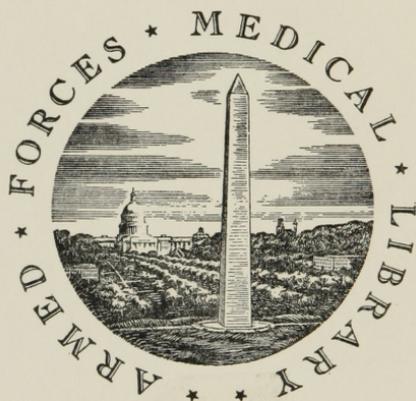




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AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

New-Bedford Auxiliary Society

FOR THE

SUPPRESSION OF INTEMPERANCE,

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING,

JANUARY 6, 1817.

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BY ALEXANDER READ, M. D.

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Published by request of the Society.

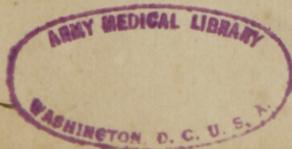


NEW-BEDFORD:

PRINTED BY BENJAMIN LINDSEY.

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1817.



ADVERSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FOR THE

SUBMISSION OF INTENTIONS

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY, 1851

BY ALEXANDER READ, M. D.

Printed by request of the Society

NEW-YORK: 1851

PRINTED BY BENJAMIN LINDETT

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## ADDRESS.

TO the friends of religion, of order, and of humanity, every institution, which embraces for its object the promotion of individual happiness, and the public welfare, must be peculiarly interesting. The present is, indeed, an age of wonders, in which unparalleled exertions are making by the virtuous and enlightened of every nation, for the diffusion of light and knowledge, peace and harmony, throughout the world. The considerations of party and of sect have been lost in an enlarged spirit of charity and philanthropy; in the exercise of which, the triumphs of virtue and religion have been widely extended. These effects have resulted from that principle of union and co-operation among the friends of mankind, which is absolutely necessary for the accomplishment of great and noble ends. Individual efforts, however vigorous and well directed, can ensure but little success.—The disproportion between the objects to be attained, and the means which individuals can furnish for their attainment, often opposes an insuperable barrier to any undertaking of magnitude, and serves as a plausible excuse for indolence and apathy. But when the advocates for religion and morality unite their strength and energy, difficul-

ties vanish, which before seemed insurmountable, and licentiousness and infidelity shrink appalled from their presence.

Disinterested benevolence and humanity, in no instance shine more conspicuously, than in the numerous associations which have been formed, within a few years, for the suppression of vice and immorality. The best feelings of the human heart have been drawn forth in sympathy for those miserable beings who are madly, or insensibly, gliding down the current of vice, into the abyss of wretchedness and woe. We, my brethren, have associated for the purpose of suppressing *Intemperance*; a vice, which annually brings its thousands of deluded victims to an untimely grave. That our undertaking is great and important, will be readily acknowledged by the sober and considerate of every class. Its nature is such, as to excite a deep interest in every heart that relents at the sight of human degradation and misery. We seek not the meed of popular applause, or the admiration of the giddy world; but we seek to rescue our fellow mortals from that dread gulf, where fame, fortune, hope, health and life perish together.

To accomplish the objects contemplated in our association, the most active benevolence, acute discernment, and persevering exertions are requisite. Our task is arduous and difficult; but a consciousness of doing our duty, should stimulate and embolden us to pursue with patience and address, those means that will best subserve our benevolent purposes. Will not our reward be sufficiently ample for the most unwearied toils and persevering endeavours, should we save one of our fellow

beings from temporal disgrace and ruin, and rescue an immortal soul from the "blackness of darkness forever"? That our united exertions may, by the blessing of Heaven, produce such important and happy effects, we are encouraged to believe, from the success that has attended similar efforts. Can we look with cold indifference upon the rapid march which intemperance and its kindred vices are making in our peaceful and happy country, and not make one effort to oppose their destructive course? Reason and conscience distinctly tell us, that we cannot do this and remain innocent.

We must expect to meet with opposition in our exertions to check the prevalence of vice and immorality in any form; but especially when they are directed to the suppression of intemperance. Would to Heaven, that our designs were misinterpreted and opposed by none but the vicious and profane. But ignorance, interest and prejudice will often excite a spirit of opposition in men, from whom we might rationally expect better things. Let us not, however, shrink from the performance of duty for fear of giving offence, or of being reproached with intermeddling with the affairs of others. Shall we consign a friend or neighbour to everlasting infamy, rather than give a temporary wound to his disordered feelings? Do we hesitate to snatch the poisoned bowl from the lips of the infatuated wretch, who eagerly seeks by this means to close his miserable life? The inebriating draught of the intemperate man will produce disease and death with as much certainty, as the most subtle poison in nature. Shall we neglect to impress upon him the imminent danger of his practices,

because immediate death is not always the consequence? Can we view him blindly rushing towards the precipice which o'erhangs perdition, and not make one effort to arrest him in his mad career? Forbid it, justice! forbid it, humanity!

The debasing nature and destructive effects of intemperance, will be readily acknowledged. No deviations from the path of duty so forcibly impeach all pretensions to the character of rational beings, as an inordinate use of spirituous liquors. But are the community in general aware of the extent of this brutalizing vice? Do they consider the millions of property squandered, and the thousands of once valuable citizens self-destroyed and lost to society? From authentic documents it appears, that, in this country, not less than *twenty-five millions of dollars* are annually expended for this destructive poison. In the same space of time, more than *six thousand lives* are sacrificed to this idol of human folly and madness. By this enormous consumption of ardent spirits, not only the physical strength of the nation is materially affected, but moral principle, that bond of union and confidence in society, is relaxed and dissolved.

When we witness the ravages which intemperance is making within the sphere of our acquaintance, do not our consciences upbraid us for criminal indifference or cold neglect in the performance of duty towards our deluded brethren? However disgusting the spectacle which the inebriate presents to our sight, yet he is an object of pity and compassion, rather than of reproach and contempt. He is our brother and our fellow; and though the blush of ingenuous shame forgets to cover him,

yet we must not leave him to perish without assistance, as if his crime were inexpiable, and his body infectious to the touch.

I trust it will not be deemed improper, and certainly not *unprofessional* on the present occasion, to take a slight survey of the effects of ardent spirits upon the human system.—This will naturally lead to the suggestion of the most promising means for the prevention and cure of those evils, against which our efforts are principally directed.

The effects of all intoxicating liquors discover themselves in two forms; either in immediate drunkenness, or in a numerous train of diseases and vices of body and mind. The first effects of inebriating liquors are such as naturally tend to enslave the votaries of passion and appetite, and to rivet the chains of the willing captive, ere he is aware of his danger. The anxious mind is rendered heedless and tranquil, and every painful affection of the soul is alleviated or relieved.—The powers of the imagination are enlivened, and the spirits flow rapidly, giving birth to wit and humour. The victim of delusion looks with rapture to the deceitful bowl, which carries in its draught every degree of sensation, from pleasure to pain; from the purest perceptions of intellect, to the last confusion of thought. That disguise, which mankind in general naturally carry about them, is now laid aside.—The demure philosopher and the noisy buffoon become companions, and join with equal zest in the loud laugh and jocund curse. Infirmary acquires strength, and timidity gains courage.—The gloomy hypocondriac forgets the phantoms of his distempered imagination, and the desponding youth forsakes his solitude and silent shades.

These may be termed the seducing *pleasures* of intoxication. All beyond is chaos and madness. The frailties of the disposition are now unmasked, and the secrets of the breast are exposed without reserve. Resentment and ferocity characterize the illiterate and rude; while cultivated minds are less desperate and ungovernable. Feuds and animosities arise, and bloodshed and death not unfrequently terminate the drunken revel. At such an hour as this, the infuriate Alexander, heated and mad with wine, plunged his sword into the bosom of his dearest friend and companion, Clytus, who in the fury of battle, had rescued him from impending death.

To this stage of ebriety, stupor succeeds; voluntary motion is lost, and

“Their feeble tongues,

“Unable to take up the cumb’rous word,

“Lie quite dissolved.”

How justly are the evils and effects of intemperance delineated by the wise king of Israel: “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.”

Let us next attend to the effects of intoxicating liquors, as they appear in a hideous catalogue of diseases of body and mind. Some of these appear during the paroxysm of drunkenness; the most common and fatal of which, is apoplexy—This is, in fact, but the last stage of ebriety. The powerful stimulus of alcohol, which is the intoxicating principle of all liquors, may directly operate on the

nervous system, and destroy the cause of vitality ; or it may occasion such an accumulation of blood in the vessels of the head, as to induce apoplexy, by compressing the brain, the source of sense and motion. The first is generally induced by the ingurgitation of a large quantity of undiluted spirit, the last follows the slower mode of intoxication from wine or strong malt liquors. When a large quantity of ardent spirit is swallowed at once, it acts so suddenly on the stomach and nervous system, that the common phenomena of ebriety do not appear. There is no time given for the regular succession of those feelings and passions, which always appear under the more tardy exhibition of wine. It approaches at once to the most dangerous point. The miserable wretch often falls down insensible, as soon as he has finished the draught. Arsenic has seldom been taken in such quantity, as to destroy life so quickly as ardent spirit. That metallic poison probably acts by first destroying the organization of the stomach, while the other directly assails the vital principle in the nervous system. The frequent instances of death from apoplexy, as an attendant or consequence of intemperance, ought to serve as an awful warning to the inebriate. Were it not that "madness is in the hearts of men while they live," the thought of a rational being sinking into eternity from the board of gluttony, riot and intemperance, would appal the most obdurate and insensible of mortals. Epilepsy and convulsions are not infrequent occurrences in the early stage of ebriety. These affections are peculiarly apt to occur where a predisposition exists,

and ought to render the subjects of it duly cautious in approaching the table of excess.

The diseases induced by habitual intemperance are numerous and complicated, and generally of a dangerous or mortal nature. Inflammation of the brain, of the stomach, of the eyes, and of the liver; gout, schirrus, jaundice, indigestion, dropsy, atrophy or emaciation of body, palpitation of the heart, palsy, melancholy, madness, and idiotism, constitute but a part of the deformed list. That habits of intemperance predispose to fevers, has been abundantly proved in the malignant epidemics which have prevailed in different parts of the country for several years past. The intemperate seldom escape an attack, and more rarely recover, when affected.

Diseases of the liver, both of the acute and chronic kind, are very common effects of hard drinking. How aptly does the fable of Prometheus, on whose liver a vulture was said to prey constantly, as a punishment for his stealing fire from heaven, illustrate the painful effects of ardent spirits upon that organ. Jaundice is one of the many disgusting appearances which intemperance gives the external form, and may properly be deemed the birthright of dram-drinking. When this takes place, the person may be justly considered a veteran in the squalid host of inebriates.

When we consider the number and importance of the organs concerned in the process of digestion, it seems inevitable that they should be deranged by intemperance. The stomach, by degrees, grows torpid, from the frequent repetition of immoderate stimuli, until it feels a disrelish for that mild and

bland nourishment, which, in its healthy state, it seeks and requires. In this way, acidity, flatulence and nausea are produced, which are soon succeeded by nervous irritability and pain, and the fate of the deluded inebriate is almost certainly fixed. To relieve these distressing sensations, he flies to his bumper, and thus every succeeding draught exceeds its predecessor in quantity, and he becomes a confirmed drunkard. Withhold his customary potation, and a scene is presented at which the finer feelings of the heart recoil with horror. Frantic gestures, looks of despair, groans, sighs, weeping and gnashing of teeth, are but a describable part.

When the inebriate has resisted the evil effects of habitual indulgence for a considerable time, dropsy and palsy mark him for their prey, and appear as the harbingers of dissolution. Look at the slave of intemperance in the morning! How wretched are his tardy hours spent in mute dejection, or listless inactivity. His enfeebled stomach loaths the nutriment which nature kindly proffers; and his trembling hand is scarcely able to raise the cup to his polluted lips. The accustomed draught restores a little temporary strength to his debilitated frame, but tremors and languor soon succeed, unless the unnatural stimulus is immediately repeated. Under such circumstances, we may conclude with certainty, that the "silver cord of life" is nearly loosed, and the "wheel broken at the cistern." Madness and idiotism by no means unfrequently follow the excessive use of ardent spirits. A few years since, an inquiry was instituted by the resident physician of the Pennsylvania Hospital, into

the proportion of maniacs from this cause. In one third of the whole number confined by this dreadful disease, it had been induced by ardent spirits. Drunkenness itself is a temporary madness; but in constitutions predisposed to insanity and idiotism, these diseases are apt to succeed the paroxysm, and often continue for weeks and months.

On reviewing the preceding list of diseases, which are but a part of the direful effects of intemperance, how are we astonished at the infatuation of so many of the human race! How madly do they rush upon disease and death, merely to gratify the longings of an unnatural and sinful appetite!

But intemperance is not less destructive to the intellectual and moral faculties, than to the bodies of men. The memory and judgment are impaired, and all the noble and exalted sentiments of the heart are depraved and perverted. Genius and talent are levelled with the dust; and human excellence is brought to bow to the irrational creation. Religious sensibility is destroyed, and all just notions of a divine moral government, and of future retribution, are either perverted or entirely lost. Hence we see the bondmen of intemperance not only neglectful of relative and social duties, but utterly regardless of their obligations to their beneficent Creator and Preserver. Numerous facts within our immediate and daily observation, attest the truth of this assertion. How rarely do we see the intemperate engaged in even outward adoration of that Being, from whom they have derived all their abused privileges! Some awakening dispensation may drive them to the house of worship; but a lethargic stupor pervades their inmost souls,

and they return unprofited, or more insensible to the admonitions of reason and conscience. That sacred volume, which contains the words of eternal life, is to them a sealed book, and seldom touched by their unhallowed hands. They feel no relish for the sublime pleasures of religion and virtue here, and consequently would be miserable, could they be admitted into paradise hereafter.

That intemperance is a fatal enemy to all the pursuits and pleasures of social life, the slightest observation will evince. How are the fairest prospects of social happiness in a moment destroyed, when the bloated visage of intemperance enters the family circle. Is he a husband and father? With what anguish and sorrow do a dejected mother and weeping children look to their protector and friend, now forever lost! The flame of conjugal and parental affection is smothered or destroyed; and he no longer performs the duties, or deserves the appellation of protector, father, and friend. His wealth is squandered upon his worse than heathen idol, until the conveniences, and even necessities of life, are bartered for the fiery draught, which only serves to increase his tormenting thirst. Lost to all those virtuous sentiments that dignify and adorn human nature, he becomes an object of shame and aversion to those most intimately connected by the ties of blood and friendship. He not only forfeits the character of man, and becomes a monument of abhorrence and disgust to his fellow-creatures, but he loses the respect even of the brute creation.

From the foregoing observations, we readily perceive, that poverty and disgrace, disease and death,

are the natural and legitimate offspring of *Intemperance*. But in the language of the venerable Rush, "it is not death from the immediate hand of the Deity, nor from any of the instruments of it, which were created by him. It is death from *suicide*—Yes, thou poor degraded creature, who art daily lifting the poisoned bowl to thy lips, cease to avoid the unhallowed ground in which the self-murderer is interred, and wonder no longer that the sun should shine, and the rain fall, and the grass look green upon his grave. Thou art perpetrating gradually, by the use of ardent spirits, what he has effected suddenly, by opium or a halter."

But not to exhaust your patience in further describing the brutalizing and destructive effects of intemperance, let us next institute some inquiry into the best means for their prevention and cure.

It is to be feared, that many well disposed persons entertain erroneous notions respecting the practicability of reclaiming the votaries of intemperance. They consider them as *morally dead*, consequently beyond the reach of any remedies, that human wisdom can devise. The tear of sympathy flows easily at the sight of other forms of human misery ; but the avenues of pity and compassion are closed, when the wretched inebriate is presented to their view. This coldness and indifference towards a class of beings, certainly the most miserable that exist in the human form, must be attributed to incorrect sentiments, early imbibed, or to a criminal negligence of a proper examination of the subject. Are any of their friends labouring under bodily indisposition, which may possibly

terminate in a mortal disease, how assiduously do they urge them to the employment of those means, that may conduce to the restoration of their health. Yet they daily meet those who are affected with a disease, which must ultimately prove fatal to body and soul, unless speedily remedied, without even admonishing them of their danger.

To reclaim those from "the error of their ways," who have long indulged in an inordinate use of spirituous liquors, is always a difficult, and often a desperate undertaking. Many instances, however, might be adduced, in which the experiment has proved successful. The deluded captive has burst his iron chains, "reason has resumed her empire over debauched appetite," and a soul has been rescued from the brink of remediless sorrow. Should success attend but one attempt in a thousand, still there is encouragement for vigorous and unremitting exertions. A consciousness of having performed our duty towards our fellow-creatures, will afford a theme of pleasant reflection, when "nature decays and spirits sink."

No undertaking, perhaps, requires more discernment, prudence and firmness, than the recovery of the victims of intemperance. By long and habitual indulgence, their bodies have become diseased and enervated, and their tempers morose, peevish, and irritable. Discriminating judgment is required, to direct us to the proper seasons for administering counsel and advice. If this circumstance is neglected, all our attempts will be worse than lost. We shall "cast pearls before swine," which will "turn and rend us." There are few inebriates, however, who do not sometimes feel compunctious

visitings and keen remorse for their miserable deflections from the paths of sobriety and virtue. These opportunities must be improved, to display before them an accurate picture of their vicious practices, and the incurable maladies, which necessarily flow from habitual excess. We must carefully scrutinize the character and feelings of those whom we would counsel and reclaim. Much may be done by rousing particular passions ; such as a parent's love for his children, the inestimable value of character, the desire of fame, and the pride of reputation and family. A lovely child has forced tears of contrition from a drunken father, when nothing else could affect him ; and the good sense and prudent management of an amiable wife have often accomplished wonders, in redeeming an intemperate husband from his miserable servitude. Numerous instances might be adduced, in which a sudden sense of shame, pride and resentment, has operated as an antidote to intemperance. In the whirlwind of passion, or the sober calm of silent shame, the chain of habit has been broken, and the intoxicating charm forever abjured.

In all our attempts to reclaim the intemperate, we must first gain their confidence and esteem. This may be effected by treating them with tenderness and respect, carefully avoiding all reproachful language, and sarcastic reviling. They must be regarded as labouring under a disease of the mind, in which the soul itself has received impressions incompatible with its reasoning powers. At such seasons as prudence may dictate, let them be warned of the ruinous consequences of their evil habits in this life, and the inevitable doom that

awaits them in a future state of existence, if they persist in their mad career. Let them be feelingly persuaded to forsake those places of resort, where strong temptations may assail them, and to relinquish those pursuits, which may lead them into the society of the intemperate, the vicious and profane. Paint to them in glowing colours the sorrow and wretchedness of their neglected families, struggling with incessant toil to gain a scanty pittance; or, helpless and infirm, dependent on the cold hand of charity for daily subsistence. Present to their view the increasing difficulty of subduing their evil propensities, the longer they are cherished, and the danger, and even probability of being suddenly arrested by death, and consigned to everlasting ignominy and contempt. But while we display before them a true picture of their unreasonable conduct, let the consolation of hope be suggested, lest they be urged to despair, when all our exertions will be fruitless. Set before them the restoration of health and character, the endearing smiles of an estranged family, and the mercy and favour of that Being, who is long suffering and kind to the penitent and returning prodigal. As an encouragement to their desponding minds, and an inducement to attempt an immediate reform, let the numerous instances of honourable recovery from their wretched slavery be stated. This will satisfy them, that a return to habits of temperance and virtue is not impracticable, nor in fact so difficult as they imagine; and will fortify their resolutions of repentance and amendment. By all the considerations that can influence a rational being, let them be urged to an entire abstinence from every kind

of intoxicating liquors. They may contend, that sickness and death will ensue, if they at once relinquish their accustomed draught; but this is only the language of an enfeebled mind, swayed by depraved appetite. If the inebriate would cherish the faintest hope of reformation, he must resolve to forsake immediately the haunts of dissipation and excess, and to taste no more forever the poisoned draught of the Circean sorceress. We are assured by some of the most eminent medical characters of the age, whose extensive observation and experience entitle their opinions to our unqualified assent, that a sudden and entire abstinence from all spirituous liquors is perfectly safe for those, who have long indulged in their use. No dangerous degree of debility has ever been found to follow the subtraction of the unnatural stimulus, though this opinion has been generally maintained. It is doubted, whether an instance of reformation can be adduced, where the inebriate has gradually relinquished his ardent potation. His only safe course is to abandon it at once, however distressing his sensations may be for a season, from the suspension of his customary draught. These pains, which are but a necessary part of the cure, will be of short duration, and his drooping spirits will be exhilarated by the return of health and peace.

But we have much reason to fear, that in many instances, all our arguments and entreaties will prove unavailing, as it respects confirmed drunkards. It may then be asked, what further means can be devised for their relief? Have we done our whole duty towards the miserable captives? There

is yet one expedient, by which they may be redeemed from their worse than Turkish bondage. They must be placed under the "merciful necessity" of refraining from all intoxicating liquors. This might be easily effected, did the community entertain correct notions of the injustice and criminality of supplying them with their bane. Many persons are in the daily habit of selling ardent spirits to the notoriously intemperate, who would shudder at the thought of dealing out small portions of arsenic to any human being. Yet the impropriety of the former practice is as apparent, in the light of reason and justice, as the latter. Ardent spirits, when used to excess, are as destructive a poison as arsenic; and the one ought to be as carefully withheld from the intemperate, as the other from the maniacal and insane.

Let it not be said, that we abridge the rights and privileges of any person, when we withhold from him the instruments of his own destruction. Do rational men decline to furnish the infatuated wretch, who is bent on suicide, with opium, arsenic, or a halter? Why not then refuse to stain their garments with the blood of the drunkard, by withholding the means of committing the same atrocious deed? It becomes those who habitually supply the intemperate with spirituous liquors, to take this subject into serious consideration. Can they expect to stand before their Creator and Judge, with "clean hands," and a "pure heart," while they are guilty of such cruelty and injustice to their fellow-creatures? Can they expect to be forgiven in the sight of Heaven, on the plea, that "they know not what they do"? Let that perfect rule

of conduct be observed, of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us, and the inebriate will no longer be daily supplied with the means of self-destruction.

But the prevention of intemperance is an object of our association, on which our strongest hopes of extensive usefulness are founded. This part of our subject remains to be considered. So important a topic demands a liberal discussion; but time will admit of but few remarks.

It has been justly observed, that habits of intemperance have their predisposing causes. It may not be unprofitable, therefore, to suggest a few of the most important of them. Among these, the daily, or frequent use of spirituous liquors, even in the smallest quantities, is the most prominent and alarming. This practice is not only unnecessary, but always in the highest degree dangerous. By gradually accustoming the taste and stomach to the use of ardent spirits, in some mild form, men soon acquire an inordinate thirst for them in a stronger and unmixed state, and are insensibly led from one stage to another to downright ebriety.

Another predisposing cause of intemperance is an improper familiarity with the idle, the dissipated, and the licentious. The sociable and imitative nature of man often disposes him to adopt the most odious and destructive practices from his companions. It is morally impossible for a man to associate with the intemperate and profane, without acquiring their detestable habits.

Persons of feeble constitutions, especially those who are troubled with complaints of the stomach, are apt to seek relief from ardent spirits, either in

a pure or disguised form. Let such beware of this dangerous resort, by which many have fallen sacrifices to intemperance.

Many have sought to drown their sorrows in strong drink, who have been depressed by the accumulated evils and disappointments of human life. But they have trusted to a false friend, a deception, that lulls into fatal security. The only cure for these evils is found in religious and moral sentiments. These opiates of the soul do not terminate their operation by increasing the gloom, and inducing a severer paroxysm at its next occurrence.

The use of tobacco strongly disposes to the more powerful stimulus of ardent spirits, by rendering water and simple liquors insipid to the taste. The practice of smoking cigars is generally followed by the use of brandy and water, and thus the seeds of intemperance are imperceptibly sown. I have viewed with regret and concern the prevalence of this habit among the youth, and even children in this village. This practice invariably leads them to those places, where the idle and the abandoned resort, and they become early familiarized with those scenes, which deprave and enervate the youthful mind. Unless parents and guardians carefully watch and repress such dangerous habits, they will find, that many of the youth will become the slaves of debauched appetite, before they arrive to the age of manhood.

It is of the utmost consequence, that the young should be apprized of the danger of frequenting those places, where the mad bacchanalian holds his frantic revels. Evil communications corrupt good

manners; and vice, by being often seen, loses its deformity. A drunkard, reeling through the streets, seldom escapes the insult and mockery of school-boys; and the babbling sot may, for a time, be their sport and derision; but a frequent view of the object wears off the sensibility of the eye, and what they once beheld with disgust, now becomes their friend and associate. Many promising young men have become worthless sots through the contagious influence of example.

In order to prevent the evil effects of intemperance upon the rising generation, let parents sedulously observe the inclinations of the youthful mind, and properly notice the slightest deviations from the path of temperance and sobriety. An inordinate thirst for intoxicating liquors may be easily quenched, when first discovered, but it gains strength by every indulgence, and soon becomes so interwoven with the actions of the system, that it can only be eradicated with the greatest difficulty. Notwithstanding the seducing nature of the love of ardent spirits, men do not suddenly become drunkards. They acquire their noxious habits gradually, and discover not their oppressor, or his galling chains, till too late to escape his cruel grasp. Let those, therefore, who are in the daily habit of taking spirituous liquors, consider the danger to which they are exposed. They are treading in a path, which leads to disgrace and ruin; and the farther they advance, the more difficult they will find it to retrace their steps.

It may be urged, that ardent spirits are necessary for those who are exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather, and endure much labour and fatigue; but

this is far from being true. The temporary glow which they produce, renders them more susceptible of hurtful impressions. The increased activity which follows their use in labour, is of a transient nature, and is always succeeded by a sense of weakness and languor. Let the use of ardent spirits, therefore, be restricted to those limits, which inspiration has prescribed.—“Give strong drink” only “to him who is ready to perish.”

But it is not drinking spirituous liquors to the length of intoxication, that alone constitutes intemperance. Many spend much of their time at the bottle, and may properly be termed intemperate, who are able to execute the duties of their respective stations. They have never been so transformed by liquor as to be unknown by their own house-dog, and to be hunted, Actæon like, round their own walks ; or so foolish in their appearance, as to be insulted by idle school-boys ; yet they are the slaves of depraved appetite. These *sober* drunkards, as they may well be termed, deceive themselves and others. Though ignorant of their danger, they are travelling slowly along the road to ruin, and their journey terminates at the same goal—bad health and premature death.

It may be said, that some intemperate men have numbered three score years and ten, or even four score years.—This is undoubtedly true. But what kind of life has that been, half of which has been spent under the impression of deranged intellect ? Their moments of sobriety, if they had any, must have been a repetition of mental disquietudes, dejected spirits, and gloomy apprehensions. But thousands die before they arrive at thirty, where

one reaches eighty years. Those only, who are inclined to observation and reflection, are aware how great a share intemperance claims, in bringing the human race to the insatiable grave.

Permit me, my young friends, to caution you against the slightest indulgence in the use of intoxicating liquors. Shun the haunts of dissipation, licentiousness and excess, as you would the poison-tree of Java. In these are sown the seeds of disease, pain, insanity, a miserable existence, or a premature death. Would you be exempted from such miseries, beware of drinking beyond the limits of strict temperance. Though the wine may sparkle in the glass, and appear beautiful to the eye; though it may gratify the taste and exhilarate the mind for a moment, yet, "at the last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." Destroy not your own peace, and the comfort of your parents and friends, by contracting a habit, that debases man below "the beasts that perish." Let those minds, which are now pure and unsullied by debauch, never become familiarized with the demoralizing language, or the licentious practices of the intemperate, the vicious and profane. As you value health and happiness, be persuaded to resist manfully, every temptation to intemperance and its kindred vices, and to pursue the path of wisdom, which leads to respectability and honour, to glory and immortality.

Are there any in this respected audience, who have insensibly become enslaved by an inordinate love of inebriating liquors? Let me urge you, in the language of friendship and affection, to reflect seriously upon the wretchedness of your situation.

You are rapidly sinking in the scale of being, and unless you effect a speedy amendment, you will soon have passed beyond the precincts of hope. You have cherished a habit, that tends to accumulated guilt and misery, and constantly exposes you to sudden and violent death. The brittle thread of life may be severed during a paroxysm of intoxication, and you shall awake no more forever, but to lament with unavailing sighs your madness and folly. The irrevocable sentence has gone forth, which fixes the fate of the miserable inebriate. That Being, who hath said, "I am the Lord, I change not," hath also said, "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven." Is not this solemn denunciation sufficient to alarm your fears, and to rouse you from your fatal slumbers? Be entreated to resolve upon an immediate reform, that you may escape the awful doom denounced against you. You are yet prisoners of hope, and through repentance and amendment, may be happy here in the caresses of your families, and joyful hereafter in the favour of a merciful God.

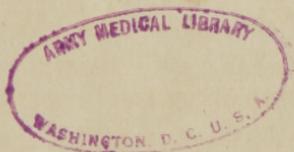
But I must not enlarge upon this interesting and exhaustless subject. I have already trespassed too much upon the time of my associates and friends. Enough has been said to convince every unprejudiced mind, that the object of our association is important, and demands the patronage and aid of all the friends of religion and humanity. My brethren, the task, which we have undertaken, is truly arduous, and much of our success depends upon our perseverance and zeal. The benevolent and enlightened in other places are engaged in the same noble cause, and the happiest results may be

expected from such an extensive union of talents and virtue, for the promotion of public and individual happiness. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," but redouble our exertions to check the rapid march of intemperance and its kindred vices, by every possible means that wisdom and prudence may dictate. Our cause is good, and as such it will receive the benediction of Heaven, and all opposition will, sooner or later, meet its due reward. May we not hope for an accession to our number of some, who feel a tender sympathy for the deluded victims of debauched appetite? To such we would extend a respectful invitation, to unite their endeavours with ours in the cause of benevolence and humanity.

That some good has already resulted from our association, I trust will not be disputed. That it has not been in proportion to the magnitude of our object, we readily confess. Our success has rather been measured by our zeal in the cause.— This has been suffered to grow cold and languid, consequently our exertions have been feeble and limited. But, my brethren, in such a cause as this, cold indifference and listless inactivity ought to have no place in our affections. We are engaged to promote the present and future well being of our fellow creatures. We would save them from pain, sorrow, and disgrace in this world, and from consummate wretchedness in the world to come. With such an object in view, who that "has a heart to feel," but must be deeply interested in the success of our undertaking.

The revolving year reminds us of the necessity of exercising our talents in the cause of religion

and humanity, while opportunity is presented.—  
“The places, that now know us, will soon know  
us no more forever.” Let us, therefore, be dili-  
gent in promoting the objects of our association,  
and deem no exertions too great, or any sacrifices  
too dear, while there is a human being to be saved  
from temporal suffering, and eternal death. Should  
we be so happy as to reach the peaceful shores of  
immortality, and there meet one kindred spirit  
rescued from hopeless despair through our exer-  
tions, how ineffable will be our joy, and how ample  
our reward.



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