

REPORT
OF THE
FORMATION
AND
ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE
NEW-ZEALAND
TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

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REPORT.

TO such a fearful and appalling degree had that all-destroying vice, Drunkenness, arisen in the Bay of Islands—and such a rapidly-growing obstacle it presented itself to be to the advancement of the knowledge of God, among both Europeans and Natives—that it called loudly for some interference; a few individuals therefore, in the Spring of 1835, proposed the introduction of a Temperance Society, as a means, under the blessing of God, of restraining and of diminishing that uncontrolled tide of Intemperance with which the Bay abounded,—they wrote the following preamble, and affixed their signatures thereto, and this was the formation of the now established “NEW-ZEALAND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.”

“ Bay of Islands, New Zealand,
August 5th, 1835.”

“ WHEREAS the evils of Intemperance from the use of Ardent Spirits have arisen to an alarming height, among many of the resident Europeans in the Islands of these Seas, producing among them, disease, want, and, in some instances, sudden death, accompanied, also, by a long train of immoralities consequent upon drunkenness:—

“ Resolved, That we, the undersigned, do form ourselves into a Temperance Society; and that we use such measures and form such rules as may be necessary for effecting a reformation in the existing habits and

opinions of those using Ardent Spirits, and, in furtherance thereof, resolve, that the following (see Res. II., p. 5,) be the laws of the Society, subject to such amendments as may hereafter be considered necessary."

A few months rolled by, during which interval upwards of twenty persons had not only affixed their signatures to the aforementioned preamble, but also aided the objects which the first proposers had in view, by contributing to the Cause; upwards of £l. 10s. having been given in order to support the infant Temperance Society.

The little band having thus gained strength, thought the time was come to make it more generally known, accordingly advertisements were printed and circulated, calling a Meeting for the establishing of the said Society, to be held in the newly-erected church at Kororarika, on Wednesday the 11th May, 1836. This meeting took place, was respectably and (for New Zealand,) numerously attended, about fifty persons being present, when the following resolutions were passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS.

JAMES BUSBY, Esq., British Resident, in the Chair.

I. Moved by the Rev. H. WILLIAMS; seconded by Mr. B. Y. ASHWELL:—

That whereas the evils of Intemperance from the use of Ardent Spirits have arisen to an alarming extent, accompanied by a long train of immoralities consequent upon habits of In-

temperance, amongst many of the Europeans and Natives of this land, and of the Seamen touching at this port, it is therefore expedient to form a Temperance Society, to be called "THE NEW-ZEALAND TEMPERANCE SOCIETY," which shall consist of all persons, whether Europeans or Natives, who shall sign the following Declaration,—“We agree to abstain from Distilled Spirits, except for Medicinal purposes, and to discountenance the causes and practice of Intemperance.”

II. Moved by Mr. J. SHEPHERD; seconded by Mr. J. B. MONTEFIORE:—

That the following shall be the Rules of the Society:—

1. That this Society be called “The New-Zealand Temperance Society.”

2. That each member shall abstain from the use of all Ardent Spirits, except for Medicinal purposes.

3. That the business of the Society shall be conducted by a President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and a Committee consisting of twelve members, five of whom shall form a quorum.

4. That the Committee shall meet regularly at such periods, and at such places, as they may themselves appoint, for the despatch of business; and at any time, when a requisition to that effect shall have been made by three members of the Committee, due notice having been given thereof by the Secretary; and that their duty shall be, together with the Secretary, to open a correspondence, or, by personal interview, with

influential persons in their neighbourhood, calling on them to use such means as may produce a reasonable and salutary impression of this subject on the public mind; to circulate publications bearing upon the objects the Society has in view, and to devise such other measures as may be most likely, under the blessing of God, to effect a radical change upon the intemperate sentiments, habits, and customs of society at large.

5. That a contribution (however it may be recommended,) shall not be deemed necessary to membership.

6. That the contributions, which may be received, shall be appropriated to the purpose of making known, by publications, the benefits and advantages derived from an entire disuse of Ardent Spirit, and the multiplied horrors and evils of its habitual use.

7. That the principal chiefs of these parts be requested to attend the General Meetings of the Society; and that persons, competent to address them in their native language, be designated to set before them the evils of Spirit-drinking, and the desolating consequences that have followed its introduction into other sister-islands of these seas.

8. That the Secretary shall regularly (at such times as may hereafter be appointed,) correspond with the Parent Society in London, and that he shall request such Tracts and periodical publications may be forwarded hither, from time to time, as the resources of the Society will allow.

9. That while the Society would be found

diligent in the use of means, and earnest in the hopes of ultimate success, they would, as their first principle, look to HIM whose unerring word has taught them that without His blessing nothing good can be obtained.

III. Moved by Mr. KEMP ; seconded by the Rev. W. WILLIAMS :—

That this Meeting regards with much interest, the success which has attended the efforts made by Temperance Societies in different parts of the world, and pledges itself to the support of the same object that Temperance Societies have in view.

IV. Moved by Mr. W. COLENZO ; seconded by Mr. C. BAKER :—

That this Meeting—from a conviction that Temperance Societies are founded upon Christian principles, and of the necessity there is for making those principles generally known—invites the co-operation of all who wish to promote Peace, Order, and Sobriety, around them ; and would, as the first principle, look to God for His blessing upon their labours.

V. Moved by Capt. COFFIN ; seconded by Capt. HAY :—

That James Busby, Esq., British Resident, be requested to be the President ; the Rev. H. Williams, and the Rev. W. Williams Vice-Presidents ; Mr. C. Baker, Treasurer and Secretary ; and the Rev. R. Maunsell, and Messrs. T. Chapman, R. Davis, J. Kemp, G. Clarke, W. Puckey, J. Morgan, and B. Y. Ashwell, be Members of Committee.

VI. Moved by Mr. G. MAIR; seconded by Capt. PLASKETT:—

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to James Busby, Esq., British Resident, for his support to the Temperance Cause, and for his conduct in the Chair.

The contributions given, at the close of the Meeting, in aid of the objects of the Society, amounted to 4*l.* 13*s.*

It is with thankfulness to Almighty God, that the Committee send forth this first little Report of their proceedings. Ten months have scarcely elapsed since the formation of a Temperance Society was first thought of; and now, in a dark and heathen land, with a very limited number of Europeans, the Society counts 25 members, and has received contributions in aid of the cause of Temperance amounting to £.15.

The Committee, in closing this plain and brief statement of their proceedings, would humbly pray, that the genial influences of the Divine blessing of Almighty God will continue to rest upon their labours; and, that the New-Zealand Temperance Society may be the means of stopping the raging of Intemperance on the threshold, so that the approach of shipping may no longer be looked on as an evil, but, as a blessing,—and, that the knowledge of God and his son Jesus Christ may extend throughout this dark land, at least, uninterrupted by obstacles springing from the root of Drunkenness, and spread around by Christian Europeans!