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AN ADDRESS

OF THE

REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE

Religious Society of Friends,

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FOR

PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND DELAWARE,

To their Fellow-Citizens,

ON THE USE OF

INTOXICATING DRINKS.



PHILADELPHIA:

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# AN ADDRESS

OF THE

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, FOR PENNSYLVANIA NEW JERSEY, AND DELAWARE, TO THEIR FELLOW-CITIZENS,

ON THE

## USE OF INTOXICATING DRINKS.

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**A**MONG all the evils that have resulted from the unbridled lusts of mankind, we believe that to no one source can there be traced more of crime and wretchedness, in their varied phases, than to the indulgence in intoxicating drinks. Practical evidences of this are to be seen on every hand. They have been pictured in colors, none too strong, by the pens of ready writers, and the tongues of earnest men and women, who have labored to inform the ignorant, to alarm those who were being drawn into the dangerous snare, and, if possible, to reclaim those who have become the victims of intemperance.

Were it the object of the present address to recount but a few among the many instances of the blighted hopes of loving parents, of the wretchedness and shame endured by devoted wives and innocent children; were we to attempt to estimate the heavy burdens which have been entailed upon the community, in giving relief to the neglected family of the drunkard; in providing a police force, which is mainly necessary for protecting his sober fellow-citizens from his acts of violence; or the courts, which are largely occupied in hearing and disposing of the charges that may be brought against him; or the jails that are mainly needed to confine and punish him for his riotous doing; were we to dwell upon the loss to the same community, that has resulted from wasted health and talents, which would otherwise have fitted men for posts of honor and usefulness, we should only be reiterating what has been often well said, and concerning which little has been left for us to add that could present in any new or stronger light the direful results of intemperance.

While desiring not to burden our readers unnecessarily with the array of fearful statistics, from various reliable sources, which

might readily be introduced, we are also aware of the fact that men are prone to forget or ignore those public evils with which they have grown familiar, and which, from their very nature, they may have come to regard as inevitable. We may be allowed, therefore, to call attention to a few statements of a general character, which cannot fail to impress us all with the alarming extent which intemperance has reached, and the deep hold it has gained upon the community.

*Examples*  
 As compared with human slavery in our own country,—by which but one-tenth of its population was thereby brought into bondage, and less than one-half its territory directly affected,—the scourge of intemperance enters almost every town and hamlet in the land, and destroys not only the bodies but the souls of men.

*War*  
 In the late war our nation is said to have sacrificed more than a million of lives and three billions of dollars. To support the liquor traffic, it is computed, from authentic sources, that the people of the United States expend annually six hundred millions of dollars, and waste untold wealth besides by the impoverishment of her citizens and the destruction of their health.

Noah Davis, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, said, in a public speech lately delivered by him, "That habits of intemperance are the chief cause of crime is the testimony of all judges of large experience. It is established beyond argument, by official statistics, by the experience of courts, and by the observations of enlightened philanthropists, that the prevalence of intemperance in every country is the standard by which its crimes may be measured."

*Summary*  
 The report of the State Board of Charities for Massachusetts for 1869 says, "The proportion of crime traceable to this great vice must be set down, as heretofore, at not less than four-fifths;" and the Inspectors of the State Prison, in 1868, gave the same proportion.

Judge Allison, of Philadelphia, said in a speech delivered at a public meeting, in 1872, "Intemperance is upon our right hand and left; on the streets—north, south, east, and west—we see the lures to destruction. There are few people who see the practical evil as we see it in the criminal courts of this city. There we can trace four-fifths of the crimes that are committed, to the influence of rum; there is not one case in twenty, where a man is tried for his life, in which rum is not the direct or indirect cause of the murder; rum and blood go hand in hand."

The city of Philadelphia has for a number of years been made

a special prey to the ravages of the liquor traffic. The restrictions imposed by the laws of Pennsylvania, with respect to the opening of taverns and granting licenses for the sale of drink in other counties, do not apply to Philadelphia; and the special laws enacted on this subject for that city have been so modified from time to time, that now there is no barrier to any man of even the lowest reputation opening a liquor saloon, provided only he can pay the paltry sum of fifty dollars per annum. The result is that there are now more than five thousand licensed places for vending this poison among the people, the most of which afford no accommodation to the public as inns or lodging-houses. They are mere traps for the young and unwary, lounging-places for the idler and drunkard, where gamblers ply their trade, and broils and murders are bred by the maddening draught.

Many of the moral class of the citizens of Philadelphia, who are accustomed to look with complacency upon the character and prosperity of their city, are, we fear, closing their eyes to the true state of its population in regard to this grave subject. What can support the vast array of drinking places that stand so thickly on the more central streets, and at nearly every corner of the city suburbs, but an enormous consumption of liquor, that must seriously affect the majority of the people and fearfully debase their social condition? What but this has called for such great increase of room in the prisons, houses of correction and of refuge, almshouses and police stations, within the past twenty years? and which, in a large measure, has cast nearly fifty thousand people on the charity of the public every winter in Philadelphia for the last five years!

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### **Temperate Drinking and the Medical Use of Alcohol.**

WE believe much intemperance originates in the use of liquors, at first in a moderate way, either under the plea of ill-health, or that they are harmless and valuable to the human system, when used in quantities that will not intoxicate. Especially is the use of malt liquors and native wines increasing on these pleas. It may be safely asserted that habits of moderate drinking almost universally precede excess, hence total abstinence is the only sure means of avoiding intemperance. The appetite for stimulating drinks almost invariably grows with their use, so that no one who begins to partake of them, even temperately, can foretell how strong the craving for them may become.

Modern investigations, made by eminent scientific and medical men, respecting the effects of alcohol on the animal frame, have disclosed results and established conclusions which go far to dis-

#### 4 *The Duty of the Christian Church in Applying Remedies.*

sipate many of the popular ideas that have been entertained as to the value of this stimulant, either as food or medicine.

Were it within the scope of the present address, we might cite largely from various acknowledged authorities in support of this view: those who desire to pursue further this interesting and important branch of the subject, may be referred to treatises by Dr. Benj. W. Richardson, of London; Sir Benjamin Brodie, Baron Liebig, Dr. Liebermiester, Dr. Henry Thompson, and many others.

The prescription of alcoholic remedies or tonics, by the medical profession, is fraught with grave responsibilities, which we apprehend are too often lightly assumed by them. How many persons, of previously temperate habits, have contracted an appetite for strong drinks when recovering from illness, through this insidious avenue to temptation, and have finally found it the highway to ruin and death! The respectability, the professional skill and authority so readily accorded to the physician, all combine to give force to his advice in such cases, and tend to disarm his patients of those wholesome fears of entering on the dangerous experiment which they would perhaps otherwise have entertained. We would therefore urge upon medical men to consider well the fearful moral risks and the doubtful physical advantages involved in the use of such remedies, and avoid them wherever possible.

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#### **What is the Duty of the Christian Church in Applying Remedies for Intemperance?**

UNDER a sense, then, of the magnitude of this desolating moral evil in our midst, which, while endangering the present and eternal welfare of tens of thousands, is affecting injuriously all classes of society, the query most pertinently and urgently presents itself, what remedies are being adopted to meet the case, and are all the agencies, which might be usefully employed, enlisted in what should be a common cause?

Very much we know has been well done by the friends of temperance, who have devoted their time, their talents, and their means in the earnest desire to bring about a reformation. But such is the craving for the stimulus afforded by alcoholic drinks, and so enormous are the pecuniary profits growing out of their production and sale, that we see to-day legislatures and high officials pandering to the demands of the liquor interests; while intemperance, with all its fearful train, is sweeping through the land, and every organized effort to check its ravages must be



admitted to have been but in small measure successful. To the seriously minded among our fellow-citizens, who are not to be classed among the tempted or the fallen, or supposed to be directly implicated in spreading the evil in question, we feel at this time called to offer a few words of earnest Christian entreaty.

As believers in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, our thoughts first, and naturally, turn to those who, like ourselves, are professing His name, and seeking to spread the blessings of His Gospel. For we have felt that upon the professing Church, as such, there are resting plain duties and heavy responsibilities in connection with the important question before us. Let us bear in mind that the members of Christ's Church are emphatically called unto holiness: (1 Thess. iv. 7;) that our Lord has likened them to "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world;" and that their influence and their example are among the means which He designs largely to use in promoting the spreading of His kingdom. The more therefore there is of dedication of heart and purity of life among these, the more we may believe they will be made "sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. ii. 21.) A manifest duty of the Church lies first within its own borders, carefully searching out the "abominable thing," and never resting until its skirts are clear of it. This will lead to earnest, faithful labor among those of its own members who have fallen into the snare of the tempter, or who may be only walking, as it were, in "slippery places." The young and inexperienced will therefore especially claim the watchful care of their fellow-members. There will be felt also a godly jealousy lest any claiming church fellowship shall be found contributing to the spread of intemperance, either by the manufacture or the sale of intoxicating liquors. If the safety of all consists in putting the temptation wholly away, can that calling be safe for him who makes, or him who deals out, the dangerous article to his fellows? And does he stand guiltless in the sight of Infinite Justice, who fills his pockets with gains made foul by the wretchedness he is thus directly promoting?

We cannot but regard it as a perversion of morals, to receive into our homes as companions for ourselves and our children the rich producer and vendor of ardent spirits, while spurning from our doors, as beneath notice, the poor victim to its use. We cannot separate them; they are upon one plane of respectability; and until men and women in their individual capacity, and as members of the Church of Christ, are willing to withdraw themselves from every compromising association with those who sell as well as with those who use spirituous liquors, their testimony will continue to be only a weak and one-sided protest. Is it

poverty only that makes rum-drinking disgraceful? Can wealth impart either to a business or a habit respectability? We desire therefore in all Christian tenderness, yet in Christian honesty, to ask, whether a professing Church is performing the duty which it owes to itself, or is holding up the light which it should do in the world, while retaining in its membership those who are thus bringing a reproach upon their profession, and thereby contributing largely to the weakness of the body, when called to deal with intemperance either within or without its pale? Again, when we recall the declaration of Holy Writ, that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God, (1 Cor. vi. 10,) how strong is the appeal to the heart of the Christian, to use all his or her influence in rescuing a fellow-being who may have fallen under a temptation that, if continued in, may result in the ruin of soul and body. It is the privilege of the Christian to know much of the efficacy of the Redeemer's grace, whereby, as he has himself yielded to its convicting, restraining, and sanctifying power, it has proved sufficient for him in seasons of temptation and weakness, and from personal experience he can commend it to others. As the "Friend of sinners," Christ has become precious to his soul, and he has rejoiced in the blessed assurance that He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) Such are peculiarly fitted to plead with the tempted or the fallen to yield to the visitations of a Saviour's love, as He knocks at the door of the heart, and seeks to make of even the hardened sinner "a new creature in Christ Jesus."

As we recall the many instances in which the best resolutions have failed, the most solemn pledges have been broken, the earnest pleadings of anxious friends have been disregarded, and the strongest arguments proved unavailing with the victims of intemperance, we believe the one effectual remedy for these must ever be found in the heart-changing, heart-cleansing power of the Grace of God.

Fully believing in the Scripture declaration, that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil," (1 John iii. 8,) and that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin," (1 John iii. 9,) we place this doctrine of the new birth through Christ Jesus at the basis of all personal and ecclesiastical reformation. No radical and abiding reform can be looked for, unless the heart is changed through faith in, and obedience to, that grace which comes by Jesus Christ, and was purchased by His atoning blood. Therefore it is that we would commend all to this Grace of God that brings salvation, and has appeared unto all men, as the Scripture testifies, "teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present

world." (Titus ii. 11, 12.) Yielding their hearts to this blessed work of the Holy Spirit, men would be enabled in His light to see their lost condition as sinners, and would receive the gift of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, would be shed on them abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and strength would be given by Him to walk in the pathway of holiness and self-denial. We are assured by an inspired Apostle that God is faithful who will not suffer men to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. x. 13.) But the escape must come in the way Christ himself has pointed out, who says, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." (Mark xiv. 38.) This watchful, prayerful state is the only place of safety for the strong as well as the weak, and most apt is that injunction of our Lord, "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch!" (Mark xiii. 37.)

Thus being grafted into Christ, the living vine, and abiding in Him, He assures us that, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John xv. 7.) Hence the Church, so composed of living members, is qualified, both in the closet and its collective capacity, to pray in the Holy Ghost for the spread and power of the Redeemer's kingdom. "I will therefore," says the Apostle Paul, "that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." (1 Timothy ii. 8.) Also, "that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." (1 Timothy ii. 1.) Oh, that this spirit of prayer might more and more prevail in the professing Church! Such weapons, we may be assured, would be mighty, through God, to the pulling down of even the strongholds of intemperance.

There is a practical work also which may be done by the Christian Church, in laboring among its fellow-members in private, as any who are spiritual may feel their hearts drawn in restoring love to warn the erring and tempted of their danger, and exhort them not to touch "the unclean thing." All connection with the traffic in any kind of alcoholic drinks, or renting buildings to those who intend so to use them, should be discouraged and avoided. Frequenting taverns, or other places where liquor is sold, unless absolutely essential for other purposes, should be shunned; and especially ought parents to guard their sons against familiarity with them.

In the exercise of a personal influence for good, much must depend upon our own careful and consistent walking, and, with this in view, we shall necessarily find ourselves often called to

practise self-denial for the sake of others; for shall we be clear in the sight of a God of infinite purity and justice, if by our indulgence we give any encouragement to a fellow-creature to partake of that which, however harmless to us, may be spiritual death to him? The privation, in most cases, would be very trifling to ourselves, while the possible consequences to him might be ruinous. How fearful the responsibility in such a case, and how solemn the thought, of finding in the last great day of account that a brother's downfall was traceable to our unfaithfulness or thoughtless indulgence! We have said that the amount of self-denial would generally not be great. If it is felt to be great, we may be sure that we ourselves are not quite out of the reach of danger. In this connection, we would remark that the use of spirituous liquors for culinary purposes in the household is unnecessary, and might be entirely dispensed with. Children, and those in our employ, would be thus far relieved from a temptation to which they might otherwise be exposed under our own roofs. And remembering the apostolic injunction, to "abstain from all appearance of evil," (1 Thess. v. 22,) we should not overlook what, to some, might seem a matter of very trifling importance, when seeking temporary accommodations for ourselves or our families away from home, endeavoring, if only for example's sake, to select as our boarding-places or eating-houses those from which intoxicating liquors are known to be excluded. If we are alive, as we should be, to the danger as well as the best interests of those around us, these, or other little acts of self-denial in the same direction, may often, unwittingly to ourselves, exert a silent influence for good, while they will bring their own reward of quietness and peace within.

Is there not, therefore, as regards individual Christians, as well as the professing Church in all its branches, a manifest and most fitting duty which is loudly calling them to put forth their powerful influence for the suppression of an evil, which is not only spreading desolation and wickedness throughout our own land, but causing the very name of our common Christianity to be a by-word and reproach among the heathen? And if, in order to fit the Church for this great duty, the cleansing of her own hands is first called for, we earnestly desire that, as in the fear of the Lord and with an eye to His honor, this may be brought about.

As representing the religious society of Friends in this part of our country, we may be allowed to press the above considerations the more earnestly upon our fellow Christians of other persuasions, because we have long since felt called to see to it, that our members are clear of the use of spirituous liquors as a drink, and that none are retained in religious connection with the society who either manufacture or sell them. With this object in view, we may state that committees are yearly appointed by the proper

meetings for discipline, whose business it is to inquire of every male member whether he has partaken of any spirituous liquors as a drink during the previous twelvemonth, or thus offered them to others. In the few cases in which the answer is affirmative, earnest, brotherly persuasion is used to induce the abandonment altogether of an indulgence so full of danger to themselves, and so wanting in right example to others.

The committees then report to the respective bodies appointing them the result of their inquiry and labors, but without personal allusions or exposure. This practice, with other favorable influences, has resulted in causing intemperance to be almost unknown within our limits, while we know of none in membership with us who are engaged in the manufacture or sale of ardent spirits. From our own experience, therefore, we have reason to believe that patient, faithful, Christian labor with brethren who may have gone astray, will, under the Divine blessing, accomplish much. Should each branch of the professing Church thus discharge its duty, first to itself and to its own members, we cannot doubt that the way will be opened to take some decided action, on the part of religious bodies generally, whereby the influence of the whole Christian community shall make itself felt, as it ought to be, in relation to this fruitful source of misery and corruption.

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### **Restrictive or Prohibitory Legislation.**

WE fully believe in the Divine institution of civil government among men, and that rulers are not to be a terror to good works, but to evil; that men placed in power are bound to act as "ministers of God for good" to those they govern, agreeably with the doctrine of Holy Scripture. That the State, as the natural guardian of its citizens, has the right to restrain or forbid the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, on the same principle that justifies the prohibition of the sale of obscene books and pictures, or lottery tickets; and by which it regulates and restrains the vending of poisons, gunpowder, and other dangerous articles. This right has been abundantly affirmed by four Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Grier, of that court, remarks, in giving his opinion in a certain case before him, that "it is not necessary to array the appalling statistics of misery, pauperism, and crime which have their origin in the use and abuse of ardent spirits. The police power, which is exclusively in the State, is competent to the correction of these great evils, and all measures of restraint or prohibition necessary to effect that purpose are within the scope of that authority."

Judge Catron says, "If the State has the power of restraint by license to any extent, she may go to the length of prohibiting sales altogether." We believe the system of licensing public drinking houses by the authority of the State, to be an unmixed evil. It tends to cast around the business of dram-selling the shield of law, and to confer upon it a fictitious respectability, which is destructive of right sentiment in the unthinking part of the community. The plea that it produces an important revenue to the State or National Government to grant a license to manufacture or vend strong drinks is plainly delusive. The cost to the nation or State at large, to repair the losses inflicted on the people by drink, must sink the paltry revenues its vendors pay, into insignificance. Statistics show that it would be far more economical for the government to maintain the liquor dealers in idleness, and forbid their trade entirely, than to receive all the taxes they pay for the right to impose the criminals, the paupers, the idlers, and the diseased upon the body politic for support. It is not just, nor consistent with the principles of our free government, to permit one class of men thus to prey on the rest of the community merely for their private gain.

The necessary uses of spirits and other intoxicants for medicinal and mechanical purposes, may be provided for by law, under such restrictions as will, at least, greatly curtail the abuse of them in other ways. Such prohibitory laws have been in force in Maine since 1851.

We quote the following recent testimony of five eminent members of the Maine Legislature, respecting the operation of what is known as "The Maine Liquor Law."\*

"At the time of the enactment of the Maine law, the liquor traffic was carried on openly and freely, wholesale and retail, in every city, town, village, and rural district in the State. Immediately upon the enactment of the law the open sale of liquors ceased, and the traffic was at once abandoned by a very large majority of those who had been engaged in it; and now it is entirely unknown in all our smaller towns and villages, and throughout all our rural districts. The traffic yet lingers in our cities and larger towns, secretly and on a small scale, and is confined almost entirely to the worst part of our foreign population. It is not too much to say that the quantity of liquor now smuggled into the state, and sold in violation of the law, is not one-tenth as great as it was before the law. This great change in the habits of the people procures an enormous saving in the wages of labor, and in the resources of the State, which were

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\* An Address to the friends of Temperance, by Neal Dow, Lot M. Morrell, James M. Buzzell, Joshua Nye, and A. P. Morrell, dated June 2, 1879.

formerly so largely squandered, and wasted in strong drinks. No one who knew what Maine was before the law, and who knows what it has been since, and is now, can fail to see the wonderful change for the better, in all its interests, public and private. In 1871, an additional Act, of greater stringency than any which preceded it, was adopted without a dissenting voice in either house, and at the session of 1879 a question came up for the modification and amelioration of the penalties, and the requirements of the law, which was promptly defeated by the emphatic vote of 127 to 17. This latter vote may be fairly considered as marking the present condition of public opinion of this State upon the whole principle and policy of prohibition, and the determination of the people to suppress the liquor traffic."

The foregoing testimony to the effect of prohibitory legislation is sustained by the results in other communities where it has been tried. In Massachusetts, it was in actual force through local elections from the year 1841 to 1852 with most beneficial consequences. After a thorough investigation of the matter, the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature reported "the evidence to be perfectly incontrovertible, that the good order and the physical and moral welfare of the community had been promoted by refusing to license the sale of ardent spirits; and that although the laws have been and are violated to some extent in different places, the practice soon becomes disreputable, and hides itself from the public eye, by shrinking into obscure and dark places; that noisy and tumultuous assemblies in the street and public quarrels cease, where license is refused; and that pauperism has very rapidly diminished from the same cause." In Vermont a prohibitory law has existed for twenty-seven years. In St. Johnsbury, in that State, where there is a population of 5000, the law has been strictly enforced; and it is stated that "there is no bar, no dram-shop, no poor, and no policeman walks the streets." Connecticut enacted a prohibitory law in 1854. In 1855, Governor Dutton said in his annual message to the General Assembly, "There is scarcely an open grog-shop in the State, and the jails are fast becoming tenantless, and a delightful air of security is everywhere enjoyed." But in 1873 the liquor influence was strong enough in the Legislature to substitute license for prohibition. Two years afterwards the Secretary of State declared that "there was a greater increase of crime in one year under license than in seven under prohibition."

From the foregoing, and a multitude of other examples of the practical effects of wise laws to control intemperance, we feel that we advocate no visionary theory, but one that commends itself to all who are concerned to arrest this awful scourge in the body politic. The citizen in casting his vote for candidates

for office should be awake to this important question, "Are they heartily in favor of temperance, and of prohibitory laws to promote it?" If the friends of temperance generally made this a condition of supporting candidates for office, we should soon find that political aspirants would respect their views, and that the apathy now so prevalent among legislators respecting this great question would be succeeded by the attention its merits so imperatively demand. Whatever doubts may be entertained by those engaged in framing laws, with regard to the feasibility or expediency of enacting statutes which are directly prohibitory of the liquor traffic for a whole State, on the ground of a lack of public sentiment in the majority of all the people to sustain them, there can be no objection of this nature urged against local option laws, whereby townships and small municipalities may have extended to them the privilege of protecting themselves by a vote of their own inhabitants against the sale of liquor within their respective precincts. Such legislation has been decided by the courts of several States to be constitutional and valid. It is surely in harmony with the spirit of our free institutions, and an act of simple justice in a matter so intimately connected with the material as well as the higher interests of every community to accord to them the same degree of self-control as has long been recognized and practised by townships and boroughs in regulating public education, repairs of highways, etc., within their limits. No charge of injustice or party bias could be reasonably brought against a legislator for advocating such a law, by those who deal in or use intoxicating drinks. The advocates of prohibition and of license stand on an equal footing at the polls, and are only required to acquiesce in the will of the majority.

For those who have been placed by their fellow-citizens in positions of authority, whether legislative, executive or judicial, we have felt especially desirous that in dealing with matters which may have a bearing more or less direct upon the subject under consideration, they may fully realize the responsibility which attaches to their official acts. Many are the influences tending to draw them from the plain path of duty, and among these perhaps none are stronger than the fear of man and the desire for his favor. But when we remember the Scripture declaration, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," (2 Sam. xxiii. 3,) the source to which those in power should humbly look for guidance and approval is plainly set forth. And as they are actuated by these higher motives, any temptation to swerve from their own conscientious convictions will lose its power.

For those who have at heart the best interests of our people,



and who do in their public services remember that there is a God over all to whom they must shortly give account, we believe the time has come when, regardless of partisan considerations or the loss of popularity, they should deeply and conscientiously consider whether they are taking that decided stand which they should in connection with this pressing question, and whether they are heartily throwing their influence into the right scale.

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### **The Public Press.**

THROUGHOUT a reading population like that of the United States, the Press necessarily exerts a powerful influence, not only by giving expression to public sentiment, but as a means of moulding that sentiment for good or for ill. We desire, therefore, that Editors of newspapers especially, may feel the deep responsibility that rests upon them in connection with the question before us. As chroniclers of the events of the day, they have it in their power to commend the good that may be passing before them, and by their editorial comments may incidentally instil noble and virtuous sentiments into the minds of their readers; while, on the other hand, they may point out and condemn what is injurious to public morals, and consequently to the best interests of the community. With the freedom which is happily accorded to the press in this country, the action of legislative bodies and public officials is open to its criticisms, and, as a consequence, those who are holding posts of authority are strongly influenced in their public acts by the approval or the censure which they thus receive. When the prevailing tone of the Press, whether secular or religious, shall be fearlessly on the side of right, recognizing its duty in leading and elevating public sentiment, rather than obsequiously following it, we may hopefully look for the happiest results; and since the enactment or enforcement of wise and just laws which would effectually restrain the production and sale of alcoholic liquors, must depend upon a corresponding sympathy in the community at large, it can scarcely be otherwise than that the daily newspaper will be largely instrumental in promoting, or retarding the legislation which is now urgently demanded. We desire also to call attention to a flippant, and even jocose, style of writing too common with newspaper reporters who, when relating the doings of the wretched drunkard, are disposed to picture the ludicrous side of intemperance rather than the misery and shame inseparable from it. We fear that by this means the thoughts of the reader are often turned from the merits of a case in its graver aspects,

and, almost unconsciously to himself, he may come to regard the whole subject of intemperance with a lamentable indifference. It is cause of satisfaction to find that several popular periodicals have of late opened their columns to a free consideration of the evil before us, and the wisest methods of dealing with it. We can but trust their example will be followed by others, under the conviction that it is one of the most pressing questions of the day, and that some of the highest interests of our country both present and prospective are involved in its right solution.

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### **Woman's Influence.**

IF one class amongst us more than another is personally interested in the suppression of intemperance, it surely is the women of our country. As we recall the scenes of domestic wretchedness, the heartless neglect, the pining want, the brutal violence, to say nothing of the many murders in cold blood, which are almost daily being brought to light by the public press, as the doings of drunken husbands and fathers, we must believe there are, behind all these, experiences of untold woe which are known only to the silent sufferers and the all-seeing One. The fortitude and the enduring patience with which these trials have been often borne, are amazing, and only add to the claims which the sufferers have upon the heartfelt sympathy of every right-feeling mind. Earnestly could we desire that these might know the power of Divine Grace to sustain them under their burdens, and give them that "measure of wisdom from above," which they so greatly need, in dealing with the wanderers and the fallen ones. Those of their sex who have happily been spared such afflictions, should remember their sisters in adversity, and may well be stirred up to use every right effort for their relief.

In social life they have it in their power to discountenance, if not abolish, many of what are known as the "drinking usages of society," which have so often proved the means of leading, step by step, to habitual intemperance, while they have many times seriously hindered the poor inebriate who, in weakness, is struggling against his besetting sin. As mothers, we need only remind them of the tender but most responsible charge which has been committed to their keeping; the importance of early impressions received at a mother's hands, and the value of a mother's prayers. As the teachers of a very large proportion of the young children of our country, may they wisely employ the golden opportunity thus offered for imbuing the minds of

their pupils with a deep sense of the degrading effects of intemperance, as well as the delusive character of those allurements with which they must shortly meet. Thus fortified, may we not hopefully believe that multitudes from among the children of to-day will be training to take their places, ere long, in that great work of reform to which, we trust, the rising generation will be found devoting its best energies.

For many and strong reasons, we therefore feel that women are called to exert their influence, which is so powerful for good or evil, in giving a higher tone to public sentiment upon a subject in which they are deeply interested. We cannot but believe, that it is mainly for want of fully appreciating the latent power which they hold, that the influence of female minds and hearts has not been more largely felt in this direction. Should this be wisely put forth, as we trust it may yet be, in dealing with one of the most alarming problems of our day, the results for good, under the Divine blessing, can scarcely be overestimated.

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### **Conclusion.**

In conclusion, we are afresh impressed with the magnitude of the evil we have been considering, as it presents itself in its varied aspects; and under the conviction that its source is deeply rooted in the sinful propensities of our fallen nature, we are well-nigh ready to exclaim, "Vain is the help of man!" Yet, however fortified in his strongholds the liquor dealer may be, however powerful the influence he wields, by the unscrupulous use of his unrighteous gains, there is encouragement for the Christian laborer, in the assurance that the weapons of his warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan.

Widely extended and deeply rooted as intemperance is, it must ultimately yield to the peaceful but victorious extension of Messiah's spiritual kingdom. Encouraged by this animating belief, may the Church, a designed agency for the spread of this kingdom, and the diffusion of the blessings of the Gospel, may all who occupy positions of influence in civil or religious society, be incited, in the meekness and gentleness which the Gospel inspires, and with a love for the souls of those engaged in the iniquitous traffic, as well as those of the unhappy victims of intemperance, to earnest, faithful labor for the removal of this great and increasing evil from our midst.

We do not doubt many are earnestly longing, with us, that the

miserics resulting from intemperance may be stayed, not only for the relief of those who, directly or indirectly are suffering from them, but because it has long been one of the most serious obstacles to the promotion of vital religion among mankind; and, as we remember our own helplessness for the work, let our prayers be directed to the "God and Father of us all," that, through the quickening influences of His own Holy Spirit upon the hearts of men, this, with every other obstacle shall be removed, which now hinders the coming of that promised day, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah xi. 9.)

At a Meeting of the Representatives of the Religious Society of Friends for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, known as the "Meeting for Sufferings," held at Philadelphia on the 7th day of the 11th month, 1879, "the Committee on the subject of Intemperance, appointed in the 6th month last, now produced an Essay of an Address on the use of intoxicating drinks, which was adopted by the Meeting, and referred for publication and distribution to the Committee that prepared it."

Extracted from the Minutes.

JOSEPH WALTON, *Clerk.*

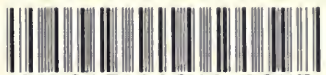


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