

AN

XXVII.

# ADDRESS

UPON THE

## MORAL CLAIMS OF TEMPERANCE,

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Charleston Total Abstinence Society.

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## ADDRESS.

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The subject we present to your consideration this evening is the Moral Claims of Temperance, and it will be our endeavor to trace out the peculiar obligations which these Societies carry with them, and impose upon all rational, moral, and immortal beings.

Anatomists have paid the highest encomiums upon the physical organization of man, and echoed the declaration of Holy Writ, that it was very good. If we could dissect the *moral* constitution, and unfolding all its wonderful arrangements, exhibit its mysterious workings in their countless relations, we would doubtless break forth, with pious Galen, in hymns of wonder and admiration, to its Great Author; or exclaim with all the rapturous fervor of Israel's inspired Minstrel: "I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" But although our complete moral structure is removed from our actual vision, and all that we can know of its organization is from its effects, together with a few bold, and striking phenomena,—we know enough, with the assistance of analogy, to assert that there are certain primary parts, which, from their intimate relation with our well being, and moral life, we term *vital*,—prominent among which is the virtue of Temperance.

Used in its primitive signification *temperance* was synonymous with *moderation*, and as such was the keystone of all the virtues; for it was the essential condition under which each virtue could exist, or manifest itself lawfully. It regulated both the emotional existence of the virtuous principle, and its outward manifestation. Considered as mere passive impulses, having their dwelling place in the seat of the moral life, there must be amity and order in this their common nidus; they must live in harmonious and proportionate spheres; there

must be no clashing or antagonism of existence; none must usurp a larger portion of the human soul than is becoming. The Platonic harmony of the heavens must be here beautifully realized. None must possess dominion to the exclusion of others. Love must not absorb justice, nor must justice banish love. Prudence must not cripple fortitude, nor must fortitude frown down prudence. Each must rule with even sceptre,—each be controlled by *moderation* or *temperance*. When too, these passive emotions are awakened from their subjective state to activity and outward development, proportion and restraint must be imposed, and the exercise of any one class of duties, or of virtuous actions, (for such I conceive to be the nature of duties,) to the exclusion of another class, or to excess, is a violation of the law of our moral economy. Thus to practise truth with rigidity, and to suffer the fountain of charity to dry up, is as vitiating and ruinous to our moral nature, as it would be injurious to cultivate and improve our minds, to the neglect and decay of our bodies. Thus love inordinate, is wrong; charity indiscriminate, pernicious; benevolence towards vice, sinful; prudence overmuch, an immorality; and *moderation* or *temperance* must characterise every action, every outward manifestation of the inward principle, as well as the principle itself, in order that the moral being may be justified. Hence it was that the moralist and philosopher of old made temperance the crowning virtue. Hence the poetic fiction of the golden mean—"the nothing too much" of the schools. It was the most polished stone in the circlet of morals; "the silken string which ran through the pearl chain of virtues."

But even narrowed down to *moderation* in a single respect, and confined in its application to a single article of physical stimulant, this virtue, *temperance*, loses none of its dignity, in its diminished extent of sway. Even when applied to the use of intoxicating drinks alone, it may be shown to be essential to the healthy condition of the moral man, and the suitable exercise of his moral powers; and it can be demonstrated, that the obligation which attaches to every conceivable moral action, carries with it an implied obligation to the sober, and temperate habit.

It is a common remark that the vices are gregarious ; and the appearance of one is a fair prognostic of the speedy exhibition of others. But this arises, not from any immediate power in one to produce another ; but from the nature of the human heart, which, when corrupted, like an impure soil, brings forth thorns and briers in wild and countless luxuriance ! But there is in this vice of intemperance a direct and necessary precursory of all the vicious elements of our nature, which flow directly and inevitably from it, their impure spring. It is a noxious weed, which not only vitiates the soil, but itself scatters the poisonous seeds of licentiousness and vice, while, like the deadly Upas, it spreads its baneful influence far and wide, withering and blasting every tender shoot of virtue's planting. It is not only the harbinger, but the progenitor of crime. Its name is Gad—a troop cometh ! Aristophanes calls it the "*mother of crime* ;" or more strikingly, the "*metropolis of vices*," as if all were here collected in intimate and familiar relation, cohabiting in foul alliance, this their impure Babylon : and there is a strong mingling of truth in that quaint sentiment of the Bacchanal which describes "seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack." Where did wine ever stimulate to virtuous action ? When did virtue, Heaven-born, ever grace a banquet board ? Venus may rise in lascivious beauty from the foaming sea, but Minerva must spring, full armed, from the head of Jove. When the Understanding is clouded, and the Moral perceptions dimmed by the opiate fumes of wine ; where can there be that nice and wire-drawn distinction between right and wrong—the very substratum of virtue ? where that sensitive and keen and intuitive recognition, and espousal of the noble and praiseworthy, and the prompt, unerring detection and abandonment of the base and ill-deserving ? When the Judgment is dethroned from its sober realm by excited and lawless passions, which have been exorcised from their spell-bound submission, by the incantations, and maddening charms of alcohol ; how can Justice maintain her even balance, and prejudice and passion be prevented from turning the nicely poised scales ? How can Truth utter her sacred and solemn realities, in the senseless babblings of the inebriate, or the vapid belchings of the false Bacchanal ? "*In vino Veritas*" is his motto ; but what truth does it ever reveal, save the undenia-

ble evidence of his total depravity? Where in all the annals of Circean revels, or the revealed mysteries of a licentious Eleusis, was Bacchus ever a friend of Chastity? Who does not know that decency like Persian garments are thrown off amidst wine cups? And religion!—for I conceive that such is the constitution of mankind, that in their gross imperfection and degeneracy alone, is the religious element not a component part—How can God be acknowledged, or honored, or glorified, when the image stamped with his own signet, is marred and blurred, to the foul semblance of a brute,—the spark of divinity kindled within him from the altars of eternity, is quenched,—and man, made but a little lower than the angels, with a destiny of ages for his inheritance, cramps himself to the petty confines of a moment's appetite, and grovels in the swinish wallowing of the unreflecting brute? Surely, there is something peculiarly fatal in this vice,—and it is no task of imagination to conceive how forever barred and sealed, against the entrance of the drunkard, must be the gates of the paradise of God. If every sin be a devil, the name of intemperance is Legion, and, like its great prototype, its fit abiding place *a herd of swine*. There is a striking fable of the Jewish doctors, which tells of a certain king, who, alighting upon eleven of their holy Rabbins, put them to the choice whether they would eat swine's flesh, marry a Gentile, or drink of their Ethnic wine—they chose the last, as the least evil:—and when they had freely drunk of the intoxicating bowl, they indulged also, without compunction, in their other aversions. So absorbing, and greedy is this vice, which, like Aaron's serpent, swallows up every other species of crime! There may be poetry, and mirth, and good cheer, and sweet madness, in the bowl; but it is withal a Pandora gift, from the indiscreet handling of which, issues in wild and venomous swarms, all the vices which have traversed the wide globe, stinging and biting unto death!—"Hope alone remained in the box,"—and may we not image her, in the chaste and homely, peaceful, kindly form of temperance, bringing and speaking consolation to the writhing victims of misery and disease!

It is enough to startle the vulgar mind accustomed to trace the magnitude of effects up to an equally great cause; that indulgence, in an article so simple as alcoholic stimulant,

should produce such utter and desolating overthrow of our virtuous principles, and devastate with such besom havoc, all that can dignify or bless mankind; yet, such is the melancholy truth! and it is a reality, which should make virtuous beings shudder, for their security, when a habit, so seemingly disconnected with aught, save physical gratification, brings in its train such irreparable moral evil!—it should make us guard with wary eye, and circumspect vigilance, and with every faculty “on armed watch, that will render all access impregnable” against the inroads of a foe, subtle and seemingly insignificant, but only the more fatal, into the very outposts of our moral citadel!

But Temperance is something more than a part of the general virtue *moderation*; and drunkenness, than a specific development of *excess*.

Drunkenness is considered in Holy Writ, and in all decalogues of morals, as a vice *per se*,—not as being a mere excess of animal gratification, and thus standing in the same category with other excesses of practices, in themselves indifferent, but as being distinctly, and independently a vice; and thus its corresponding virtue, Temperance, must be a distinct and individual virtue. And we observe a double obligation arising from it, as viewed in this two-fold light—as a prominent component part of the virtue *moderation*; and, also, as a virtue distinct in itself, with its own peculiar and special sanctions and obligations; considered, and in which last relation, we will see, disarmed of their weapons, those who place along-side with temperance in drinking, moderation in every conceivable use of those gifts that the God of Nature has bestowed. Temperance in language, or Temperance in food, Temperance in zeal, or Temperance in expenditure; are not comparable in elevation to the high stature of Temperance in spirituous liquors: nor is Intemperance in either, sunk to so low an abyss of guilt. The cause we advocate, does not, like them, derive much of its name and honor, from expediency. It is a low, and contracted, and undignified view of this virtue, which, elicits its claims, from its beneficial effects, and the injuries which the correlative vice inflicts. It derives its purity and strength from the everlasting fount of virtue, whose source, like that of the Nile, though buried in unexplored

obscurity, irrigates with its unfailing waters, in rich and ever renewed and renewing fertility, the empires of the world. Whether it be a distinct virtuous principle, or whether but a condition of the exercise of these principles; whether it be a fundamental element, or a phenomenal mode; whether it be a unique or compendious part of our moral constitution—I will not here enquire; but suffice that, there is an obligation arising from that constitution and imposing itself upon every human being, to keep his judgment clear, his passions calm and undisturbed in their lawful channels, his will above the rude control of appetite, and his mind unparalysed by his own deliberate acts. This obligation, the Drunkard universally despises; and the use of any beverage, vegetable, mineral, or herb, that has a known tendency to mar this arrangement, and to produce discord and revolution, and destruction, in the interior life of man, and which are not used purely as medicinal—I conceive to be a palpable violation of a plain, and distinctive precept of our moral nature; and to be in itself, the object of ill desert, and vicious!

My friends, when we reflect upon the nature of the mind of man, and all the mysterious adjuncts which distinguish him from the brute, the use of intoxicating drinks assumes a tremendous importance—a towering and awful solemnity! His body, like the brute creation around him, indeed sprung from the dust of the ground; but he became a living soul, not only by the *mandate*, but by the *act* of the Creator. The breath of Jehovah is in his nostrils! What part or relation he bears to the divine essence, we know not; but this we do know, that he was made in the image of his Creator—in the likeness of the Invisible and Eternal God. If it be an act of inhuman cruelty to wantonly hurt the bodies of the senseless brutes that perish; if it be a custom of barbarous origin, and of savage outrage, to mar the proportions of his own body, and to do violence to his own flesh—the offspring of the dust, and the creature of an hour:—what name can adequately express the enormity of the outrage to the image of Deity—the violence to an Immortal being? We are accustomed to estimate by too low a standard, the nature and value of man's immortal essence, perhaps, from our common acquaintance with immortal spirits, and their oft infirmities.

But it is no mean or common thing,—it is more costly than mines of virgin ore—a nobler structure than the universe itself—more mysterious than the startling wonders of nature—more dear to the Courts of Heaven, than ten thousand worlds. External objects occupy our attention, and dead phenomena in the world without, have greater charms for the eye, and the ear, and the senses, than that microcosm within! What are the wonders of nature; wondrous though they be? The sun rises and sets in awful splendour! and the stars look down upon us from their superior heights—the ocean rolls its waves in commanding majesty; and the wide expanse of heaven seems reposing in conscious eternity; and the Mind of man, as it contemplates, bows before them all! But Ocean knows nothing of those stars, whose beauty it loves to reflect; and Heaven is but a blind and deaf mute; the Sun and Stars are but senseless, spiritless machines; they know not each other, themselves, or us. But the Mind of man knoweth them all! It courses with the Planets along their airy pathway, and maps and journals out their wanderings! It tells to the mighty Chronicler of Time himself, his years, and days and months. Formless, unseen, like the viewless wind, it sweeps the blue embrace of Heaven, and beholds, in the endless waves of Ocean, but broken mirrors of its own eternity! Stars may fall from their zenith—the Heavens be rolled away as a scroll—the Sun grow dim and fade—and Ocean be parched and dried up,—and the Mind of man will outlive them all! One drop of water, or a tickling reed, may crush his body; but all creation, all save creation's God, could not extinguish his immortal being! Is it nothing to trifle with and mar, so noble an intelligence? Nothing! to curtain in the eye of the soul, to dull and imbrute his senses, and to bury them in the sepulchre of fleshly appetite! Is it nothing to quench the vestal fire, which should ever burn to illumine, and warm within, with the midnight shades of idiocy, or the lurid and fitful vapours of drunken insanity? It is nothing less than *suicide* to deprive ourselves of a knowledge of ourselves. Nay, it is more—it is to raise the parricidal arm against God—it is *Deicide*—to extinguish for ourselves the existence of God! Something like this, is the sin of the drunkard,—akin to this, the heinous enormity, which shuts him up to

the wrath of his Maker, the contempt of Men, and the delight of Devils—an outcast from Heaven, a blot upon Earth, a prisoner of Hell; and hence, arises within us the voice of conscience, declaring the dictates of our moral nature, to forbid the use of intoxicating drinks, and to urge to the reasonable preservative of Abstinence!

But the full scope of our obligations to Temperance can only be completely grasped, by an acquaintance with the nature of virtue and vice respectively.

Virtue and vice, are to be loved and hated, *as such*. To cherish virtue, and practice it for its beneficial effects, is, in reality, to undermine its very foundation, and to resolve it into mere expediency. To abhor vice, and to flee from it merely because it is detrimental, is no exercise of moral principle! And any system of moral reform which bases its action upon mere effects, will find, that there has been left behind a spring, which will ever feed the torrent of vice, and choking all their efforts to cut it off, will baffle their best aims,—because, too little was claimed; too much has to be compromised. It is evident, that if the reason for denouncing Intemperance consists merely in the fact, that it impoverishes the family, degrades the individual and becomes a gangrene upon the body politic; and Temperance be commended only as being a preventive of these evils, and an instrument of happiness in disseminating the seeds of honest industry, noble frugality, and public virtue; when either of these effects is not proved to exist, or is not plainly apparent, the whole foundation of the system is overthrown, and the individual is left to a calculation of his own, warped, it may be, by prejudice, as to the good or evil results of intoxicating drinks; and according to this arithmetical computation, the morality will be shifted from one side to the other! My friends, virtue has nothing to do with arithmetic! It is an infinity, to which, nothing can be added,—from which, nothing can be taken away. It begins where arithmetic ends. True—when Intemperance does infallibly produce evil results; and where the blessings of Temperance are manifest and clear; there are no better arguments to address to the feelings, than these mighty energies of Hope and Fear! and far be it from me to disparage those forcible

and thrilling exhibitions of ruin and disgrace on the one hand,—and the pleasing and alluring pictures of prosperity and peace, on the other, which have startled many from the brink of woe, or won them away to the abodes of sober happiness. Such appeals, illustrate and adorn the annals of our Temperance cause. They are noble wings; but not the corner-stone of this, our moral edifice. It must be borne in mind, that we inculcate Temperance as a *duty*; because it is a *virtue*, and deprecate drunkenness, because it is a *vice*! To applaud a virtue because it is prosperous, is to denounce it when in adverse circumstances; and to preach down vice because it ends in calamity, is to compose a homily upon it, when it is apparently happy and fortuitous in its results. If virtue was always rewarded, and vice invariably visited with punishment; effects would be infallible indices of the qualities of actions; and whether or not, in the upshot of things, this may not be so, we cannot certainly determine. Virtue is, in truth, its own reward, and vice its own punishment; but whether in Eternity alone, the throne of distributive justice may not be reared, is beyond the reach of mortal ken. It suffices for any purposes of human reason—that apparently, they are oft times, mingled and confused in their effects; and it is no uncommon spectacle to see virtue, the seeming mother of much temporal sacrifice and misery; and vice, the prolific parent of prosperity and success. And it was just this paradox that has given rise, in all enlightened nations, to the idea of a place of future rewards and punishments, where the decisions of this world would be overruled—vice receiving the deserts it merited here; and virtue entering into the participation of those princely guerdons it forfeited in time, to reap four-fold in eternity. The distinction between virtue and vice being then immutable, any standard of morals which bases their test, and consequently our moral duties upon these deceitful and shifting grounds of effects, must be weak and unstable; and must involve all the errors, and absurdities, and crimes, that have characterised and desecrated all systems that have justified means for the attainment of the end:—which is but a synonyme of the same fallacy.

When, therefore, I hear the Temperance cause placed upon

the same platform with societies, which begin and end in human improvement, and beneficent objects : such as Insurance offices, or Asylums, or Alms-houses,—worthy structures it is true,—but whose foundations are of clay, and iron, and brass : I am compelled to raise my voice, feeble as it may be, to defend Temperance upon a far more durable and nobler basis—a basis of pure and virgin gold, laid by the hand that laid the immutable foundation of virtue, in the yearless past of eternity ! I believe that Temperance has a nobler mission than the amelioration of man's physical wants. I believe that Temperance holds no common credentials from the potentates of earth ; but is divinely appointed from above, an herald from the Courts of Heaven—an embassy from the Abode of Virtue. It comes subordinate, (meekly subordinate, I trust,) to Religion, first daughter of the skies—as a handmaid and forerunner, to reap its harvests, oft where the beautiful feet of the Gospel messenger have not yet trod,—and oft to follow in its pathway, gathering to its humbler barns those sheaves which are unfit for the nobler treasure-house of souls. And methinks ! in that Heavenly garner, there are doubtless, some tender plants, which, under the mild influence and genial fosterings of Temperance, have budded for a riper and maturer growth, and now transplanted to fairer climes, blossom to immortality.

When, then, I see the poor victim of intemperance,—it is not so much his shattered constitution,—and quivering nerves,—and fever-maddened pulse that moves my pity,—though these are sad and appealing exhibitions ;—but it is the wreck within ! the mind in ruins ! the nerves of virtuous action, once powerful to command and rule—unstrung !—the once healthful beat to the unison of virtuous feeling, like an untuned instrument clashing in tumultuous discord with every generous emotion. There is a *vis medicatrix* in nature, a quickening corrective power, which can resist and alleviate physical derangement ; but what, save Almighty grace, can renovate the drunken soul ? His poverty, and want, and rags ! what are they, in comparison with the heart-destitution, and intellectual beggary. and nakedness, of the moral Lazars of corruption, who lie at our doors, covered with the defilements of guilt ? Philan-

thropy and Patriotism may combine, in their labors of love and civilization, to provide for the needy body, shelterings and asylums from the storms of weather, and the ravages of disease: but Oh! where, in all the chambers of the human soul, is there a place of refuge, or repose, for the shadow of that noble being, that once inhabited to adorn its palace? a palace—now a hospital, where every passion, a raving maniac, rushes from its every cell to rend and tear it! Is there not a holy mission in the Temperance Cause? Is there not more than expediency and benevolence in the Temperance Movement? Do not the solemn obligations of Virtue, and of Duty, impose a dignity upon it, well worthy the earnest heed of rational, moral, and immortal beings?

This may seem, to some, as the dash of hyperbole! The picture, my friends, may be highly colored, but its outlines are universally applicable, and will be found to stand the searching test of experience. Do I hear the excuse from any within the sound of my voice, that they have only occasionally—perhaps once—fallen a victim to the benumbing influence of ardent spirits, and are, therefore, free from the imputation of much that has been said? My friend, think not, for a moment, that you are free from vice, because exempt from its habitual sway. Length of chain adds nothing to the slavery of him, that is fettered by a single link. Blind not yourself with the delusion, that from the absence of evil consequences, you can infer the innocence of that single act. Remember, that effects are but the insignia,—the badges, of vice, not that which stamps it with its inherent quality. It is not the sceptre which makes the King—nor the wardrobe the Prince.—Your guilt may not stand registered in your bloated visage, or broken constitution; nor have been chronicled with the mournful pen of disastrous consequences; but upon the tablets of an enlightened conscience, in the records of eternal justice, that single act has an immortal significance; it is the death warrant which seals your destiny beyond the tomb! You are not yet to know that an offence has been committed; it is already done. It borrows not its complexion by what is to be, but by what has been. Your guilt is in the past. Punishment, or repentance, alone in the future!

From this fundamental error in the conception of the dis-

tinctive nature of Virtue, and Vice, arises many of the sophisms by which the young are fatally deceived; two of which, from their wide-spread existence, we will pause to consider. The first, is a false distinction drawn between the guilt of the drunkard, and that of the so-called man of pleasure—the drunkard of festivals and high days. The one, the world brands and stigmatizes with ignominy and contempt; but passes the other by with a censure of imprudence. But they differ only in *degree*, not in *essence*—only as a habit differs from its formative acts. An habit is a bundle of acts, and the viciousness of an habit is but the accumulated viciousness of acts. This accumulation may be in a terribly progressive series—but it must find its beginning in *positive* vice. That is no series whose first term is nothing. The nature of the drunkard's guilt is *primarily* in the distinctive and peculiar vicious tendency of each several act—which, when linked with other acts, forms a chain of evil principles, fettering and enthralling all virtuous emotion, and giving rise to the *secondary* evil of habits. The vice, however, does not lie in the *repetition*, but in the things repeated; not in the chain which connects the evil acts, but in the acts connected; and the aggregate evil of a habit, is but the product arising from the constituent acts—the whole is but a compendium of its parts! Thus, though the guilt of habitual intoxication is fearfully augmented, it is so in a ratio determined by the very first act. The guilt of the occasional inebriate may not be *enormous*, but it is *great*—it may not be *excessive*, but it is *complete*.

The other fallacy consists in the assumed irresponsibility of one under a state of intoxication. Because, (it is said,) he is unconscious he is no longer a moral agent; because, he is a madman, he is no longer responsible; because, he has taken on the form of a brute, he is no longer a man; and vices, which tinge the ingenuous cheek with shame, or hang the head in disgrace, are mantled over by the charitable excuse of his state of insensibility. But my friends, you cannot cloak up one vice with another, and conceal it,—it is but to bring tatters and rags to hide the deformity, and to expose it in more revolting form. Morality is not the boon of charity; it is not a robe to be taken

off and put on as a parade or court dress. It is the vesture that clothes humanity, our swathing bands in infancy, our leading strings in childhood, the garb and habiliments of maturity, the winding sheet we carry with us to the grave, and the apparel of the resurrection morn! Every soil and rent shall remain there, beyond the power of charity to amend. To grant immunity to the moral culprit of the wine cup, is to lower the standard of virtue indeed, when Human justice, its feeble shadow, holds him unexcused. If intoxication be not valid as a palliation, when Human justice unsheathes its sword, can it dull the edge of Divine retribution? No! The inebriate criminal bears upon his devoted head the double guilt of his double crime! and I may add, that even when further crime does not ensue, there is a probability—nay, a vehement tendency towards it, and circumstances alone prevent him from adding a deeper dye to his already deep-dyed guilt.

But the Temperance we advocate is, Total Abstinence! And it now devolves upon me 'to trace out the peculiar obligations, which these Societies carry with them, and impose upon rational, moral, and immortal beings.' And here let me remark, that it is just at this point, that many stumble and halt, unwilling to tread with us the rugged pathway of Abstinence. The true cause of stumbling, when stripped of its plausible disguises, and laid bare in its naked reality, is some darling appetite—some cherished custom—some sensual gratification, which is loath to sacrifice its purple and fine linen for the plainer garb of the "lean and sallow abstinence." I will not undertake to affirm, that Temperance and Abstinence, are terms exactly synonymous. Far be it from me to confound what are essentially distinct, or to improve the code of virtues, inscribed by the hand of Divine Wisdom. And farther be it to add a single sin to the dark calendar of vices. But though abstractly different, they are practically much the same. An abstinent man must keep sober; a temperate man is seldom other than one who abstains. "In order that I might drink little," said Dr. Johnson, "I drink none."

The apparent strength of many of the arguments of Moderate Drinkers, seems to me to lie in their sophistical definition of

Temperance. This, they affirm, consists "in the use, without the abuse, of intoxicating beverages;" and they charge our Societies with proving too much, in denying the *use*, with the *abuse*. Now this distinction between the use, and abuse of a thing, when traced up, takes its rise from another principle—that God has created all things for the use, and nothing for the abuse of man. To use all the gifts of nature, therefore, is the lawful dictate of reason; while to abuse them, is as strictly forbidden. The tribes of animals are designed for the physical necessities, and conveniences of man; but to maltreat them by cruelty, or extravagance, or neglect, is deemed wrong. To use the productions of nature is a natural instinct; but to waste them, is considered prodigality and folly. Now, the grounds upon which the use, or abuse, is lawful, or wrong, in these cases, are purely objective. The animals, being the gift of God, are to be used—but these animals must not be abused. The fruits of the earth are to be consumed, but they must not be wasted; and all that can be possibly inferred from this principle, is, that wine, being a gift of nature's God, may be used, but must not be abused, or thrown away. But surely this is widely different from the position of Temperance advocates. When we speak of the use, and abuse of wine, we do not speak of it, as in these instances, as an object acted upon, but as a subject agent. It is not our abuse of the wine, as in the case of animals, but the wine's abuse of us—our physical, intellectual, and moral natures. We have no reference to the duties which we owe to wine, as a gift of God, but the duties which we owe to ourselves, as moral beings, who can be injured by intoxicating beverages. It is not the use, and abuse, as *effects*, but as *causes*; and is more properly called the "usefulness," or "abusefulness," of wine, from a reference to those properties in wine which render it useful, or hurtful to us. The meaning of the definition is thus much changed; and it is incumbent upon moderate drinkers to defend their position as virtuous and temperate men, upon the ground that intoxicating stimulant is useful to their physical, moral, and intellectual being. And they must forfeit that claim, or embrace our abstinence principles, and profession, whenever it is in the least degree injurious to them.

Is wine then useful to man's physical constitution? As a

medicine, it may be, and undoubtedly is,—but then it must partake of the nature, and be subject to all the regulation of medicines; and the opinion of physicians, at the present time, is fast becoming unanimously opposed to its use, otherwise than as a drug. This portion of the subject, however, as well as its influence upon the intellect of man, we must pass by. Our province is the Moral constitution; and the problem we propose for your consideration is, the beneficial or injurious influence of wine upon man, as man,—not as an animal, but as a thinking, willing, reflecting, immortal being! Viewed in this light, so intimate is its connection with his moral powers, and their exercise, that it almost seems invested with something like moral agency. Is that agency exerted towards virtue? Does it advance man in the march of improvement? Does it aid him in the school of moral discipline, which is to fit him for a higher sphere? Does it accelerate the increase of Civilization, of Truth, of Religion? When moderately indulged in, does it quicken the perceptions of duty, or energise its performance? When freely quaffed, does it not debase, demoralise, dehumanise his nature,—eclipsing his intellect, paralysing his will? Does it add a tittle to his immortal destiny? Does it not subtract every thing?—These are the grave problems which, Moderate drinker, you must calmly weigh, deliberate, and decide yourself, ere you can justify your position. Until you have certified these facts, your morality is but “Conjecture, fancy, built on nothing firm.”

What then do we claim for Abstinence? It is a means to an end—a wise and certain means to a glorious end! The obligation to virtue, which we have laid much emphasis upon, is something more than verbal definition. It is not a mere emotional and subjective phenomena, having both centre and circumference within the human breast, but an active, energetic stimulant to outward manifestation. It is not the silent appreciation of what is beautiful, or praiseworthy, and a corresponding disapproval of the base and ill-deserving; a mere feeling of admiration, or aversion, which arises, as in the contemplation of a pleasing picture, or harrowing scene; a passive impression produced upon our minds: but it is a strong, moving, restless, active principle, forcing and pressing to its exertion. The office of Conscience, the seat of the moral

sentiment, is not simply to set before us Virtue and Vice as ends, but as ends to be prosecuted by means, which means are also brought under its cognizance, and stamped with its sanction, or rejection, as this may be right, or wrong. The obligation to use noble and lawful means, is tantamount to the obligation to pursue lawful and glorious ends; and as Virtue and Vice are qualities of actions, and are things not indifferent, but which *must* be pursued, and *must* be avoided, the agency of means, and of moral means, towards a moral end, is a high and solemn injunction of this Sovereign of the Breast.

Thus Conscience dictates not simply the approval of Justice, but its administration; and such administration as will, to the best of our knowledge, attain to it. It not only presents Sobriety and Drunkenness to us as objects of approval and condemnation, but it enjoins the practice of the one, and a total freedom from the taints of the other, insured by the securest moral means in our power. Thus the duty man owes to his offspring, is to support and maintain them; but surely there is something more than bare support and maintenance, that falls within the law of duty. A *proper* support, and *lawful* maintenance, are certainly included; and the parent who rejects the best and most available means of rearing his children, for dangerous and uncertain measures, must incur the guilt of moral dereliction. The reciprocal duties one owes his parent, are love and obedience; but without controversy, moral turpitude attaches to the standard of the love and obedience which the Hindoo renders to his decrepit parent; killing him, or exposing him to beasts and fowls of prey! And with the obligation which we are under to Temperance, there is blended another obligation: viz. to avail ourselves of those means which are most effectual, and to shun those which are ensnaring and uncertain. That of all possible means, Total Abstinence is the wisest, most virtuous, best, none will deny—and how moderate drinking will stand the trial, is now our inquiry.

Now, in the first place, the Moderate drinker is but a half moralist. He embraces only a part of the moral code—abstinence from Vice. The admiration and habitual practice of Virtue for and in itself, he discards as a beautiful theory, and deems it the extent of his responsibility to hate Vice.

He drinks moderately, but surely not because he deems *moderate* drinking a virtue, but because *excessive* drinking is a vice. He is not virtuous from his instinctive love of Virtue, but from his dread of Vice. Blind to the beauties of a spotless purity, he espouses a chaste virgin from his nervous horror of the wiles and glamour of a Delilah. The creature of Fear, he knows nothing of the peaceful calm in which Hope laps her trusting votaries; and his only safeguard for keeping sober is his boasted aversion to being drunk.

Does the practice of moderate drinking ensure against this—drunkenness? At best it is uncertain,—it may or it may not: and its efficiency, be it observed, does not arise intrinsically from itself, but depends upon something extrinsic and foreign to it; and this is the boasted self-command which the individual arrogates to his possession—the conscious energy of his iron will! the power he holds over his lawless passions to lash them into fury, and then to curb and rein these maddened courses into tame and submissive quiet! a power which is the Creature of circumstance and the Slave of appetite! Such; Taster of the wine cup, is the little point upon which you are balancing your virtue! Are you prepared to do it? to risk your all upon the veering of a moment's gust? If you are fearful of the mad experiment,—as a sense of human frailty should teach you to be,—stablish yourself with total abstinence principles and total abstinence pledges. If not, let us pursue the subject further. You have taken self-command as your law, your counsellor, your strength, and locked yourself up to the resources of your own bosom in proud security, confident that panoplied in your own powers you can withstand the force or wiles of temptation. But are there no foes within? no enemies in the camp? Let us inspect the strength of your moral fortress. You have a will, strong, massive, vigorous;—but there are passions which can relax and unnerve it! You have a judgment calm and clear,—but it can be clouded and swayed by your affections! You have a conscience sensitive and faithful;—but its whispers are less tender than those of love, its voice feeble amid the discord of crying appetite. You have emotions high and noble, but they are coupled with their contraries;—things base are mingled with things lofty;—there are rebels in chains that

may rise and crush you. Your nature is vitiated by birth. The current of your feelings was poisoned in its spring. Your inclinations have been magnetized by sin. But you have another foe—more fatal than them all—a traitor within your bosom's core! Appetite! blind, greedy, animal appetites! which, leering through the senses, are excited towards all things without, irrespective of their moral qualities; which are elicited towards things base with as vehement attraction as towards things noble, and which only severe control, and wrestling, struggling caution and restraint can regulate! You have suffered these blind and foolish spies which you should have kept pent within under guard, to wander at large, and to tamper with the alluring bribes of the enemy. They have tasted of the hostile bounty, and are yearning, panting for increased gratification! Think you your position safe? Think you your salvation sure? The History of the World, the Downfall of noblest cities, the Surrender of sturdiest fortresses, the Ruin of empires, are but so many copies of the boasted skill, and strategy, and self-command, and treachery, and deceit, and final wreck of a thousand Moral commonwealths! The Grecian horse upon the plains of Ilium concealed within its ribs of fir no deadlier foes—than that sparkling goblet within its crystal bounds!

But, besides—There are characteristics of this taste for wine which are peculiar to it, and which render it thrice ensnaring. Appetite and Satiety—Desire and Disgust—Pleasure and Surfeit are the indissolubly connected concomitants of sensual enjoyment: and there seems to be everywhere in the Animal economy a point upon which Nature has inscribed, "Enough." But there is no such limit in the fondness for wine. Unsated—insatiable, it grows with what it feeds on. Who has ever seen the winebiber tired of his wine and cups? Where is the point from which the flooding taste for alcoholic stimulant dates its ebb? The richest viands cannot tempt the Epicure too long; but the morning's beams will blush upon the Bacchanal's feast. Honey is but sipped from the tip of the finger; but Wine is drunk from the hollow of the hand! With appetites within craving like famished whelps, sharpened by artificial stimulant from without,—who is the strong

man whose house is secure? He may be *safe*—if you understand by that word absence from actual ruin. Circumstances may preserve him; human vigilance, and care may protect him; Divine Grace may save him: but he never can be *secure*. Add to this the deceitfulness of wine, and security becomes an empty shadow—a vague and unsubstantial dream! This arch murderer is cunning in his art. Like the Executioner, it blinds the victim, that he may not see the blow;—like a wily Magician, it wheedles him of what he is, and then cheats him with what he is not.—It steals from him his sense of moral agency, and liberty; and when shackled in fetters, proclaims him free. How rare is the instance of a self-acknowledged, self-condemned drunkard! Such is the sorcery of the bowl, that intoxication seems to be ever equi-distant from the present: and with each glass, the moral vision seems as it were extended, and the point of error ever flits before him, like to-morrow, or like his own shadow, and he can never reach it!

So it may have been, my wine-loving, wine-drinking, wine-sinners friend, with you. Judged by your own illusory standard, you may stand self-acquitted—self-approved! But remember! your distinctions, and your rules of action, and your judgment upon these actions, have nothing to do with the moral government of the Universe—they stand there for cyphers! There is a right, and there is a wrong; and their boundaries are no shifting, imaginary lines, drawn by human calculation, or regulated by human custom. They are immoveable, eternal as the throne of God. Whatsoever be your private or local distinctions between these two poles of human action, will avail you nothing. There may be sin in drinking a single glass of wine; or there may not be. If there is, your decision to the contrary will be no demurrer in the Halls of Eternal Justice. There may be a point this side which, indulgence in intoxicating beverages may be harmless; but your designation of it will not stand as the Decree of Heaven's Chancery. There is a line which separates Right from Wrong; Innocence from Guilt. It may be an airy thread, or wiry cord; but once passed—it is the Rubicon of Eternity—the Ocean between two Continents—the Gulf betwixt Heaven and Hell. You may cheat yourself with the

delusion that your daily glass is as innocent to your body as the dew of the morning; but it may be, in the striking language of Robert Hall, "distilled damnation" to your soul. It may be ten, or fifty, or one hundred steps to the brink of the yawning precipice; but it is *one* more, that launches you to destruction! Is it wise then? is it reasonable? is it consistent with the duties which, as moral beings, you cannot divest yourselves of, to throw yourselves recklessly upon the narrow chance of escape from this Maelstrom of iniquity,—to embark upon an ocean of fearful storms, and hidden shoals, and deceitful winds, and treacherous mists, and disastrous currents—with no chart save human foresight,—no helm nor compass save self-command,—no landmarks save the mouldering wreck of some hapless comrade,—no beacon save the false fires of some greedy wrecker!

But "Experience," you will say, "proves the voyage safe, and Example is our guide, and the name of many a distinguished and respected citizen sanctions the dinner and social glass." The argument is one of too much influence with men. With Seneca they prefer considering drunkenness a virtue, than Cato vicious. But, besides that, no title or name,

"However mighty in the olden time,  
Nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay,  
Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme,  
Can blazon evil deeds or consecrate a crime."

There is no refuge here. It is recorded of the philosopher Bion, who was a confirmed atheist, that he was carried by a friend into a temple of Neptune, and shown the numberless votive tablets which adorned its walls in commemoration of the vows of shipwrecked mariners, who had been rescued from the Sea God's domain by the power of his trident. When the philosopher had sufficiently contemplated them, his friend pressed him with the triumphant appeal: "Do you not *now* believe?" The philosopher shook his head and replied: "But where are the tablets of those who perished?" Yes, my friends, "*Where are those that perished?*"—The "votive tablet" of many a moderate drinker decorates your cities and houses; but the mantle of Charity, and the winding sheet of Oblivion, cover from closer

scrutiny, the unfortunate victims that have fallen ! Intemperance finds no tributes in obituaries ; and keeps no record upon grave stones ! If there could be a Portrait-gallery, like that in the Ocean-God's temple, of all that have drowned their virtue as well as their cares in wine ; methinks ! it would startle you from your apathy, or convert you from your infidelity. Such a gallery does exist. God grant that none here present may recognize themselves, or comrades, there !

I have thus endeavored to unfold the moral elements, which form the vital power of the Total Abstinence Cause, and of which the pledge is but the expression, the symbol—the avowal which freemen are ever proud to make of their principles—their temperance creed—a lifeless, unmeaning formula, without the life-giving spirit—but as the embodiment of a virtuous principle at once the prerogative and pride of man.

And, my young friends, can I not, with suitable propriety, address myself to you ? Sharing with you your youthful passions and emotions and temptations and dangers, will you not take part with me in those principles of Virtue which will be at once your sword and shield ? My subject loses none of its dignity in presenting itself to you. In the grave and moral drama of life there are no minor actors, or lesser characters, upon the stage. Each, even the youngest and most humble, is invested with destinies and duties which rivet the attention, and absorb the interest and arouse the sympathies of that High Assembly of Heaven's Host that gaze upon the spectacle. Let us not think that because we do not yet fill our fathers' places, we should not imitate their virtues,—or, if necessary, by our respectful, but decided example, rebuke their vices. There is no mistake so fatal to an honest appreciation of the duties of youth, to improvement in moral discipline, or to the exhibition of moral excellence, as that sophistry of head and heart which makes life an assemblage of several distinct stages, separated by strongly marked boundaries, actuated by widely differing impulses, awakening into life entirely new moral powers, and calling for the exercise of fresh born principles, which appear for the first time and again become obsolete in the abrupt passage from one stage to another—and not, rather, a gradual and easy transition, an undefined but constant successive growth and development from state to state,

and period to period, and form to form like the germ and leaf and stem and bud and fruit of flower and tree,—an unfolding and enlarging and developing continuity of growth and increase,—an infinite succession of fleeting, shadowy moments, woven and interwoven, till, link upon link, they lengthen and expand into hours and months and years, with all their complex machinery of thoughts and feelings and motives and impulses and principles and actions, forming a mighty chain, connecting birth with death, filling up and embracing our earthly existence,—a gliding and mingling and flowing on from fount to brook, and brook to rivulet, and rivulet to bolder stream, widening and deepening and swelling in its flooding course,—ever fed by the far-back influences of its natal home and infant source—till a noble, fruitful river, or fierce, tumultuous cataract, it bursts its narrow bounds, and speeds on with majestic fullness to its world-wide destiny of waters!

As great as may be the difference in external circumstances, and outward relations, and forms of specific duties; the principles and mainsprings of action—the inner man—undergoes no change—save the growth of development. What is a child but the infant man? what the sire of fourscore winters but the aged child? As the features of the cradle are carried to the grave; as the peculiarities and injuries and diseases of the physical man pass, on developing themselves, through every successive stage of existence; as the cultivated intellect of early days gives character to the meridian powers, and dignity to the decline of life; and as the prejudices and influences of youth impress themselves upon maturer years: so will the great Harvest season of manhood ripen to maturity those virtues or vices, those moral and wholesome plants or evil, noxious weeds, whose seeds were sown, or which were left to grow unchecked, and wild, in the precious Spring-time of youth.

Remember, my young friends, that life is but an ever-repeated *now*. What *will be*, is the result of what *is*—Tomorrow, of To-day—Manhood, of Youth—so true is it that “the child is father of the man.” In your youthful forms, passing by the imperfections and carelessness, and frivolities which characterise the boy, and taking a long

prospective glance through the vista of coming years, I see the men of the next generation—the exponents of the principles and customs of the maturing Nineteenth century—the pillars or the destroyers of States,—the regenerators or corrupters of Society, the supporters of its virtues, or the benefactor of its vices. Already the mantles of your fathers are falling upon your shoulders! May they be the mantles of Temperance, pure and unspotted as a virgin's robe—an ornament of grace to yourselves, to be bequeathed as a rich heir-loom to your remotest posterity!

And to those of gentler sex, Temperance, too, has its mission. Daughters of Eve! your Illustrious Ancestor was the unhappy cause of this, with the kindred vices which have cursed mankind—Availing herself of a power with which she had been endowed as a blessing to man, she tempted him to sin, with the luscious *juice of an Apple*. See to it—lest you cause the further disgrace of any of his descendants by enticing them to share with you the *juice of the Grape*.

And to the hardy and long tried band of Temperance advocates—I have but the word of encouragement. As the noble and veteran Champion of our host—whose zeal is but the reflection of the nobler impulses of his soul—told you on last Monday evening: “Go on;” Ours is no paltry skirmish—no winter's campaign—we are soldiers enlisted for the war—volunteers enrolled for life. With unbroken phalanx and defying front, we must ever move fearlessly onward, and ever struggling for fresh victories, keep resolutely what has been won, baffled by no obstacles—disheartened by no reverses—daunted by no threats. Watching at our posts—bucklered and greaved for conflict—our camp-fires ever burning—let the watchword go round—“Total Abstinence.” We have sterner contests than those of man with man; the warring of man with himself—the battling with his own appetites, his own depraved nature, call for intenser effort, and higher emprise and keener suffering, and nobler fortitude, than physical strife. We have no periods of slumber and repose. In moral conflicts, there are no treaties, no leagues nor armistices. Among our banners, there is no white flag of truce. We must not conquer, we must subdue—a Saxon invasion, ours, to vanquish and *exterminate*. No quar-

ter to the fell ravisher of homes and hearths. No mercy to the captive whose freedom makes us slaves ! The Reptile must be crushed—not bruised ! As long as a single glass of intoxicating beverage, is imported, bought, or sold ; as long as a single dram-shop, or bar-room opens its doors to Misery and Hell ; as long as society sanctions the custom, and a single health is pledged in moral hemlock, we must fight ! and with Spartan loyalty to Virtue's high behests, be prepared to suffer the last extremity “in obedience to her laws.”

But blessed be God ! we wrestle not for the baubles of earth and time ; but in the cause of bleeding, wounded virtue—in the cause of down-trodden, trampled religion—in the cause of abused, and martyred intellect—in the cause of fettered, enslaved, moral liberty ; for the franchisement from the grossest thralldom that ever galled humanity—seeking no blood-stained victories—no blood-bought trophies,—but garlanded with the peace-branches of Mercy and Love ; our triumphal chant will be but the echoing of Angels' song—“Peace upon earth, good will towards men”—to the responsive beating of a thousand captive hearts, which rejoice in their overthrow, and find victory in defeat !