian woman, last at the cross and first at the sepulchre, has learned most fully the Christian spirit; feeble woman readily recognizes that the Gospel and grace of God alone can prevail in reforming effort, and therefore it is that tender females have been foremost in Christian life, and work, and martyrdom, and they must be found in the forefront of the hottest battle if a Temperance triumph is to be gained.

Time would fail to tell of the secret orders, which, well-meant and more or less effective for good, have yet been a cause of division in the ranks and often a devil's device to deceive silly souls; of license laws that legalized the traffic and made it respectable, yet were dikes on the banks of the river of death, and when enforced, were powerful checks on its deadly current; of local option that banished rum from many limited spheres, and has lately prevailed in forty-eight of the fifty-two counties of Georgia; of civil damage laws that at least plucked from greedy dealers some of their gains for the drunkard's wife and children; of temperance parties whose nominations tickled the vanity of aspirants to office, but whose "scattering votes" only made the cause ridiculous, or elected the worst candidates; and of the indefatigable workers whose unchronicled sighs and toils made possible the results gained by men whose names are everywhere known and honored. Newspapers, societies, lecturers, novelists, judges, lawyers, physicians, ministers, a galaxy of names, have had place in the heroic company of apostles, confessors, and martyrs of Temperance.

The churches, as always, in the last half century contributed most of the men and women enrolled as soldiers of the cross for Temper-

ance; and no church had a monopoly of names, nor can claim to have been *the* Temperance church. Sadly, too, the churches furnished many of the bitter antagonists who battled against abstinence from the cup of devils, and opened the table of the Lord to those "who sold liquid damnation for five cents a glass" to enslaved victims of appetite. The assembly of the Presbyterian church in 1832, declared "that the common use of strong drink, *however moderate*, has been a fatal, soul-destroying barrier against the Gospel;" in 1871 declared the traffic, or renting of houses for it, to be "contrary to the spirit of God's Word, and wholly inconsistent with the claims of Christian duty;" and in 1877, called upon sessions to "refuse to admit to membership, or to retain those within her pale, who are engaged in the sinful traffic." True, some of their Synods, as that of New York this year, and many of the ministers and members, have antagonized the principle of total abstinence, and lived in violation of the assembly's declarations, keeping the church unpurged from communion with rumselling; but the declarations stand as the judgment of their supreme court. The United Presbyterian Assembly has taken similar ground and also recommended unfermented wine for the Lord's table; but there are among its ministers and members those who favor the use, engage in the traffic, and openly oppose Temperance effort. The Methodist church, years ago, embodied total abstinence in its book of discipline, required the exclusion of those who, against reproof, persist in the use, or traffic, or in aiding and abetting them, and classified these with gambling and debasing immoralities; it is claimed that all its ministers are abstainers, and advocates of it. The Episcopal church, in company with Universalist churches, has no prohibition of rum-selling and receives the rum-seller without question to their communion. The Popish priests, despite the noble efforts of Father Matthew and the Total Abstinence Brotherhoods, generally are drinkers; and in our cities the keepers of most of the drinking saloons, and the most infamous of them, are loyal to the Scarlet Woman who still puts the cup of her abominations to the lips of the kings of the earth. Dr. Marling, in a report to the Presbyterian Assembly of 1882, says of the United States: "In all the denominations except the Methodist, there are ministers who defend the use of intoxicating liquor;" and that in the Kirk of Scotland, only *one* minister in *eight* is an abstainer, while in the Free and United Presbyterian, and in the Presbyterian church in Ireland, only *one* in *three* are abstainers. But the reduction in British revenues of \$1,500,000 from 1881 to 1882, on account of the less amount of beer used, to which Mr. Gladstone alludes with satisfaction in his last speech, shows that the cause of Temperance is progressing favorably, and mainly from the change in sentiment among the churches.

The Reformed Presbyterian church, from its origin, has faithfully witnessed against all the evils in society, intemperance not excepted. The first total abstinence society in New England was organized more

than fifty years ago by a Covenanter minister, and for years it consisted of himself and his precentor as President and Secretary ; but gaining ground, a Seceder minister came to oppose them and advocate the moderate use. There was a large meeting, and the Seceder made a strong speech ; but at its close, the congratulations of the drunkards who were out in full force, convinced him that he was wrong, and he joined the society. The Covenanter minister was taught the doctrine and practice of total abstinence by his mother in Scotland. In 1833 the doctrine preached by Covenanters, and their practice for the most part, was against the use even moderately ; but the troubles of that period, arising from the division of the church on the question of the maintenance of their great distinctive doctrine and practice, prevented public action on Temperance. The magnitude of the evil, however, soon called out expressions of condemnation from the Synod of the church. In 1836 it was unanimously resolved that as “ the traffic in ardent spirits is seldom or never carried on by any without contributing to the destruction of both the souls and bodies of their fellowmen, we recommend to our people totally to abstain from the traffic in ardent spirits.” In 1841, it was resolved : “ That members of this church be and hereby are prohibited from engaging in or continuing the traffic : and, that wherever there are individuals employed in this traffic, sessions are hereby directed to deal with them immediately in such a way that this evil may be removed from the church in the best and speediest manner.” In 1857, it was resolved : “ That the *sale and use* of intoxicating drinks, as a beverage, is at this day an offence deserving church discipline, and that sessions be directed to act accordingly.” In 1874 Synod recommended that intoxicating wines be not used in the observance of the Lord’s Supper. Thus, from the beginning, our church has through the half century advocated and maintained total abstinence ; it has acted at every step with unanimous decision ; there is not in its communion a liquor-seller, or a known tippler, nor a minister who does not preach and practice total abstinence ; and the entire body is a unit in advocating and laboring to secure the complete suppression of the sale and use of all intoxicating beverages by local option, and by prohibitory amendments to the constitutions of the several states.

The work yet to be done is vast. What the consumption of liquors in the United States must be is seen in the fact that, in 1882, the national revenue from this source was over \$86,000,000, and in 1883 was over \$90,000,000. If we look at the amount drunk, remembering the facts in the states that prohibit the sale, and the large importations made annually, the fact is alarming that of domestic liquors about *six quarts*, and of domestic ales, beer, etc., over *ten gallons* are drunk on an average by each inhabitant of the United States. This flood of vice and crime is growing as the years advance, and if unchecked will soon convert us into a nation of drunkards. The church is yet but

half awake to the appalling sweep of this temporal and eternal ruin, We must anew lift up our prayer with strong crying and tears to the Divine Saviour that his Spirit may raise an effective standard against it. And the church, his representative and agent in moral and spiritual reformation, must cease to rest in admonitions and recommendations; and must absolutely prohibit in her members the use of all intoxicants. But before she can consistently and effectively do this, the intoxicating cup must be peremptorily banished from the table of the Lord which she spreads for his children. Not till then is she herself pure; and only thus can the accursed thing be wholly extirpated from our beloved land.



*FIFTY YEARS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.**

BY THE REV. JAMES KENNEDY, NEW YORK.

While most heartily joining in the congratulations offered by the former speaker, we hope that in giving a place in your commemorative services to Foreign Missions, it is the power of the same Spirit working in you, that once made the devoted M'Cheyne exclaim, "Oh! I must get a missionary map to pray by!" and if anything I can say on this subject, in the short time at my disposal, should cultivate and strengthen such a feeling, the effort will not be in vain.

Under the general term, Foreign Missions, there are many delightful views of the work of God, as now prosecuted in the world, to which our attention might be profitably directed; as the philosophy, the history, and the statistics of modern missions.

In relation to the first, the philosophy of missions, it is, perhaps enough to say that in prosecuting such work the Church is only carrying out a necessary and universal law of life. All life in its active form consists of two things. First, a life force within; and secondly, that life force within acting aggressively on something without, so as to assimilate and incorporate it with itself. All life, vegetable and animal, commences with an initial cell, which cell has the mysterious power of assimilating and absorbing foreign matter, and of growing by adding cell to cell, each new cell adding to the power of the life force, till it reaches the limits of its being. This is the law of all life, and of every organism, whether in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, or in the domestic, social, national, and spiritual organisms, with which we are familiar. Among these the Church is a spiritual organism, and her initial cell is Christ—"in Him was life"—and to fulfill the conditions of her being, life in her must be an aggressive

*Abstract of an address delivered Nov. 20th, 1883, in the First Reformed Presbyterian Church, South 17th and Bainbridge Streets, Philadelphia, on the occasion of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of its re-organization in Cherry Street, in 1833.