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“SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE.”

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED

IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ON THE EVENING

OF THE

TWENTY-SEVENTH OF OCTOBER, 1833,

BEFORE

THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY

OF THE

CITY OF TRENTON AND ITS VICINITY.

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BY THE REV. SYMMES C. HENRY.

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CRANBURY, N. J.

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TRENTON:

PUBLISHED BY D. FENTON.

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1833.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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TO THE REV. SYMMES C. HENRY.

DEAR SIR,

The Executive Committee of the Temperance Society of this City and its Vicinity, at a meeting held by them on the 25th instant, passed a vote of thanks for the impressive and appropriate Discourse you delivered in the Presbyterian Church, on the evening of the 27th ultimo, and respectfully request you to furnish the subscriber with a copy for publication.

On the Committee's, as well as on my own behalf, I am, dear sir, very respectfully yours, &c.,

D. FENTON.

TRENTON, November 28, 1833.

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TO MR. D. FENTON.

DEAR SIR,

I received your communication, containing the vote of thanks of the Temperance Society of the City of Trenton and its Vicinity, for the discourse I lately delivered before them, together with a request that I would forward a copy to you, their President, for publication. It does, indeed, give me pleasure to aid in a cause so truly benevolent and glorious; and if the interests of this cause can in any way be promoted by the publication of the discourse I had the pleasure to prepare and deliver at your own personal suggestion, and, in accordance with the invitation of the society over which you preside, I cheerfully submit it to you for this purpose. Long may your society be among the foremost of our land in furthering the interests of this blessed enterprise; and long may you, my dear sir, live to see and to aid the triumphs of the Temperance Reformation.

Yours respectfully,

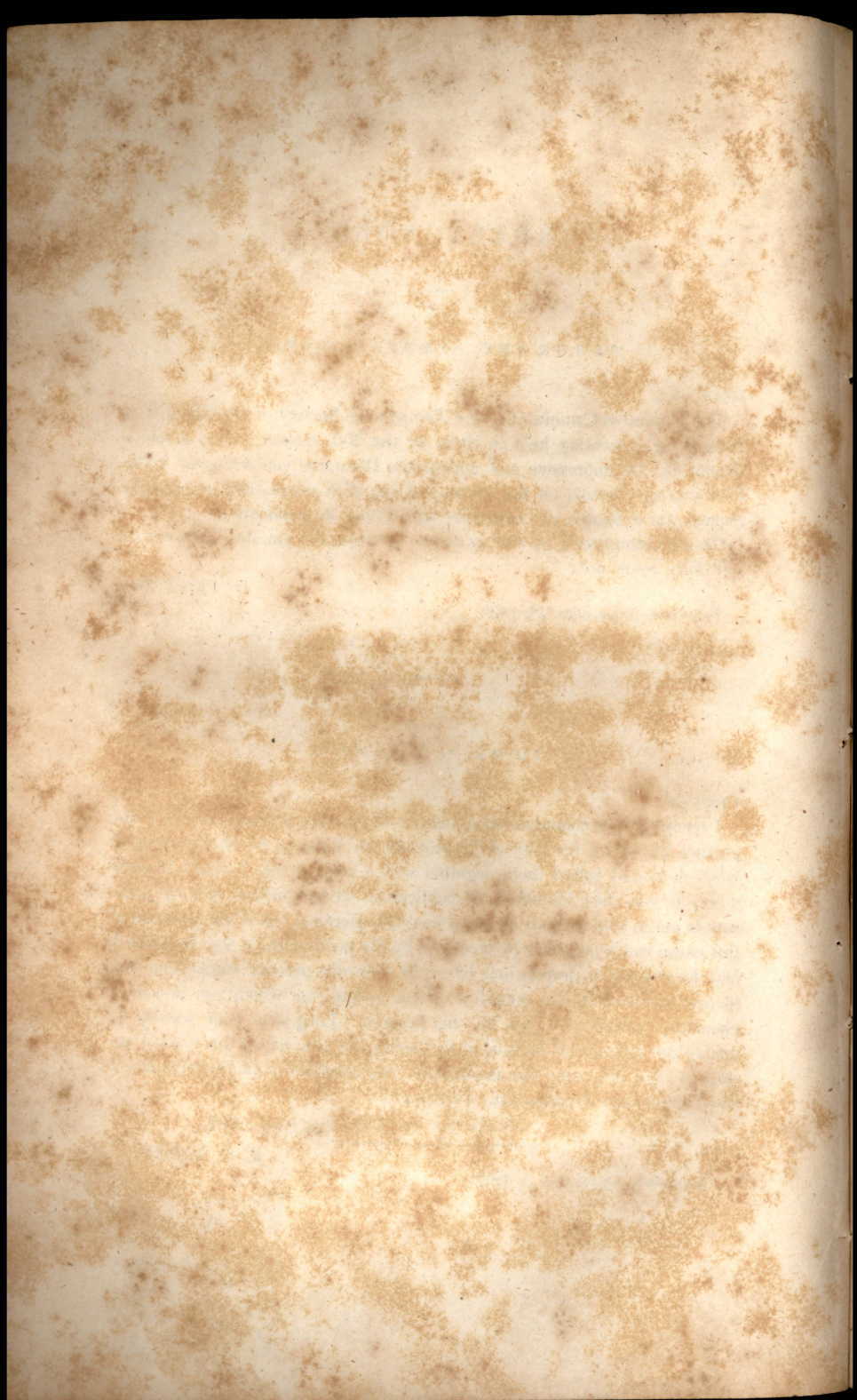
S. C. HENRY.

CRANBURY, December 3, 1833.

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## DISCOURSE.

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“SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE.”

EPHESIANS IV. 15.

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SIR Walter Scott, in his biography of Napoleon, says, in regard to the loss sustained by the British army, in the ever memorable battle of Waterloo, “Fifteen thousand men killed and wounded, threw half Britain into mourning. It required all the glory and all the solid advantages of that day to reconcile the mind to the high price at which it was purchased.” But if the scenes of another Waterloo had been repeated yearly, what mourning and lamentation would have filled *all* Britain, and who could have measured the sighs and the tears of the many parents, widows, and children that such a frightful carnage would have occasioned? Need I remind you that, at this moment, there is an enemy in the midst of us, whose sword, like that of the destroying angel, is passing through the land, accompanied, too, with a great cry, and leaving many places with scarcely “a house where there is not one dead:” an enemy that yearly witnesses many more thousands slain, in his bloody march, than were left weltering in their gore on the field of Waterloo. And though he has proclaimed himself the friend of our country; the friend of its manufactures, its commerce, and its general prosperity, yet surely it requires some-

thing more than "all the glory and all the solid advantages" which he brings "to reconcile the mind to the high price at which they are purchased."

It is to receive some information, and to take counsel in regard to the various manœuvres and operations of this enemy, that we have met to night; and, in doing so, it is not our design to "bring a railing accusation against him," but to "speak the truth," and, in accordance with the spirit of our text, to speak it in love, firmly believing, that *Truth* and *Love* are the mightiest and most successful weapons in this warfare, and will eventually accomplish his complete destruction.

I need not tell you, that the adversary and the enemy of which we speak is *Intemperance*. The manufacture, the traffick, and the use of ardent spirits, has spread dishonor, pollution, and death among many of the families of our happy land, and has carried thousands of our citizens into a degraded and a loathsome captivity. What, then, are some of the statistics of this great evil? In other words, what are the plain, the astonishing, and proven facts connected with its desolating progress?

Consider *its effects on the human mind*. They may be seen in the stupid countenance, the vacant stare, the silly behavior, or the wild ravings of its votary. Who does not frequently witness its debasing influences, by which it reduces man to a beast—to a fool—to a devil—and renders him unfit to sustain the endearing relations of companion, father, husband, and friend? Many, too, are the instances in which it leads to the complete destruction of the human intellect. The registers of insane hospitals assure us, that one-third of all their wretched inmates were sent there by intemperance.

Consider *the crime to which it is accessory*. When excited by intoxicating drink, men can blaspheme and scoff at all that is sacred. They can lie, and steal, and trample on every law,

human and divine. Under its maddening influence, husbands have murdered their wives, and children their parents. No vice is too beastly—no crime too vicious for the drunkard. The records of our courts will show, and the keepers of our prisons testify, that, with scarcely an exception, their overflowing numbers are from the schools of intemperance.

Consider *the thousands it has beggared, and thrown as a burden on the hands of public charity*. In this highly favored region of the earth—this land flowing with milk and honey, it has unhoused many a helpless family. In an evil hour it entered their doors, and took not its departure until it stripped the bed of its clothing, the fire of its fuel, and the table of its food; and, while it turned the inmates out of their dwelling, it turned the house and the farm into the hands of another, and sent the original proprietor to be locked up in the debtor's apartment of a common jail. The history of rising two hundred thousand paupers in the United States, will show that three-fourths, or one hundred and fifty thousand of them have been the victims, directly or indirectly, of intemperance.

Consider *the loss of health and life it has occasioned*. As it regards the ill health, and the numberless cases of accident and disease it occasions, the amazing truth cannot be conceived. The lowest estimate of deaths ascribed to intemperance, yearly, is thirty thousand. Yes! it is indeed an appalling thought, that no less than this number of souls is annually passed by intemperance at the gates of death, for the bar of God.

Consider *its amazing waste of property*. Not to say any thing of the losses sustained by individuals and families in bad bargaining, neglect, and mismanagement—all which no doubt is very great, but which can never be fairly estimated—it is calculated that this nation pays, as a tax for intemperance, at least seventy or eighty millions of dollars, in the prosecution and

punishment of crime—in imprisonment for debt and the support of the pauperism with which intemperance has flooded the land. What an amazing sum!—four times as much as is necessary for the annual support of government—and sufficient to furnish a bible for every family on the face of the globe. It has been very satisfactorily shown by some of our best and wisest men—men who have attentively investigated this subject—that the traffick in this article, if entirely abandoned—so far from being a loss, would be a clear gain to the country of many millions.

Now, these are truths so often published—so well established—so widely circulated—so generally received, and so little doubted, that it is not necessary to detail any more of the particulars by which they are made out. But as to the amount of guilt and wretchedness and woe which they exhibit, no tongue can tell—no finite mind conceive, and it is known only to him who surveys the whole, and sees at once its length and its breadth—its height and its depth.

Here then, at this stage of our remarks, a question very naturally arises—what must be done to arrest the evils of intemperance? The answer to this question is plain. We say, without hesitation, nothing can be done by permitting and encouraging people to drink under all circumstances, when they please, and without restraint and shame. This is universally conceded. But there are two other ways recommended. The one is, *to use ardent spirits moderately*; the other, *to drink none at all*. Both have their advocates. Which shall we choose?

As to the *first*—to drink a little—to drink in *moderation*, as it is usually termed—it is precisely the plan upon which intemperance has always been combated, and we have seen with what success. To persuade people to indulge only moderately, has been the favorite plea of the world for ages; and its long use, is the very reason why it should be condemned. If it were a

*new expedient*, we might be willing to give it a trial. But it is old enough, and has been tried to the uttermost, and has entirely failed to accomplish any thing for the better. The wisdom and the benevolence of centuries have made the most of it, and the best of it, and yet, to the wonder and grief of many, the vice, so far from being checked or arrested in its progress, increased, and increased rapidly. At last, we have been awakened to a fair estimate of the success of the plan. And what is it? Why, so far from its having shown the least tendency to *exterminate the evil*, it has proved itself the nursery and the *source* from whence all its abominations flow. All who have come to the stature of full-grown intemperance, have been nourished at this fountain, and trained in this school of all the mischief—in one word, they were once *moderate drinkers*. All who have become tyrants in their families, and have learned to lie down in the street, and have been driven from comfortable homes (once their own) to tenant hovels of poverty, may look back to *this* as the *beginning* of their downward course. No man ever yet set out to use strong drink, with the expectation of becoming a drunkard. Depend upon it, no man ever became a drunkard, who did not believe from the first, that he was able to keep himself within the bounds of *moderation*. The very first lesson in the school of intemperance is—"I only take a little, and a little will do me no harm." But this is the very plea which lies at the foundation of the drunkard's ruin, and which is the delusive, but prolific source of the miserable destiny to which it leads him. It is the source of the vice, debasement, and wretchedness, which pours forth in all directions, and will continue so until it is discarded. The *moderate use* of ardent spirits must be discouraged, or the *temperance reformation* can never be successfully prosecuted. Time and experience decide that it must be abandoned, or multitudes will continue to drink

a little and a little, and thousands will annually drink themselves to their graves.—There is a deceitfulness about all its pretensions to safety, to which we must awake—to which every good man ought to awake, and will awake, and to which the wise and good throughout the land have already awakened, wondering that they could have been deceived so long by what is now so glaring, and earnestly inquiring what they shall do to repair and to stop the evils it has occasioned.

Well then, as it is plain no good can follow, but on the contrary much evil, and incalculable evils are the consequence of advocating and recommending *moderate drinking*, what is to be done? There is but one answer—persuade *people to use none at all*. This expedient is OMNIPOTENT. It is mighty, through God, to the pulling down all the strongholds of the enemy.—Be it remembered, therefore, that *total abstinence* is the only plan upon which reformation can be hoped for, and nothing else will drive it out of this happy land; and just in proportion to the extent to which this principle shall be adopted, will the woes attendant on this vice be seen and heard no more. Suppose this *principle* to become *universally* adopted; suppose all who are now temperate to abstain *entirely* from ardent spirits, is it not evident, that as the ranks of intemperance were thinned off by death, there would be no supply forthcoming to fill them up again; and that, as one drunkard after another went down to the tomb, their number, receiving no additions, would continually decrease, until a few years would sweep them all away, and leave a healthful, happy, and prosperous population to inhabit the land.

When we consider the history and examples of intemperance, and see how its victims are brought to their present condition, in despite of all their resolutions and all the tears and tender entreaties of love and friendship, and in defiance of the most

powerful motives to desist and reform—motives drawn from a regard to reputation and success in business and the sacred ties and obligations of domestic endearment—we are free to declare, that *total abstinence* is the only effectual remedy of this great evil. We assume it to be the only means of *personal security*—the only preservative principle against the formation of an appetite for strong drink, and its insidious encroachment upon every barrier erected against excess. Let a man be in the habit of drinking a little ardent spirits daily, though he may *use it moderately*, he has no guaranty of safety—nothing to insure him that he will not fall a victim to its power.

At this stage of our argument, we have to meet an objection, as common as it is injurious, and which we fear has helped to confirm many in their habit of drinking, and to strengthen their prejudices against the temperance cause. It is this—“many who have lived long and respectable lives—men whose character for sobriety, morality, and religion was never questioned, have indulged for years, or to the end of life, in the moderate use of ardent spirits, without any perceptible injury—and surely we may do the same;—the little we take will not hurt us more than it has hurt others.”

I have stated this objection in such terms as will give it all the weight to which it is entitled. And now, in reply, I am free to acknowledge, that there have been persons who have thus indulged with *apparent* impunity, though, at the same time, we are not willing to say *without injury*; because it is generally admitted that to a healthy man ardent spirits must prove injurious in some way or other. But what we mean is, there have been those who have drank moderately without betraying themselves into drunkenness or sustaining any visible injury in their health. And so, there have been those who have breathed a pestilential air, who never fell victims to the infection; but does

that show they were not in danger? Does it prove that others may do the same with equal safety? Nay, is it not certain that many of them, by venturing within the infected district, are seized of the contagion, and die of the plague?—Many of our fathers stood unhurt on the fields of battle, where they bravely fought for our dear-bought liberties, but were they not in danger? And did not many of their co-patriots in arms fall before the musket-shot and cannon-ball? And should we have no risk to run and no dangers to face amidst the scenes of bloodshed and the carnage of contending armies? Just so it is in regard to the pernicious and dangerous indulgence of moderate drinking. While *some seem* to pass through life unhurt, *others* have fallen down, bleeding and wounded. While some have escaped the demon's dart, many have been slain. Oh, how many thousands whose untimely and deplorable end can, with certainty, be traced to this *starting point*! How many husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers—how many of all ranks and all professions—how many high in station—great in talent—extensive in usefulness—blessed with fortune and influence—men of high promise and noble resolutions—of kind and generous feelings—greatly beloved and greatly honored, have here begun to run their race of degradation and death!

And with regard to those whose course and whose end have not exhibited so sad and melancholy a spectacle, have we not reason to believe that it has been *hastened* by the use of ardent spirits, however moderately they have had the credit of indulging their appetite? If we are disposed to pay any regard to the opinions and warnings of the great masters of the healing art, we must conclude that any quantity, however small, when regularly taken, is a deleterious poison, that infuses itself through the whole system, and often breaks forth into maladies that destroy health and life. How painful and distressing is the

thought, that many whose deaths have been ascribed to diseases of various nomenclature, have brought these diseases upon themselves by *the regular use of strong drink*. This has been the slow and silent, but *real* cause which has laid them in the grave, though they were never regarded as intemperate by the world. How is it possible, then, to resist the conviction, that *entire abstinence* is the *only safety*—the *sole remedy* for ruin so widespread and overwhelming.

We hardly need say, that this plan upon which the friends of the temperance cause have fallen, and in which they are united, is not only the surest and the best, but it is the *cheapest*. It is attended with no expenditure. It can be practiced by all of every age and every condition. And as it costs nothing, its gains are immense: it will save millions of dollars that are now worse than thrown away. And, besides, it is the most *benevolent plan*. It does not call into its aid the civil authority. It injures no man—wrongs no man—defrauds no man. It has no political or sectarian views to answer. It infringes on no man's liberty. It appeals to reason, and would persuade all to embrace it, by a regard to the highest interests, temporal and spiritual, of the human family.

Under a deep impression of the great importance, simplicity, and efficiency of the principle of *total abstinence*, I feel constrained to urge it upon your serious consideration and your exemplary practice. What wonders it has already accomplished! Who would have dared to predict the results which have followed it, wherever it has been introduced—it has excited an unprecedented interest, and enlisted in its service wisdom, experience, learning, and influence, to a surprising extent. From the east to the west, and from the north to the farthest south, its omnipresence is seen and felt. Farms are tilled, buildings erected, harvests gathered, vessels built, the ocean navi-

gated, journeys performed, militia companies paraded, the army and navy maintained, commerce transacted, our prisons governed, our laws enacted, and the bench of justice announces its decisions without the aid of intoxicating drink. The progress of this good and glorious cause is still onward. It is rapidly and powerfully advancing. Its friends are augmenting—its enemies are decreasing, and blush to avow their opposition—nothing can arrest its final success and triumph. But it is retarded, and may be greatly impeded, not by the *intemperate*, but the *temperate*. If they continue to uphold the moderate use of ardent spirits, by their example, upon them devolves the solemn responsibility of keeping up the manufacture and traffick of this baneful poison. If they are backward in closing the only gate that opens upon the downward path of the drunkard, upon them it seems must rest no ordinary share of guilt. Because it is undeniable, and it can easily be shown, that so far as our example is not opposed to *all*, and *any use* of spirituous liquor, except when prescribed as a medicine, it is in the scale of intemperance. But suppose we take the ground proposed, and avow our conversion to the vital principle of this work. Suppose, with the whole united force and influence of our example, we come over to the side of *entire abstinence*, would we not give a tone and a strength to public opinion against the least use of ardent spirits? Would not this prevailing sentiment prove a most wholesome check to every incitement to intemperance, and stand centinel at every avenue by which it could come in? How, then, could a temperate man contract the desire, and fix the habit of drinking? Could one in fifty, or more than one in a hundred, be found willing to risk their character, and set themselves in opposition to public feeling, by using an article that had been universally renounced as ruinous and detestable? And would it not be next thing to an impossibility to continue its

traffick and its use, in view of the frowns and indignation of a whole community? Most assuredly, if we are not mistaken, the light and the efforts of the present age are verging public sentiment to this point. An influence has thus been created that sets directly in opposition to *the least use of ardent spirits*. And it is plain that to make this a mighty influence—an influence that will hasten the abandonment of the whole business of making and vending and the habit of using it, the temperate part of our citizens must take the firm and open ground of *entire abstinence*.

But, in order to give this influence a more efficient and extensive operation on the community, it must be gathered up wherever it is found, and concentrated in *temperance societies*, and thrown forth from them in every direction, so as to be seen and felt and respected. The power and importance of associated exertion is universally acknowledged. The day in which we live affords abundant evidence of this. Every great and benevolent project that has scattered its blessings over the land and the world has risen and been sustained, and is carried forward and grows more mighty by co-operation. It cannot be doubted that the whole progress and glory of the temperance reformation must be attributed, under God, to the influence exerted by these societies. Hundreds and thousands of the temperate, individually weak, have become collectively strong. By coming together they have embodied their examples, their resolutions, and their efforts; emboldened the fearful and faint-hearted; confirmed the wavering and strengthened the weak; awakened attention; produced inquiry; interested many of all classes and ages; brought the public ear to listen; the public mind to reflect; the public prejudice to soften down; the public conscience to feel, and the public sentiment to give a verdict in their favor; and last, though not least, they have collected and

distributed an amount of information on this subject most surprising and spirit-stirring, information which but for their instrumentality would never have been obtained: and thus a thousand facts have been brought to light, and a thousand energies been put in motion in behalf of this glorious cause, which no insulated human industry, no plan of unassociated action could have ever reached. I am free to admit, that previous to the formation of these societies, there were many who saw and deplored the evils of intemperance, and who attempted, and to some extent practiced on the principles of abstinence; but being separated from each other, without encouragement and without concert, they were not able to stem the current of public opinion and practice. So far as their example extended, it was no doubt attended with good effects; but no great impression was made—no head-way against the wide-spreading evil—no diminution in the sale of liquors, and no general amendment became visible on the face of society.

We are not aware that the *right* of an individual to abstain entirely from the use of ardent spirits, has ever been seriously questioned, or that such abstinence is condemned as improper and morally wrong. There have been some men, in all ages, who could not be prevailed upon to taste the intoxicating draught, and long before societies for the promotion of temperance were thought of, there were those who totally abstained. We can easily conceive that a regard to health or reputation, or personal safety or usefulness, may have been among the prevailing considerations with such persons for the adoption of the course they pursued. And as they acted according to their *acknowledged right*, it will not be pretended that there was any thing morally wrong in so doing; that they should have acted otherwise, and have been *constrained* to drink, from a sense of duty to God and their fellow men. However unnecessary and

uncalled for, the maxim they have avowed may be viewed, still it is not for a moment maintained that it interferes with the rights of others, or that they are not at liberty to resolve that it shall be their maxim through life. Now, if a single individual has the right to make a formal resolution and to enter into a solemn pledge to abstain from ardent spirits, most assuredly any number of persons enjoy the same right, and may associate together for the same purpose.

But while the *right* of taking this ground is not disputed, the *propriety*, the *necessity*, and the *importance* of the measure is not so readily conceded, even by those who profess to be friendly to the cause of temperance. It is asked—why bind ourselves by a pledge to pursue a course which we already approve? In reply, let it simply be observed—that it will operate as a check and a guard upon us in the hour of temptation. We know too little of our weakness, and presume too confidently upon our strength of purpose, if we think that we need no deliberate engagement to retain us in the path of duty. Every man is frequently placed in such circumstances, that he will waver and yield and be overcome, if he feels himself free from the influence of settled resolutions. And because in such cases there is no breach of engagement, there is little or no compunction or shame. And if the truth were known, you would find but very few of these advocates for temperance, without subscribing a pledge of abstinence, who do *entirely abstain*. I have heard of the much boasted ability of abstaining without coming under an engagement; but I have never yet seen it effect a great deal. If there be indeed a fixed and settled purpose to abstain, it appears to me that it will in a day like the present come forth and show itself in a *declared and open membership* with a temperance society. But where there is nothing more than a mere indolent preference of the habit of abstinence—I

very much fear that the individual may fall before the first attack. It is wise, therefore, to join with others, who may assist us in executing our good intentions. And this is precisely what we do, when we unite ourselves to a temperance society. We feel upon ourselves the happy operation of the connexion. A sense of consistency, and a regard to the opinions of others, as well as higher motives, concur in aiding and confirming our steadfastness.

I am aware that it is also urged, that such resolutions and vows as are involved in the pledge required by the temperance society, *are always attended with danger*, since such is the weakness of all human purposes, that they are very liable to be violated, and that thus the cause sustains irreparable injury. Correct as this argument may be in part, yet it leads much too far: since it would equally deny the prudence of any *fixed rule* for our conduct—or any purpose of holy living, or any serious attempt at reformation, or determined abandonment of a vicious and wicked life. If the position be maintained, that no purposes of good and no resolutions of temperance and safety be justifiable, because they may be broken and prove injurious to the cause they profess to uphold, then is removed one of the strongest barriers against one of the most efficient aids to the practice of virtue. If it be wise and prudent at all, to come under the binding influence of a resolution, then surely we may, with great reason and propriety, take such a step in reference to the subject under consideration. Such a resolution establishes the mind, instead of leaving it unsettled and undetermined upon every emergency; and in every case of refusal to comply with pressing entreaty, it presents an apology that commends itself to the reason and the consciences of all.

But one principal importance of these associations must be especially sought for in the influence which they exert by way

of *example*. Wherever one of these associations exists, it will produce conversation and inquiry. It will be known, who are its supporters, and why they thus abstain. Indifference in some towards the object, and opposition in others, must be expected. Self-interest will lead those who are engaged in the traffick to decry the work; and the ignorant and unthinking will affect to be witty, when speaking of *the water drinker*. When the cause of temperance is named, the bar-room will resound with jests and the boisterous merriment of the midnight revel may be heightened. I wish I could stop here; but the truth must be known. In the houses, at the tables, and in the parlors of those of whom we should expect better things—temperance societies and their advocates are spoken of in a manner that, we doubt not, the judgment and the conscience of the person condemn. But still the cause prevails, and as the wisdom and benevolence of the plan become more and more apparent, it receives fresh accessions of strength from the ranks of its original opposers. It is in this way, by the steady, the open, and persevering endeavors which are put forth in behalf of the temperance reformation, that a great amount of good has already been effected and the most encouraging hopes are excited. It is by the *combined influence of example* that this work of faith and labor of love is carried forward; and every argument that would induce us to withhold our public testimony in favor of a scheme so virtuous, so truly benevolent, and so fraught with all that is dear and sacred to the bodies and the souls of men is most fallacious. It is freely admitted—we may be temperate *without joining an association*—just as we may be christians *without making a public profession of religion*—but where then is *our example*. And as in the one case an open confession of Christ is requisite, in order to our glorifying God and becoming extensively useful, so in the other, in order to give the whole of our example to

the cause of temperance, it is equally necessary that we should take some *public*, some *decided stand*. Where every person is called to be at his post and do his duty—neutrality is culpable. Our example is cited either for or against this cause daily, and our influence is operating continually on one side or the other. While we hesitate or refuse our co-operation, numbers, by regarding our example, will withhold their aid also, or will be encouraged to continue the habit of drinking, until it may end in their disgrace and ruin. I ask, then, how can we—especially how can any professor of the holy religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, refrain from lending the weight of his example and influence to a work which he must be convinced is recommended by the highest considerations of duty and benevolence.

Having endeavored to set before you an *easy* method, and the *only* method by which you may hope to do something to save yourselves and families, and friends and neighbors, from the fatal evils of intemperance, it only remains for me to recommend to you all the adoption of the principle and practice now defended. I would propose it to the solemn consideration of every parent—every youth—every patriot and friend of morals and good order, and above all, to every disciple of the blessed Redeemer. It matters not how you are situated or what are your pursuits—if you have hearts to feel for the crimes, disgrace, and wretchedness, which have been produced by the traffick and the use of ardent spirits; and if you have a desire to lend a hand in arresting their progress, the surest and most effectual way of doing this will be the adoption of the principle recommended in this discourse. Suppose it should call for the exercise of self-denial—suppose it should conflict with your present interests, and subject you to the rebuke and the ridicule of self-interest and folly—what you renounce by enlisting under the banner of temperance, is not worthy of a thought viewed in

connexion with your duty and your responsibility—an approving conscience, and the present and eternal welfare of thousands.

Let me entreat *parents* to look at this subject. What can be dearer to them than the happiness, the respectability, and the safety of their children. What could more completely embitter the cup of your domestic enjoyment than to see your sons numbered as they grow up among the profligate and the drunken? Many are the parents whose lives have been rendered deeply wretched and whose gray hairs have been brought down with sorrow to the grave by the intemperance of their children.—At this moment there are fond fathers and indulgent mothers, whose hearts are bleeding over once promising sons, now ruined and undone. But how were they ruined? Must it be entirely ascribed to corrupting companions and the enticements of the dram-shop! Had not the regulations of their own home a baleful influence upon their childhood and youth! The parents, perhaps, were not intemperate, but did they not use ardent spirits, and while the taste and the habits of their sons were forming, did not the bottle and the decanter frequently appear on the sideboard and the table? Were they not offered to every calling friend—resorted to for strength when feeble, and refreshment when weary? Such children never grew up under any deep impression of the evils of drinking and with no disgust for the stupifying beverage. What else could be expected, than that they would imitate the example they daily witnessed, and gradually acquire a fondness for strong drink. And though we do not say the habit thus contracted under the parental roof leads, in all cases, to right-down intemperance, yet it frequently does. Here the first step was taken. Here commenced the seduction of their youthful feet, though they were afterwards hurried forward to their degradation and ruin by the corrupting examples of the world around them. Such, in a greater or less degree, will be the conse-

quences, wherever parental example is held in veneration among children. A father may venture to the brink of a precipice, and return again in safety; but his son, in attempting to imitate him by doing the same, may become giddy, and plunge into the deep abyss. Believe it then, parents, the *only safe plan, in training up your children, is entire abstinence*. Put the accursed thing out of your houses. Abstain yourselves, and employ the whole influence of example, opinion, and persuasion to drive out of fashion and into disrepute the common but ensnaring practice of evincing hospitality by the display of the glass and the decanter.

Let me present this subject to the serious consideration of all the *young men of this assembly*. To whom can the eye of the christian philanthropist be more reasonably directed for cooperation in this work of reformation, than to you? And how utterly vain will be the efforts of benevolence in this great cause, unless you are disposed to come forward and breast yourselves against the encroachments of intemperance? If the spirit of temperance be infused into your veins, it will eventually expel the last drop of burning blood from the social system, and, by its strong pulsations, send a healthful circulation to the remotest members of the body politic. Beloved youth, I address you as the hope of the nation and the hope of the church. Be persuaded to look well to your steps—ponder the path of your feet. You are about taking the places of those who have been the prime actors in the busy and the bustling scenes around you, but are now fast retiring from the stage. The *present generation* will be extensively influenced by your principles and your conduct, and it is not too much to say, that *you will have the moulding of the character of the next*. Can, then, the importance of your entertaining right views, and of your taking a right stand on this great subject, be unduly magnified? If some

cruel and daring enemy were to invade our land, for the purpose of destroying our liberties and of spreading devastation by fire and sword, would not *the love of country* impel you to rise up at once, and go forth to meet and to encounter him in his progress? And now, as there is an enemy already among us, whose breath is pestilence and whose march is desolation and death, does not your country's honor and happiness equally demand your help and bid you come to her assistance? It is asked—what can young men do? One thing, at least, they can do—*They can continue temperate*. But this cannot be done by indulging the appetite for strong drink, *however cautiously*. If you drink a little stately, though it may be in moderation, you have begun precisely where all those began whose race is run and whose destruction is sealed. If you would consider yourselves as safe, you must entirely renounce those habits which have led others on to ruin. Should you frequent places of evening resort, where the glass is passed merrily around and the hours are consumed in social drinking, then, be assured—bright as your morning now opens, and cheering as may be your prospects, it will be turned into a day of clouds and thick darkness. Would you then, dear youth, have the pleasing expectations of your parents and friends realized in reference to your future course; do you aspire to interesting domestic alliances; and is it your wish to become successful in your business; happy in the circle of your acquaintance; respected by those who know you; useful in life; lamented in death, and blessed beyond the grave, then “taste not, touch not, handle not,” the inebriating cup: “at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.”

Let me call upon *the patriot and the friend of humanity* to look at this subject. Is not the extermination of intemperance desirable, and an object worthy of the regards and the efforts of

every lover of his country? It is no longer a question, whether the country is cursed with this plague to a most alarming extent. It cannot be doubted that such is the present power and character of intemperance—notwithstanding all that has been done to arrest its progress—as to demand the putting forth of all the moral force of the nation to subdue it. A great effort is demanded for its expulsion—an effort that must be commensurate with the evil—and that is *national* and *universal*. Some suppose *that enough had been done*, and talk as if the work was accomplished, when in fact *it is but just fairly begun*. Such are still the facilities of intemperance—such the temptations to intemperance, and such the examples by which it is sanctioned, that unless the efforts to put it down be greatly increased, it will still sweep through the land, like an overflowing scourge, augmenting her pauperism and her crime; wrecking her intellectual and physical energies; undermining her moral principle; nullifying her elections and sapping the root of her dear-bought and boasted liberties. O! if ever intemperate men and their abettors come to form the *public opinion*, and consequently the *public conscience* and the *public law* of our country, then may we weep over her fallen glory and bid adieu to her prosperity and her greatness. Is it not evident, then, that it is the solemn duty of all the people of this land, and especially of every true friend to his country, to rise up at once and vigorously unite in the furtherance of those measures, that alone will stop the march of this unequalled Destroyer. Let the use of ardent spirits, for the ordinary purposes of drink, be rendered so unbecoming and disreputable, that he who wishes to sustain an unsuspected character for temperance, will either wholly renounce their use, or betake himself to some secret place, where no eye can see him taste the dangerous cup, but the eye of God. Let a public feeling be created against the licensing of so many houses of corruption,

where the article is so attractively offered and so cheaply vended, that hundreds are tempted to purchase the means of their own destruction, and are easily led astray by the wily arts and evil influence of these places of seduction. It is frequently asked—why are so many taverns and dram-shops—the evils of which are countless and plain as open day—tolerated? Why do not the proper authorities refuse to license them? We reply, that as the proper authorities are guided by *public sentiment*, whenever *that* is fairly enlisted in opposition to such houses, *then*, and *not till then*, the evil will be remedied. The deliverance of the country from the curse of intemperance is utterly hopeless, while ardent spirits is in the hands of the people and is a common article of traffick. It must be banished—and nothing will so quickly do this as an *enlightened, purified, and elevated public opinion*. Let, then, every patriot, every statesman, every magistrate, and every friend of morals and of common humanity help to form that opinion. And who can have a heart to draw back in view of the countless woes that flow from the cruel tempers—the deep disgrace—the hopeless poverty, and the corrupting examples of all the victims of this dreadful vice upon parents and friends—upon wives and children—and upon the morals of society at large?

Especially, would we make this appeal to *the disciples of the holy and self-denying religion of the gospel of Christ*. What so insidiously and so surely undermines every moral principle of the heart; what so effectually quenches conviction in the breast of the troubled sinner, and sends him, under the influence of a false hope, to number himself among the saints, and become a curse to the church; what so completely breaks down the restraints of religion, and opens the door to almost every vice—as intemperance? It has proved itself mighty in stupifying the conscience and hardening the heart—in obliterating the fear of

the Lord from the minds of men, and steeling them against the influences of the sabbath and the sanctuary—the word and the providence and the grace of God—nay, it has snatched from the death-bed of thousands, the consolations of the gospel, and written upon their graves the sentence of *Despair*. *Christian Brethren, Beloved in the Lord—beware, then, what position you occupy in regard to the cause of temperance—see to it, that you do not stand in the way of this reform. Be careful that your business, your gains, or your fears of the opinions of others, do not throw your influence in the scale of opposition. Nobly and fearlessly and conscientiously determine that from henceforth, you will be found among the friends and promoters of this cause. There may be some who stand aloof, because they have not yet discerned the path of duty: but I would call upon such—I would call upon all, to espouse the safe side—the side of virtue and of human happiness. In the language of the Israelitish lawgiver—I would ask, with all solemnity and in view of other scenes that are to take place at another day—“WHO IS ON THE LORD’S SIDE,” IN THIS BLESSED AND GLORIOUS WORK? AND AGAIN, I ASK, WHO?*