

A BISHOP ON TEMPERANCE.

The temperance question is so important, and is so deeply agitating the whole public that every reference to it by men in positions of influence is eagerly caught up. Christian ministers are, as a rule, the friends and advocates of total abstinence and prohibition. A few do not favour prohibitory legislation though they practice and teach total abstinence. A very few do not believe in abstinence for the individual any more than they believe in prohibition for the community or the State. To this last class Bishop Medley of Fredericton belongs. He has on more than one occasion, if we do not mistake, delivered himself in favour of moderate drinking and against prohibition. He has been quoted by drinking men and rum-sellers; and that his views have been a source of strength to the men of the trade, and have been worth votes to them in the several C. T. Act contests, there can be no doubt. One of the things the friends of temperance in Fredericton have always had to contend against is the influence of the Bishop's well-known antipathy to every movement to abolish the sale and use of intoxicants.

Last week, at a meeting of the Church of England Temperance Society, he took occasion to speak his opinions and feelings very fully and very emphatically. There is something strange, to say the least, in the time chosen for this latest deliverance. The C. of E. Temperance Society, though organized several years ago, had for a long time been practically dead; and some of the bishop's people say he was responsible for the little or no life it had. Within a few months, chiefly through the influence of Sir Leonard Tilley, the Society has taken on new life. Its meetings have been regularly held and interesting, and it has been exerting a good influence and giving promise of being an increasingly effective, aggressive temperance force in the city.

Was the bishop displeased that a society in which he has no interest, with whose aims he has no sympathy, and which he is believed to have sought to kill, should be very much alive? It looks like it; and as though he had determined to strike the movement a death blow. We do not believe he will succeed this time.

The bishop's position, according to the report of his speech, is simply this: Total abstinence is a mistake, a sign of weakness, even an injury; and men should be careful about signing such a pledge. Wine and other liquors are God's "good creatures," and he doubted whether any had a right to call them bad and refrain from their use. He always partook of liquor himself and declared that it did him good. Of course, he said, it should not be used to excess; and he advised young men particularly to learn just how much they ought to take to use it in moderation.

As to such societies as that he was addressing he did not believe in them; men imagined they needed them; and if they could do any good by them he was not sorry, but he evidently regarded the movement as a delusion though well meant.

He took occasion, also, to express his disapproval of prohibition; and went so far as to say that the evils which arise from attempts at prohibition are greater than those which it is attempted to cure. Any man who talks thus is simply showing his ignorance of facts about prohibition which are within the reach of any person who wishes them.

The Rev. Mr. Roberts and Governor Tilley commented on the bishop's utterances, the Governor making points in favor of total abstinence and prohibition, and expressing a desire to discuss the subject with him. The bishop is not likely to accept the Governor's invitation to a discussion.

It is bad enough, indeed a sad thing, that a gentleman like the bishop should hold such views. It is impossible to believe that he has given careful thought to the whole matter in all its bearings. One is almost forced to the conclusion that his beliefs are based on his appetite and his apparent escape

from any personal injury from the drinking habit of his life, rather than on thorough investigation of the subject. We could wish that even yet, though he has reached four score years, he would carefully examine into the drinking usages of the society he knows best; he would, we think, be appalled by the array of indescribable evils that have resulted therefrom.

But the saddest feature of such utterances of such a man is the use that will be made of them, and the great harm they must do. Everywhere throughout the land he will be quoted in approval of the rum trade. His speech will form a part of the rummen's literature in every fight they make against the restriction of their wicked traffic.

Drinking men will quote him in justification of their cups. Who can tell how many young men, who otherwise might be saved to sobriety and usefulness, will go on to drunkenness because a bishop says drinking is not only right but better than abstinence?

Correspondence.

Letter From Rev. A. B. Boyer.

Dear INTELLIGENCER: This is Monday morning, Nov. 29th. Our ship the "City of Calcutta," which was to have sailed on Saturday has been detained until to-day. On arriving here about a month ago we did not expect to have sailed so soon, but Providence has favoured us and we are again on our way. The voyage to Calcutta will occupy about six weeks, which will necessitate our spending Christmas on the sea—if, indeed, we are not compelled to stop at Suez. Let me improve the present opportunity, then, of wishing you all the compliments of the season.

Our stay here has been very pleasant and, I think, not unprofitable. We have become acquainted with a number of Christian workers and been received by them most cordially. We have seen much poverty and degradation too and realized more than ever the great need of earnest self-sacrificing toil for the Master. Much of the poverty here is on account of drink. One day while walking along the street, out of curiosity, I gave heed to a little fellow who, with pitiful countenance, was asking me for pennies to buy bread. I questioned him, about his parents, home, etc., and was just about to buy him a loaf of bread when a gentleman tapped me on the shoulder and said "Ah, have you found a waif? Don't give him anything for I know his mother; she is a drunkard and has sent him to beg pennies to buy rum." At this the little fellow, who knew the gentleman, scampered away to his mother, who was not far off witnessing the performance.

During our stay here I had the pleasure of spending a few days in London. To appreciate London one must see it for himself. All that has been written or spoken of this great city fails to give a true idea of its beauty and grandeur, or the poverty and wealth, the ignorance and intelligence of the immense mass of human beings which it contains.

While in London I heard Spurgeon, Archdeacon Farrar and Newman Hall. The former delivered an excellent sermon on the need of personal salvation from the text, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." After the sermon all Christians were invited to communion. I accepted the invitation and with the others enjoyed a most blessed season. The other two sermons were on the great questions of socialism and the unemployed. The question of the unemployed in London is a most important one. Many thousands of people are said to be out of work and starving. That reminds me that God's labourers are never out of work, nor does he neglect to feed them. Oh, what need there is of more workers! The work ought not to be left for ministers and a few officers of the church. All who have experienced His bounty should trust their sickles into the harvest. It is as sure in spiritual as in temporal things that he who will not work must starve.

Lest I worry you I will stop. Until further notice our address will be F. B. Mission, Midnapore, Bengal, India. Pray for us.

Sincerely yours,

A. B. Boyer.

Liverpool, 29th Nov., 1886.

From Miss Hooper.

A card from Miss Hooper, of the same date as Bro. Boyer's letter, and written on shipboard says:

"Everything is good. The pilot leaves soon. A beautiful rainbow bade us 'Be of good cheer.' This is the steamer on which I went home nearly three years ago. Two of the stewards who were on board then are here now. They knew me at once, and spoke to me. They said they thought I was

dead long ago. But, praise the Lord, I am alive. I feel very much like living sometime yet. Love to all.

From Miss Hartley.

A letter from Miss Louise H. Hartley, written during her journey to Africa in company with the last band of Bishop Taylor's missionaries, has kindly been placed in our hands with permission to make use of any portions of it we choose. We make several extracts. Miss H. is well known to many of our readers, especially in York and Carleton Counties, and we are sure they will be glad to hear from her.

Her letter bears date thus: "African steamship 'Ambriz'—eight days out from Liverpool, off South of Portugal, Oct. 20, '86. She writes:

We call at Maderia to-night or to-morrow, and will probably have an opportunity to mail letters, so I will talk a little to you. We are having very delightful weather now, can stay up all day without any wraps. It is 9 A. M. now; we are just through with breakfast. We have prayers before breakfast, at 8 o'clock, and again at 8 in the evening, always on deck. We had a dear little meeting last night on deck, ten of us sitting together, the stars above and the sea beneath and all around. At first it seemed so strange—just sky and water. At 11 A. M. every day we have a lesson in Portuguese. Bro. Ratcliff, the gentleman accompanying us from Liverpool, is our teacher. At 3.30 P. M. we have a Bible reading.

It has not all the way been so calm as it is now. We sailed on Wednesday the 13th, and till the following Monday we had terrible weather. There are seventeen passengers, and about all of us were sick in our berths day and night, and so rough was it that we were obliged to hold ourselves in or we would have been thrown out. From Thursday afternoon we were "headed backwards," or, as the Captain says, "hove to," for forty hours, not daring to run with the wind lest we should have been run under.

On the voyage from New York to Liverpool I was not sick at all, but these days of which I speak I cannot attempt to describe, for I never could tell what I suffered. But I am all right now.

The crew say it was a dreadful storm. Our steward told me he had gone this route eleven times and never before was so sick as this time.

But even when we lay there night after night, the ship being so terribly tossed, straining and struggling with the angry waves, not knowing what moment we might be ushered into eternity—I never heard one murmur from our party, nor the expression of a regret that we had come. I know that in my own heart there was none. I felt that it was all right with God. I did feel that I would like to get to Africa, were it His will, but was satisfied with whatever He should will.

We expect to reach Loanda about seven weeks from the time we left England. From Loanda I am to go sixty miles down the coast to the mouth of the Congo, thence in a river boat 180 miles up the river to the Doudo, and thence by carriers 51 miles inland to Nhangue Pepo. I believe Murray McLean from Woodstock is at Nhangue; it will be pleasant to see one from the old home.

Our ship is not very well fitted up for passengers. She is very old, they say, yet quite safe and reliable. The captain is pleasant, as are the other officers. There are so few passengers and all on board that we see a great deal of each other and get well acquainted. On the steamer from New York to Liverpool there were 350 passengers and a crew of 240; here there are 17 passengers and about 35 of a crew. There are seven ladies of our own party; there is one other lady and the stewardess, who are to leave us in two days as it is not considered prudent for them to go any farther down the coast on account of the climate.

I think of you all very much, and wonder how you are, where you are, what you are doing, &c., &c. We are fast losing sight of the northern stars; the "dipper" is away down near the horizon, to-night we shall scarcely see it at all. When I looked last night at the beautiful sky studded with the countless jewels, I thought yet He numbers them, He has them all in His thoughts. And so He has us in mind, His redeemed; even I, only one among the "as numberless as the sands," and His care. His eye keeps me in sight, and no harm can come to me. When I look at the awful and beautiful majesty of His handiwork on land and sky and sea, and know that He spoke them all into being and order and keeps them so, then I feel it so small a thing for so almighty a power to hide me safely sheltered beneath His wing. "My soul trusteth in thee, in the shadow of thy wings will (d) I make my refuge."