1832. Dan'l Copeland,
With the respects of the Author

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

READFIELD TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

AT THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY,

JULY 4, 1832.

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ADDRESS.

I DO not appear before you, this day, at my own solicitation or request. Had I seized my pen to beguile the hours that were hanging heavily on my hands, another subject would have claimed my attention—one on which the mind could have lingered with emotions of pleasure, and which would have presented the fancy with some images beside those of woe. Had the love of display been the predominant feeling of my mind, I would also, in that case, have sought out for the occasion another subject than that which we now propose to discuss. In the drama of life, whatever may be the sentiment of the misanthrope, there is now and then acted a scene of pleasantness. The mind recurs back with feelings of the highest satisfaction, and in the contemplation of them, there springs up in the bosom a feeling of playful delight, whether the imagination rests on the plot of the scene, or the actors by whom it has been presented. Many of the scenes connected with the day we now celebrate are of this description. To others, however, we leave the pleasant task of numbering them over, and of joining their voices in mutual gratulation. We have assumed to ourselves a graver task; and the scenes which we associate with the object of our present assembling together, have no affinity to these. The feeling of romantic gayety, or self-complacent pride, can here find no place on which to rest. Intemperance is an unwelcome theme.

Unwelcome however as is the theme, unpleasant as are the emotions to which the contemplation of it gives rise, and diverse as may be the sentiments entertained on the subject, by the individuals composing this audience; still, it becomes me, called as I have been, to address you on this occasion, to speak plainly and fear-

lessly the sentiments I entertain in relation to it. In doing this however, I pledge myself to be candid and respectful; and I ask, as the only favor I have a right to claim, the candid attention of all who have come in here.

This day is one, which the American of true patriotism can never meet but with feelings of pride. On no other occasion does he feel, as on this, the gratitude he owes to his fathers, for the rich inheritance they have committed to their sons. On no other occasion does he set so high a value on the blessings of liberty, nor feel willing to sacrifice more for its support. On no other occasion does he cherish a more ardent love for his country and its institutions. *The Duties of an American Citizen*, the subject which I propose partially to consider, will not, then, seem inappropriate to the present occasion.

Were we to seek for examples of high traits of character, worthy of imitation—for models of excellence which we might be proud to copy, where should we find them, if not in our own country, or in connection with our own history? I need not speak of the eloquence of Henry, directed to the support of a cause which as yet was unpopular. I need not point to him, while as yet the spirit of revolution had not gone forth, boldly standing up in defence of the cause of nature and of truth, even while *treason* was heard to echo from every part of the house. I need not allude to the almost unprecedented sacrifice of La Fayette, and a host of our revolutionary worthies, while as yet all was uncertain, whether success would make them patriots and crown them with honor, or whether failure would brand them as rebels and the ambitious leaders of an insurrection. I need not allude to the voluntary sacrifice of New York, Delaware, North Carolina, or Georgia, in submitting to the restrictions imposed on the trade of the other colonies and spurning the exemption proffered to them by the British Parliament, as a low and insidious artifice to reconcile them to what might by and by grow to a great and fearful evil, even though it then seemed but as a grain of mustard seed. Neither need I mention the sacrifices not only voluntarily but cheerfully made on the part of the thousands composing our colonies, in depriving themselves of almost every article of luxury, rather than to recognize the principle, that Great Britain should

in any form violate the rights, which were considered by them unalienably theirs.

But where are the spirits of our Revolution? Where now are those who are willing to sacrifice their temporary popularity, their private gain, their love of present gratification, for the public good? I need not say that the time has not gone by, when our country requires these sacrifices at the hands of her citizens. It will not be deemed irrelevant to the occasion, to say, that the scenes which rise in prospect before us, as American citizens, will call for the exercise of the highest virtues. The elements of moral commotion are already at work in our country, and the signs of the times admonish us of the approach of fearful political evils. How shall their approach be prevented, or their influence counteracted, but by the diffusion of general intelligence, by elevating the standard of virtue, and by impressing upon the minds of the rising community those high notions of true glory, which alone are the safeguard of a republican government?

I will not speak lightly of the virtue or integrity, which, even now, are seen in our country. Indeed I do not believe we have much occasion for present fear. When our Country shall have come to the point which threatens her ruin—when she shall have come to the verge of the precipice to which she now seems advancing, then shall the spirit of patriotism rise above that of self or party, and by her warning voice shall rouse the slumbering community, and marshal them in the support of her cause.

But I should not meet the expectations of those who have assembled here, nor perform the duty which I owe to those I address, were I not to allude to the dangers that threaten us from the existence of one vice which has taken deep root in our country—the vice of *Intemperance*. Fifty years ago, this evil was scarcely known among us; yet even then, the eagle-eyed patriot saw in ardent spirit a national evil. Mr. Hamilton, in one of the first of that series of Essays which the nation has adopted as its own, says, "That article would well bear a high rate of duty; and if it should tend to diminish the consumption of it, such an effect would be equally favorable to the agriculture, to the economy, to the morals and to the health of

society." He adds, "There is perhaps nothing so much a subject of national extravagance, as this very article." If when this evil was but a germ, such an expression of sentiment was called for, what can be said too much, when it has grown up and filled the whole earth? Not a community, not a neighborhood in our whole country has escaped. Indeed there is scarcely a family, but feels itself degraded by having some of its connections enumerated with the drunkards of our land.

Nothing is more obvious, than that intemperance tends to superinduce poverty, ignorance and moral degradation. On this point all must be agreed. In a country where the rulers are such by divine right—where the government is administered by a succession of hereditary nobles, it is a small matter, considered in a national point of view, that her subjects are degraded and abject. But in a free government it is not so. Here, every citizen, at regular periods, "bears to the omnipotent ballot-box his full portion of the sovereignty." Here the voice of the most humble is heard in all our councils. The direct tendency of poverty, ignorance and moral degradation is to subject this tremendous power of the multitude to the will of the few; and to throw the direction of our public affairs into the hands of artful and designing demagogues. Intemperance is in this way exerting a fearful control in our country, by destroying that balance of influence which is founded on property, as well as that healthful mental equality, which is so essential to a self-ruled people. Indeed, so great are the political evils already effected by this degrading vice, that the true lover of his country can but entertain painful apprehensions for the future fate of this Republic.

There is another way in which our nation suffers directly from the effects of intemperance; and that is by the premature death of many of its inhabitants. It is true, the drunkard generally goes down in silence to the grave. Few are the tears that are shed over the place where he sleeps. The voice of public mourning is never heard on his account. Yet who can say, had it not been for the dangerous usages of society, by which he was first decoyed from the paths of virtue and sobriety, how useful a citizen he might have made? Who can say, how many there are who thus sink down in infamy, who

might have shone their country's brightest ornaments? Thousands of young men have entered upon the world with prospects fair, but have fallen before the withering touch of intemperance, like the leaf by the untimely frost. How great the loss the world has suffered on the account, is left for the imagination alone to conceive. The lover of his country however, if he possess the common feelings of humanity, can but weep over so mighty a wreck of talent and promise.

Another national view may be taken of this subject, not less humiliating than these. Too often do we see in those who have gone up to stations of usefulness, where are required sterling integrity and unyielding virtue, the slaves of a groveling passion. Too often are the seats of justice and of legislation filled by those, whose debilitated systems, nervous irritability, clouded judgment, enfeebled memory, and dullness of perception, in a language that cannot be misunderstood, declare them to be the worshipers of strange gods,—such as never brought us out from the land of bondage. Our fathers bowed not before them, nor poured out libations upon their altars. In those Essays composing the Federalist, which have been before referred to, and which will be read, long after the circumstances that gave rise to them shall have become dim in the distance, Mr. Madison, speaking of the plan and execution of the Constitution of our country, says, "It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty Hand, which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the Revolution." Are the guardians of our liberties, and the defenders of our rights, the worshipers of the purple god, instead of that Almighty Being, whose interposition in our behalf is here recognized? Then may we pluck the plumes from the gray bird of our country's standard, from our legislative halls break down from its pedestal the venerated statue of our country's father, and instead of LIBERTY, inscribe DESPOTISM on our country's seal.

The wisest of the men who compose our national councils have united their influence in the cause of temperance. A number of meetings have within a year or two been held in the Capitol for its promotion. Here the leaders of the parties have put up their swords into

their scabbards; and, however unused to mingle their voices in concert, to the honor of their names, on this subject there has been but one voice. They have here come together, and mingled their sacrifices on this altar, sacred to the public good.

But this is not the only view which it is our duty to take of the subject under consideration. What are the objects of government, but the peace, order, and happiness of the community? And if these be not effected, what avails the nominal character of the government under which we live? Every species of misery, it is our duty, as American citizens, to endeavor to alleviate. And where shall we direct the eye—to what favored spot, from our own State to the farthest South, not to see the ravages of intemperance?—not to see the sunken eye of dissipation, the haggard cheek of poverty, the tear of suffering innocence, the ruin of moral character, and the scattered fragments of man's glorious intellect? Where shall we turn, not to hear the sighs and wailings of suffering humanity?—There is something dark and unlovely in the scene, that presents nothing but images of sadness; and I would turn from it, but that the occasion calls.—On the one hand, may be seen squalid poverty, half naked, stealing away from the wretched cottage where no fire cheers the morning of December, and no food satisfies the hunger of famished helplessness and innocence, to seek for another potion of the cause of all this misery; and on the other, wealth is seen squandering away its abundance, and giving in exchange plenty and peacefulness for want and wretchedness. Here, may be seen the lost to all moral principle, in whom conscience has lost its power, and the social affections their tenderness; and there, the intellect originally endowed with the most elevated powers, and glowing with all the warmth of the soul's highest aspirations, stricken down in the midst of its high soaring—its sacred fire quenched in the unholy flame of its own kindling. We scarcely need turn to see the young aspirant after fame gradually declining in his efforts; and by slow, and to himself almost imperceptible degrees, losing sight of the objects that once fired his ambition, till at length he sinks in infamy, and goes down to sleep where Love nor Pity shall ever drop a tear over his grave.

These views are no exaggerations—they everywhere meet the eye even of the most superficial observer. Other dark scenes there are that meet not the public gaze. To those who have seen them, they need not be repeated; and to those who have not, they cannot be adequately represented. Yet it may not be amiss, to present even an imperfect sketch of what is sad reality, before the young, the thoughtless, the gay—some of them perchance the future matrons of our country.—I have seen the wife, whose husband was a drunkard. She too was a mother; and with her children, from the prattling infant to the accomplished young lady, has oft been seen watching his return with deep anxiety. I have seen them retiring before his awkward movements, his tottering step, and his countenance of vacant thoughtlessness. I have seen their tears, and heard their sighs, when they have seen the dignity of the man—of him who *was* a husband, a father—lost in the degradation of the brute. Then I thought of blighted hopes, of withered anticipations;—I thought of a family ruined by vicious example, of property confiscated, of the disgrace of her who once shone in the highest circle, of the lone death-bed and unvisited grave of the drunkard, and of the cold charity of a cold world. Allured from the gay circles of her youth, and from all the endearments of home and kindred, with promises flattering and expectations high, at once she is thus precipitated to the most hopeless abyss of temporal ruin.

Such are some of the evils that have their origin in the use of ardent spirits.

I am now prepared to speak of the object for which we have this day assembled, by way of comparing it with the high purpose of our fathers, which led to the Declaration of Independence, which event is this day, throughout our whole country, so enthusiastically celebrated. Think me not about to speak lightly of the glorious achievements of our ancestors. To no one can the scenes of our early history appear more interesting than to me. To no one can the distinguished actors in those scenes appear more worthy, or their names more deserving of immortal fame. But when I cast my eyes over this country, which they bought with their blood, and see scattered here and there in every town, in every

neighborhood, habitual drunkards, already amounting to about one fortieth part of our whole population; when I, in my imagination, visit their homes, now the abodes of wretchedness, and see the poverty, cruelty and suffering, to which female delicacy and helpless innocence are subjected; I can but conclude, that there never was so much to call forth the firmness of resolve, and the vigor of action, exhibited by our fathers, as there now is to call forth our best efforts to put an end to the desolating evils of intemperance.

But I feel disposed to present this subject a little in detail. It is an estimation, coming from a source on which we can rely, that there are now three hundred thousand habitual drunkards in our country. If we suppose associated with each of these only two who are the immediate sufferers from their habits of intemperance, even in that case, we have a number either degraded by drunkenness, or suffering from their immediate connection with drunkards, equal to one fourth part of the whole population of these United States on the day of their emancipation from British tyranny.* And what were the hardships—what was the tyranny, to which they were subjected, compared with the bondage of him who is a slave to ardent spirits?—with the overwhelming and heartfelt afflictions of those, who are destined to see their fathers, their mothers, their children, their husbands, their wives, their nearest and dearest friends, sinking into the vortex which intemperance has opened for their ruin?

Friends and Fellow Citizens,—It is well for us to turn in here, aside from the scenes both of business and of mirth, to think on these things; and when we think on them, let us think on them as being sad and painful realities. With what rapid strides has intemperance advanced in our country during the last fifty years! Fifty years hence, we shall probably be in our graves; but judging from the past, what assurance have we that the rising generation shall not, even before our memories shall die from the earth, see this a nation of drunkards? Our only assurance—our only hope rests in the efforts of the friends of temperance. And shall we speak or

* John Neal's address before the Portland Association.

think lightly of a cause, which has for its object to make the mass of the people which compose our nation, a happier people, and to make our future Legislators, our future Governors, Presidents and Judges, more wise, more prudent, more just? It is a cause too, the proposed execution of which bears a striking analogy to one which is intimately connected with the series of events, which led to the Declaration of our Country's Independence.

Even now, in my imagination, methinks I see the venerable convention of Virginia, composed of such men as Pendleton, Lee, and the ever to be remembered Henry, Jefferson and Washington, adopting, almost without discussion, the following Preamble and Resolution :—"Considering the article of *tea* as the *detestable instrument* which laid the foundation of the present sufferings of our distressed friends in the town of Boston, *we view it with horror:* and therefore

"*Resolved*, That we will not, from this day, import tea of any kind whatever; nor will we use it, nor suffer such of it as may now be on our hands to be used in any of our families."

And they say, "that, in view of the grievances and distresses inflicted by the hand of power on the people, they recommend their association to merchants, traders and others, hoping they will accede to it cheerfully." Nor was their recommendation disregarded, or their hopes disappointed. Their voice was heard, and similar associations were formed throughout the land; and for this act of magnanimity, future generations, when they meet to celebrate this festival, shall think of them, and shall point them out to their sons as the benefactors of their country.

We here have an association of the first patriots of the nation, founded on the principle of total abstinence, and this principle recommended to the adoption of all classes of society; and we find, that those who were deaf to this recommendation were then considered as traitors to their country. And what was all this for? Was it to destroy in the germ the principle of foreign oppression? Yet what was this, to the incubus that is now pressing down upon our institutions, that is undermining our morals, and preying upon the vitals of our political

system? Was it to avoid the influence of an oppressive system of taxation? Yet what were the hundreds that British extortion threatened to rend from us, to the millions* that we are annually expending in that liquid poison, which is sweeping its thousands to the grave, and which is threatening the entire overthrow of these United States?

The plan on which it is proposed to accomplish the object in which we are engaged, considered even in a political point of view, is not, then, without a precedent. The evils of intemperance are admitted; and almost as generally is it admitted, that these evils cannot be removed but by the influence of Public Opinion. And how can the friends of temperance so well express a sentiment upon this subject, or so effectually bring their influence to bear on public opinion, as by uniting to discourage, in every honorable way, the use of what is now almost universally acknowledged to be detrimental to the public interests? But in doing this we may be called to a sacrifice—we *are* called to a sacrifice. By some means, in this part of the community, however it may triumph in other places, the cause is not sufficiently popular, to enable one to espouse it, without at least something of a sacrifice of feeling. It does not fall in with the feelings of men of acute sensibilities, to engage in a cause which is opposed to the feelings and interests of those with whom they are associated. Yet where duty leads, surely we should never fear to follow.

But the sacrifice, which a recognition of the principle of total abstinence involves, and which principally hinders the progress of the temperance cause, is one of *prejudice* and of *interest*, rather than of *feeling*. We have been accustomed from our childhood to think it perfectly harmless, to make what is called a temperate use of ardent spirit. We may now perhaps, notwithstanding the sentiments which are abroad on this subject, believe that such a use of this drug is not injurious. To throw aside this long established habit, and to sacrifice the imagined pleasure connected with it, we have a strong reluctance. Yet permit me to say, patriotism and phi-

* The Hon. William Cranch, Chief Justice of the District of Columbia, in an Address before the Washington and Alexandria Temperance Societies, estimates the annual loss to the country by the use of ardent spirits at $94,425,000.

lanthropy call to it. Though *we* may indulge in the moderate use of spirit, without carrying it to excess, matter of fact says, that *others* cannot thus control themselves. However it may be with some, there are many who cannot safely stand on this dizzy precipice. Their feet stumble and they are gone. And while such are encouraged to the repetition of what is to them a dangerous experiment indeed, by those whose appetites are not so strong, or who can better control them, it is an important enquiry, and one of which I shall not attempt a solution, how far he who offers this encouragement becomes a sharer in the crime?

Fifty years ago, as has been said, there was scarcely a drunkard in all our part of the country. Little did the mother then think, when "pouring this fiery drug into the candle-cup of the babe; or mingling it with the food of the infant," that she was training up her offspring to become the dregs of society. Little did the father think, when he took the bottle into the shop or into the field with his son, and there learned him to take the intoxicating draught, that he was leading the way to certain and inevitable destruction—that he was preparing the dagger, which would by and by pierce him through with many sorrows. Little too, did the gentleman think, when he was throwing off his glass of wine or brandy, that he was encouraging practices, which would result in habits of confirmed intemperance, among those, by whom he was looked up to as an example. As little do we now think, that our children—that our associates—that our imitators, will by and by refer the moral degradation in which they will be plunged to the frivolous usages of society—usages, which we as temperate men—which we as gentlemen—shall I add, which we as christians are by our daily practice encouraging. *The example of a thousand beastly drunkards is not so dangerous as that of one man of respectability, who is occasionally seen taking his social glass.*—It is time we were awake to this subject!

But there are other prejudices, beside those of habit. Closely allied to this, is the prejudice, which arises from erroneous observations made on the effects produced by ardent spirit. There are many who will assert—and refer to their own experience in support of the assertion—that stimulating drinks are useful in sustaining the

system under hard labor, or in defending it from the influence of sudden changes of temperature. The point however may be considered fully established by the experience of thousands who have given up its use, that men can perform more labor, undergo greater hardships and exposures, and at the same time enjoy better health, without the aid of stimulating drinks, than when they use them. Indeed, the man unused to artificial stimulants never feels their need, in sustaining the fatigues, or enduring the cold, the heat or the storms, to which a business life exposes him. It is therefore, to supply a defect, which but for an unnatural and unnecessary stimulus would never have existed, that the inebriate resorts to his periodic dram. By the use of this stimulus, a derangement of the vital organs is produced. The food becomes less nourishing, and the sleep less refreshing. In this way, the natural excitability of the system is diminished, and exhaustion and depression of the spirits ensue. From these a relief is sought in the very means which have occasioned them, and which, whatever be the temporary effects, must, from the nature of the case, continue to exhaust the system and depress the spirits still more and more.

The error here arises from observing the immediate effects only, while the more remote are neglected. The increased action of the vital organs, the temporary increase of muscular power, the excitement of the imagination, and the unusual buoyancy of the spirit—these are all noticed. But when these organs lose their vital forces—when the muscles are wasted—when the momentary excitement of the imagination has passed away, or is exchanged for the wild ravings of the maniac—or when the hilarity of the haunts of intemperance is lost in the gloomy horrors of delirium—then the unfortunate subject is too far gone to trace these effects to their proper causes, or has too little moral power, to give one admonition to his associates in guilt, or even to sigh over the ruin himself has wrought. These, though more remote, are nevertheless the legitimate effects of intemperance; and the dreary subjects of this ruin, though useless to society and a curse to their friends, are permitted to remain here and there among us, as if to admonish the temperate drinker of the vortex which lies before him.

There is also a prejudice of authority,—and it is one to which we cling with peculiar affection. We have learned the use of ardent spirit from our fathers. The practice has been confirmed by the recommendation of physicians; and still its use, even as a drink, has its solitary advocates among those to whom the lives of men are entrusted. Under the influence of such a bias, there are many, who claim that this is efficient in guarding against the attacks of disease, who admit its inutility in other cases. On this subject, there is no division of sentiment among the leading members of the medical profession; and to them I am happy in being able to refer. Dr. Sewall, who in addition to the active practice of his profession, fills the Professorship of Anatomy and Physiology in the Columbian College, among the chronic diseases produced by strong drink, names *Dyspepsy, Consumption, Dropsy, Rheumatism, Gout, Palpitation, Palsy, Histeria* and *Madness;* and remarks in immediate connection, "there is scarcely a morbid affection to which the human body is liable, that has not in one way or another been produced by ardent spirit." In more general terms he says, "There is not a disease but it has aggravated, nor a predisposition to disease, which it has not called into action." If a more definite testimony is required in relation to fevers and other violent attacks, a remark of Dr. Rush is in place, made long before the formation of Temperance Societies, "That ardent spirits dispose the body to every form of acute diseases." Indeed, we have the collected testimony of about forty, from among the most respectable physicians of the state of New York, "That ardent spirit *never* operates as a *preventive* of epidemic or pestilential diseases; but is *very generally* an exciting cause of such diseases, and *always* aggravates them."

It appears, then, that ardent spirit, instead of being a *preventive*, is actually a *predisposing cause* of disease. And not only does it predispose the system to the attacks of various diseases, but greatly increases the violence of their action, when they have once fixed themselves there. A physician of Massachusetts, of forty years' extensive practice, has given it as his opinion, that half the men who die of fevers, might recover, were it not for the use of spirituous liquors. And he even

says, "I have often seen men stretched on a bed of fever, who, to all human appearance, might be raised up as well as not, were it not for that state of the system, which *daily temperate drinking* produces: who now, in spite of all that can be done, sink down and die." But no disease perhaps has given so unequivocal a testimony against strong drink, as that scourge of the earth which has recently overspread Europe, and is already upon our borders.* In many places, more than four fifths who have become its victims, have been addicted to the free use of ardent spirit. These facts have gained the assent of the world, that strict temperance is the surest safeguard against its influence. And I fearlessly state, that no respectable physician will hazard the assertion, that in that respect the Cholera forms an exception to other acute, or even chronic diseases.

Nor is the cause of the predisposition to disease and death, which accompanies the use of ardent spirit, concealed. It is known, that all the principal organs of the body become diseased; that the nervous system—"that nicely adjusted structure, which superintends the functions of the whole living body"—is deranged; and that the vitality of the blood is impaired, and thus rendered unfit to stimulate the organs, to supply the materials for the secretions, or to renovate the tissues of the body. Thus the functions of life are disturbed—the constitution is broken down, and the energy of the system is diminished. And where this is the case, it is no wonder that disease should settle, and that it should fix itself there by a more fatal grasp.

But there is another prejudice, which arises from the same source, in favor of ardent spirit as a medicine in the treatment of disease. Here too, I shall be permitted to quote from medical writers, that the charge of *making drunkards* may be removed from the *profession*, and rest—where indeed it ought to rest—on those *individual* practitioners who still advocate its use. On this subject, Dr. Warren of Boston says, "That the necessity of using ardent spirits in medicine is extremely limited; and if the reservation of the use of alcohol for

* The Cholera broke out in New York, only a day or two previous to the delivery of this Address; and its existence in the United States was not known to the author at that time.

cases of sickness leads to practical abuses, such a reservation should not be made." And Dr. Sewall, who has been before quoted, with more boldness remarks, "If you appeal to the medical profession, they will tell you, every independent, honest, sober, intelligent member of it will tell you, that there is no case in which ardent spirit is indispensable, and for which there is not an adequate substitute." Numerous other physicians of note have made similar concessions.

I shall allude to but one more of the prejudices in favor of intoxicating liquors, and that is one supported by false reasoning. We are told that they are subject to abuse only in common with other things, and that the *abuse* of a thing is no argument against the *use* of it. This is not true, except when the thing itself is beneficial, and when the advantages arising from its use are greater than the disadvantages which arise from its abuse. In relation to ardent spirit, the use of it *in any quantities*, as an article of luxury, is an abuse. Even if we set aside all the evils of drunkenness, it is highly injurious. The dram-drinker shares much more largely in the evils of intemperance than even himself is aware. Says an eminent European physician,* "The observation of twenty years has convinced me, that were ten young men, on their twenty-first birthday, to begin to drink one glass of ardent spirit, and were they to drink this supposed moderate quantity daily, the lives of eight out of the ten would be abridged by twelve or fifteen years." In accordance with this is the testimony of Dr. Rush, where he says:—"I have known several persons destroyed by ardent spirit, who were never completely intoxicated in the whole course of their lives." Many instances of disease of the liver and stomach, which ultimately prove fatal, are referred by physicians to the influence of ardent spirit, though the persons affected may be only temperate drinkers; and we are told that some of the most fearful cases of delirium tremens have been of persons who were, in the common acceptation of the term, temperate men. The dram-drinker then, not less than the drunkard, falls ultimately by the influence of this secret poison, when but for this he might have been

* Dr. Cheyne of Dublin, Ireland.

in the vigor of manhood. Not only is his life thus abridged by his self-indulgence, but the imbecility of his mind, superinduced by these habits, is such, that he rarely leaves a vestige of usefulness behind him, to tell the next generation that he has lived.

Notwithstanding all these things, the work of death goes on. The deep and deadly fountain, from which proceeds all these evils, is still supplied; and still we see even the young man, in the midst of his strength and intelligence, enticed by the usages of society, coming to sip of the fatal waters. We see him again, when his mind and his body should be in the full vigor of manhood, with "his eye of bright" sunken, his countenance wan, his hand tremulous, and the fire of genius quenched. We look again, and long before he has attained his threescore years and ten, his bones are mingled with the ruins of the multitudes who have gone before him. He has passed away from the world in silence, unhonored and unsung. Who can tell of the thousands, of whom this is the sad history?—who basely lie down in the drunkard's grave—whose memories die with them, and whose spirits, debased by the lowest indulgences, go away to their Creator and their Judge.

But that which supplies this fountain of iniquity, and which exerts the greatest influence in delaying the progress of our cause, is private interest. Many are engaged directly in the traffic; and many others, directly or indirectly, become sharers in the advantages which the traffic offers. The tea trade at the commencement of our Revolution, which has been alluded to, was a parallel case. Shall the merchants—shall the citizens of our enlightened day, be less patriotic than were the patriots of '74? Shall we see the desolation going forth, and yet extend no hand to stay its rapid progress? Let the traffic in ardent spirit but cease, and its consumption, with all the fearful effects it produces, would also cease. But till this is done, the young will be trained up to habits of intemperance, and the inebriate will feel himself sustained in the practice of drunkenness;—the voice of wailing will continue to go up from the drunkard's habitation, and, what is more to be feared by those who are aiding in this work of ruin,—the voice

of the drunkard's blood will continue to cry to God from the ground.

The plea that this is sometimes useful as a medicine in the treatment of disease, has already been noticed. But admitting that it is sometimes used with propriety as a medicine,—so are arsenic and corrosive sublimate used as medicines. There is no objection to its limited manufacture as a medicine, or to the apothecary's keeping a supply to meet the orders of temperate physicians. It is not its necessary use as a medicine that does the evil, it is the keeping it as a common article of trade. The vender of spirits not only encourages the manufacturer, but he furnishes the poisonous draught to the self-immolating drunkard—he presents temptations that cannot be resisted, before those who without them might forever remain temperate and happy—he opens the gates of ruin, even to unsuspecting innocence, and by his practice, he gives his sanction to that which will bring woes innumerous on the rising generation.

When the dealer in ardent spirit says, that men will have rum, whether he sells it or not, the statement is not true, in the sense in which it is designed to be understood. There would not be so much consumed. His reasons for laying it aside would satisfy his temperate customers, and the disinterestedness of his course, connected with the influence which every man has in the circle of his friends, would be productive of the best of consequences. His example too, would be followed, sooner or later, by other traders, and thus would be removed the greatest temptation to useless expenditures, to idleness and dissipation, that has ever been presented to any community.

But admitting that the cessation of traffic in this drug would not diminish the amount consumed, who would wish to become accessary in the production of so great an evil? Who, for the paltry consideration of gain, would wish to furnish the dagger to the assassin, or the poison to the maniac, knowing to what purpose they were to be applied? But this is not admitted. Such a measure would have an effect, except with those who are confirmed in their habits of intemperance. And if the drunkard *will have rum*, let him obtain it where he can. I am not pleading on his account. He will

soon be gone, nor will society feel his loss. It is for the rising generation—those whose habits are as yet partially untainted with the usages of society, that I am making my plea. And let those who in the face of Heaven can stand up and say,—*Let the blood of those that perish be on us and on our children,*—let these, and these alone, turn a deaf ear to the appeal we make.

But sufficiently have we lingered among these dark scenes. The evils arising from the use of ardent spirit are admitted by all the intelligent part of the world. It is known by us, that their use is stealing away the wealth of the nation, is destroying the animal constitution, and carrying to an untimely grave its thousands and its tens of thousands—that it is peopling our prisons, insane hospitals and lunatic asylums, and burying our nation in crime and disgrace—that it is introducing sorrows that cannot be told, into families, once the abodes of peace and happiness, and is carrying into every town and neighborhood, ignorance, poverty, moral degradation, suffering and death. It is now time to ask, in the name of philanthropy—in the name of our country, what we are willing to do? what we are willing to sacrifice, to put an end to this great evil? As American citizens, as lovers of our country's peace, happiness and prosperity, we are loudly called upon to put forth our best efforts, to stop or stay the ruin which is spreading around us. Are we willing to follow the example of our patriotic fathers? and on this day, sacred to their memories, to bring our offerings to the altar on which they sacrificed. In fine, are we, who are accustomed to the temperate use of spirit, willing to forego the occasional pleasure of a social glass for the public good? Are we, who are engaged in traffic in this article, willing to forego the trifling gains of this traffic, for the peace and happiness of our community? Let me inquire further, are those who occupy high places in our town, state or country—are our professional men—our intelligent, understanding and patriotic citizens, willing to forego their own private feelings or interests, for the sake of advancing the best interests of our community? An opportunity is furnished, in the existence of the society, which this day celebrates its first anniversary, for giving a practical answer to these enquiries.

To the plan of temperance societies, objections have

been made and answered, and made again. Too long already have I trespassed on your attention, to warrant an allusion to them. Permit me simply to say, that notwithstanding all the objections which have been urged, the cause advances. The societies in our own country, more than a year since, numbered one million two hundred thousand members.* The plan on which they are established has been adopted in Europe, and the cause is spreading with astonishing rapidity through all parts of Great Britain, and societies are forming in many places on the continent. And let me inquire, whether the objectors to *this* system have ever proposed a *better*, or even attempted it? And that these societies cannot, or have not, in thousands of instances, become efficient in promoting the cause of temperance, it is too late to assert. Facts—numerous facts prove to the contrary. Since their commencement, and through their agency, the consumption of ardent spirit has greatly diminished in our country. It is upwards of a year since it was ascertained, that more than a thousand distilleries had been stopped; that more than three thousand dealers had ceased the traffic, and that a number of drunkards, not less than this, had been known to be reformed.* And many have been added to these since that time.

Indeed this system, based as it is, on the reciprocal influence that men exert on each other in society, strongly recommends itself to our adoption. Let all the friends of good order—the friends of social happiness and domestic peace—the friends of the rising generation and of our much loved country, in any town or in any community, unite their names and their influence to discourage the manufacture, sale and use of ardent spirit, and what would be the result? If those who traffic in this article were not among the first to unite their influence, they would soon follow the strong current of popular opinion; and thus the temptation being removed, the use of ardent spirit would not be known but among the professedly intemperate, who notwithstanding the disgrace which would attach to themselves and their families forever, have determined to fall by their own hands. And even these would no longer engage in their unhallowed orgies

* Fourth Report of the Am. Tem. Society.

in the open face of day, but would retire for their revels from the gaze of sober men. Thus would drunkenness be driven into the caves and dens of the earth, and our children would no longer, as at present, be familiar with the disgusting examples of the man degraded to the brute.

Who then will not unite his influence in favor of the cause of temperance? The father, though he may not on his own account need the aid of a temperance society, by joining, may nevertheless save his son from death.—The young man, by joining a temperance society, may save himself from the sorrows into which thousands and tens of thousands, whose prospects for happiness and usefulness, were once as fair as his, have plunged themselves. Or if he does it not for himself, he may, by the influence he will exert in so doing, save his fellow youth from drunkenness, and a destruction worse than an honorable death. The mother, by uniting her influence, may save her daughter from a future union with the drunkard. And the fair, those who are destined to become the future matrons of our country, by uniting their names and influence in the cause, may save—entirely save the next generation from the desolating woes of intemperance; so completely is the destiny of our country lodged in their hands.

One word to those whose call I have obeyed in addressing you this day, and I am done. We are accustomed to think of acts of benevolence and philanthropy, as having little that is noble connected with them, unless when directed to popular objects. It has, I trust, been made to appear, that the work in which you are engaged, in common with multitudes of your fellow citizens, is one of the highest character, whether considered in a national or a moral point of view; and consequently one, which should inspire independence of feeling as well as energy of action. It is sufficiently evident that at no moment of our country's existence, has it ever suffered so much directly from the influence of any foreign power, as it is this moment suffering from the influence of intemperance. And if so, however we may feel on the subject when sitting peacefully by our fire-sides—away from the sights and the sounds of woe—or however great may be the indifference with which the enterprise is viewed by those around us; we know, that when the objects, which

are destined to be accomplished by the formation of temperance societies throughout our country, are effected, the day that gave rise to them may with more propriety be observed as the day of our national jubilee, than even this day, which we annually celebrate as the day of our nation's birth.

Go on then in your great enterprise. If you cannot do all you would, you can do much. Your influence will be felt, and some, even of the present generation, shall be benefited by your exertions. Go on then, and the consideration that you have done what you could do, whether it be much or little, will give you satisfaction, when gold becomes dross—when the love of fame shall lose its magic power, and the emoluments of office their charm; and when all the pleasure arising from the gratification of sense, and the trifling gains which result from traffic and speculation, shall sink beneath more weighty considerations.