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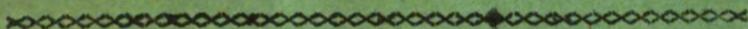
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MR. HALL'S

TEMPERANCE ADDRESS.

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT,

FEBRUARY 26th, 1833.



AN

ADDRESS

IN BEHALF OF THE

TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

NORWALK, CONNECTICUT,

February 26th, 1833.

BY

EDWIN HALL,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN NORWALK.

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ADDRESS

IN BEHALF OF THE

TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

FEBRUARY 26th, 1833.

I COME before this audience to propose for the consideration of such as have not already taken a decided stand for the Temperance reformation, two things :

First.—*To act upon the principle of entire abstinence from the use of distilled spirits ; and Secondly—To avow it to the world.*

I come to throw these proposals upon your reason, your patriotism, your philanthropy ; and to ask, that you will decide promptly, and act openly and energetically ; in view of your responsibilities to God, and of the account which you must render to him in the last great day.

Allow me, in the first place, to disavow for myself, and for the Temperance Society, every thing like sectarianism, intrigue, or coercion.

We disavow sectarianism. We meddle with no man's religious or political creed. We exclude none : we purposely neglect none. All we ask of any man is, that he adopt the two principles which I come to propose to you. We say nothing about other topics. We stand on common ground. We strike hands with all who will meet us here ; and bid all welcome to an equal share in all the rights and immunities of the place.

We need not say, perhaps, what is so perfectly evident—that there cannot be concealed in our organization a plan to unite *Church and State*, as has sometimes, with singular stupidity, been urged against us. We have yet to learn, that freemen are most easily duped, and managed, and deprived of their liberties, when they are perfectly sober. If the church gains by universal sobriety, success to the cause, that commends itself best to men when they are most fully in the exercise of their reason ; and doubtless all the people will say,—Amen.

We disavow Intrigue. We invite examination. The world knows we have done so: for all this stir about Temperance has not been concealed in a corner. Our cause will bear the light. The better it is understood, the more rapidly it gains. Nothing can be worse for it than concealment or crafty management. How can it be otherwise? We appeal to reason, and to the better feelings of humanity. Would that the world might know the whole truth; for the open undisguised truth, is the only weapon of our warfare. We therefore invite examination, and challenge investigation.

We disavow every thing like Coercion. We want no conquered allies. We are engaged in breaking fetters, not in forging them. Neither unsound reasoning, nor crafty management, nor coercion—can accomplish what we wish. What we want, is the spread of such a sentiment as will bear the severest scrutiny, and the test of time. We want no law, save that which shall take hold on the *hearts* of the people, and maintain, and execute, and perpetuate itself.

But while we disavow every thing like party or sectarian purposes, or intrigue, or coercive force, we do avow our desire to see distilled spirits, as an article of common use or luxury, banished from the land. We hope to see the time when it shall have disappeared from the houses of refreshment and common merchandise.

We avow this to be our aim. Having heard our reasons, then judge of our *object*, whether it is a worthy one,—and of our *measures*, whether they are such as freemen and lovers of reason can condemn:—then judge whether it is *unreasonable, uncharitable, or unchristian*, for us to wish and labor for the entire accomplishment of the enterprise in which we have deliberately but most heartily embarked.

We affirm, then, that what we wish to have removed, is a fountain that sends forth nothing but pure unmingled evil. More than a million of people in our country have been for some time acting on the principle of entire abstinence;—people of all employments, of all habits, of all conditions. The united testimony of these is, that they have sustained *no loss of any thing*. Farmers, tradesmen, physicians, lawyers, legislators, seamen—all concur in this testimony. If these are not witnesses enough, look to our forefathers, who laid the foundations of this mighty republic in the midst of toils, perils, and privations, which none but temperate men, such as they were, are able to endure.

Of what use, then, are distilled spirits? Containing not one particle of nutriment, they cannot add any thing to real strength. They excite what strength there is in the body, and exhaust it rapidly; then leave the weakness and trembling of exhaustion;—the strength being sunk down so much *below* its proper tone, as it was by an unnatural stimulus raised *above* it:—so that any man tires, or wears out, or freezes, or takes an infectious disease the sooner for the use of them.

On the other hand, what have distilled spirits done? Reckon in with the original cost of the spirits consumed, the waste caused by idleness, improvidence, loss of time by sickness or premature death which they occasion, the support of paupers, and the prosecution of crimes fairly chargeable to their account, and the amount has long been ONE HUNDRED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS A YEAR.

By the statement of the physicians of Annapolis, Md. it appears that the average number of deaths by intemperance for several years, has been one to every 329 inhabitants. According to authentic reports,—mainly from medical boards,—from Portsmouth, N. H.; New Brunswick, N. J.; Salem, Mass.; Philadelphia, and New Haven; it appears that this is not far from the common average. This would make the number in the United States 40,000 a year. But as there may not be so great a proportion of desperate tipplers in the country as in the cities, diminish this result one fourth, so as to make it certainly not above the truth, and strong drink stands charged with THE YEARLY MURDER OF THIRTY THOUSAND OF OUR CITIZENS.

But this is not all. Physicians universally declare, that the use of distilled spirits greatly increases the number, frequency, and violence of diseases, even in those who do not drink to intoxication. Anatomists have traced the physical effects of alcohol upon the stomach, and upon the brain; and have hence accounted for that uncontrollable thirst for rum, which many who call themselves moderate drinkers have evinced; and for that obtuseness of intellect, and that deprivation of moral feeling, which the use of intoxicating drinks almost invariably produces. They have thus shown why no man can safely trust to the use of rum. It operates as a physical cause. No watchfulness—no strength of resolution can prevent its action upon the stomach and the brain, and upon the whole man, when it is once lodged within the stomach. A man might as well trust to his resolution, to resist the effects of arsenic. No wonder that strong drink takes away reason, and makes men brutes, when the subtle poison has been found nearly pure upon the brain, testing itself not only by the taste and smell, but by the blue lambent flame, with which distilled spirits burn. The use of distilled spirits, as multitudes of our most enlightened physicians testify,—thus creates a *permanent disease*, that predisposes the system to multitudes of other diseases, and renders many uncontrollable, which would otherwise, in ordinary circumstances, readily yield to the power of medicine.

That scourge of nations, the cholera, every where sought out the consumers of strong drink. Go where it will, there it seems to scent out the breath of those who have tasted the poison. Four fifths of its victims, in Europe and America, have been such as were notorious for the use of intoxicating drink.

But why waste more time in detailing its evil effects? The mis-

chief which it has done is beyond description. God himself seems to have joined his curse with (distilled) spirits, as though they were two things never to be sundered. He writes his fiery displeasure upon the face and in the eyes of men,—ere they have tarried long at strong drink. At the next step, he makes their unsteady hand, their faltering tongue, their idle talk, proclaim his displeasure and their shame. The intemperate man at a distance, shows it in his gait. When he himself is absent, his very house and farm, and even his children and his wife, show forth his guilt. Babblings, contentions, strifes, noisy merriment like the crackling of thorns under the pot, and the gathering of thriftless idle men, mark the little fountains—the shops—whence these bitter waters begin to flow. The poor houses, the prisons, the hospitals, all proclaim God's curse upon strong drink. Thus he speaks in his *ways*. In his *word* he has declared that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and denounced a wo, to the man who so much “*desires an evil covetousness to his house,*” as to “*put his bottle to his neighbor and make him drunken.*”

We cannot fully describe the woes which distilled spirits occasion: but there are items of mischief little thought of, which we must not omit. One is, the *mental suffering of the relatives of those who are ruined by drunkenness*. I hardly know of a plea calculated to speak more forcibly to the heart of a *man*, than that which conjures him to regard the unutterable distress of a father or of a mother over a ruined son; of a son over his ruined father; of a wife over a ruined husband. *This is distress*. The harsh treatment which abused relatives and dependents suffer can be endured. The cold of bleak winter can be endured. The mother can endure it, perhaps, when she sees her children shivering or famishing, or suffering with sickness, which her helpless penury can neither cheer nor relieve. *But the wounded spirit who can bear?* The amount of this mental suffering is little thought of; but it is enormous, and almost insupportable.

There are other mischiefs still, which strong drink occasions. Who does not know how it depraves the moral feelings, and sears the conscience? I allude not now to the fact, that two thirds of all the crimes committed in the land, are committed under the stimulus of strong drink; but to that wider spread depravation, which makes us almost despair, that a man who uses strong drink will ever be brought under the power of the Gospel, and become converted to God.

Another item, is *the depravation of morals occasioned to them who mingle and deal in strong drink*. A disgusting but authentic account has been published to the world, of the dishonest mixing up of nauseous and poisonous ingredients, by which most of the wines sold in the country as *foreign wines*, are *manufactured in our cities*. Every one is aware of the copious dilutions, with which one dealer after another, as a cask of spirits changes hands, adds to its quantity for the sake of adding to his wealth. I speak of this not on account of the

injury it does to others, (would that they sold nothing but water,) but on account of the depravity which it engenders in themselves. That depravity, too, is manifestly much increased, by the arts which they take to stimulate the man of moderate circumstances into a high notion of his riches, so that he will trade more abundantly, (and perhaps too, give better bargains to the merchant.) I speak of this, however, not on account of the mischief it does to them who are so miserably deluded,—though it often brings mortgages upon their farms, and strips them of their property, and drives them to drunkenness;—I speak of it on account of *the depravity which it creates in the heart of the tradesman, which renders it so hard for the rum dealer to be, in other respects, an honest man.* Doubtless Satan has thus caught many a soul in the net of his own weaving.

Now I am not inclined to insist so much upon the loss of \$100,000, 000 a year to the wealth of the community. Money is not always virtue or happiness. But when strong drink creates so much wretchedness, engenders so much depravity, and destroys so many lives, it is time to look to the nature of its demands.

If all this evil *can* be removed, we doubt not that the judgment of every man will say, let it be done; it is an object worth an effort, even if it cost some sacrifice.

Were it a foreign foe, levying a tribute yearly of one hundred millions of dollars, scattering diseases, crowding the jails and prisons, reducing so many families to sorrow and want, butchering so many every year,—by such a lingering and degrading kind of butchery,—the nation would rise in war; mothers would arm their sons; sisters would encourage their brothers to the field; everlasting shame would cover him who should linger or turn back.

Who would dare to plead his rights to abet or comfort that enemy? Who would dare to plead, that he made his bread by furnishing that army with provisions? Who would dare to plead, that as this enemy furnished a market for our grain, gave employment to some hundred thousand of our citizens,—in forging arms and fetters, in corrupting the youth, crippling hale men of middle life, making fools and brutes of wise men, breaking up families, poisoning the public morals, stirring up law suits, and destroying lives, that therefore he ought to be tolerated in the land, and nobody lift a hand against him, for fear of *infringing upon the rights of those who have their wealth, by laboring in what they deem so honorable, so useful, and so innocent a calling!* The monstrous abuse which such an enemy had made of our confidence; the multitudes whom he had attached to his cause by his crafty distribution of emolument, would be the strongest of all reasons why he should have no longer toleration.

Now all these evils strong drink has brought upon the land, through bare toleration. That monster was once confined in a bottle within the drug shop—labelled—not “*poison*,” but “*cordial*.” Since our fathers came to America—a single pint of it was “strong water”

enough for an army. It must not be thought that strong drink is a *necessary* evil, or that the monster began his career with an army of drunkards to aid him in his conquests. He came in modestly and single handed,—pretending to be a friend, to keep out heat, and to keep out cold,—to guard against sickness, and to cure sickness;—to give comfort to the sorrowful, and to make the poor man feel rich;—to give strength to the weak, and courage to the coward. He pretended to detest the drunkard, as much as any body. He never asked any thing but a prudent use. So he crept into the nursery to comfort children: enshrined himself on the sideboard to welcome friends: sought the society of men in office, and of people of fashion.

But mark the result! Where he had created an appetite, the floods of the ocean could not quench it. What could prove a security against ruin to the man who received his friendship? Property went, friends were sacrificed, health went, fair reputation went, resolutions went,—away went life. No matter what the strength of a man's understanding, or the power of his reason, or his attainments in learning, or his high sense of honor, or his firm resolves:—no matter how much he loved his friends, or doted on his children;—no matter how *many* motives there were to give strength to his resolutions, or to recall him to honor;—strong drink had power to break down all. Many a mighty and an honored man have we seen struggling against the strength of appetite; but it was like struggling to climb up the waters of Niagara. Thousands, and tens of thousands who deplored the drunkard's wretchedness, and knew how the appetite wrought, thought themselves strong enough to grapple with the foe, and determined never to be overcome; but found themselves deceived and ruined.

The monster did spare some: but it was only to prove what the wise man said, "*Wine is a mocker!*"—it was only to mock the hopes of others, and to maintain its power. *It never had ruined so many had it spared none.* It had then been as harmless as arsenic.

If the experience of man has proved any thing, it has proved nothing more surely than this; *there is no prudent use of strong drink.* It began with toleration. It asked nothing but prudent use. These were the terms of its compact with nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of all its victims. *The only safety to any man is, to let it entirely alone.* A man who uses it *may* not be ruined by it, but what stupid conceit is that, which hopes for *safety* in the path where the wisest have been ensnared in spite of their precautions, and where the strongest have been cast down wounded and overcome? Such a vain confidence is trifling with reason. The Providence of God has written over the entrance of that path—*This is the road to death. None so wise, that wiser have not been ensnared here. None so firm, that more resolute have not been corrupted here. None so strong, that stronger have not been slaughtered here. This is the road to death.* "*Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the*

way of evil men. Avoid it. Pass not by it. Turn from it; and pass away."

To think of chaining strong drink with *reason* or *resolves*, is like thinking to subdue the heaving sea with fetters, or to fight against the whirlwind with the bayonet. *Reason* and *resolves* are weapons that bear no relation to the enemy with which you would have them combat. You cannot reason disease from the stomach, nor resolve the effects of alcohol from the brain. No man, who uses strong drink at all, can *reasonably* hope for safety, unless he have an assurance of it by a special revelation from heaven. Ten hundred thousand facts have proved, that, in this matter, "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool."

I am willing, however, to waive this argument for the present, and to reason on the supposition, that every one who hears me may drink moderately without danger to himself.

Men and brethren, we want your example for the sake of others. You see what wide ruin strong drink has spread over the land. This ruin cannot be stayed while sober—reputable men drink moderately. None follows the example of the drunkard. None makes his bread by selling rum to the drunkard. None feeds a distillery upon the earnings of drunkards. The support of drunkards would impoverish every dealer: it would break down every bar: and starve every distillery in the land. This vast fire cannot furnish its own fuel. It is fed by men who are esteemed sober: and sober men must withhold all supplies, all countenance, all toleration, ere the ruin can be stayed.

Let every sober man give to the cause of entire abstinence the influence of his *example* and his *name*, and the work is done. That single act would send peace and plenty to ten thousand unhappy families. It would recall to reason and to the enjoyments of social life, one hundred thousand wretched and degraded men. It would empty every store of the deadly merchandise. It would tear down the *bars*,—those fountains of shame and sorrow, around which the idle and the worthless gather, to render that a noisy haunt of vice, which the traveller should find a home.

Now, on the supposition that strong drink does you no injury, and is lawful to you in itself; yet imitate the example of Paul, who, knowing that meats were lawful for him, nevertheless declared, "*Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth.*" There spake a noble-hearted and an honest man! "*It is good,*" said he, "*neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is made weak.*"

Let me ask you to look at this case, for it is a strong one, and directly in point. Here is something in itself indifferent. Paul says, "*Meat commendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse.*" (This is

more than can be said of rum.) "But take heed, lest, by any means, this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols? *And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died.*"

Can it be a question, whether it is a *heinous sin* in any man, through want of regard for the welfare of his fellow creatures, or base carelessness, or obstinacy, *to destroy them for whom Christ died, rather than check his appetite?* If any doubt this conclusion, let him hear the word of God? "*But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.*"

Now here is a stronger case:—it is not meat;—it is filthy rum. It is not a harmless nutritive aliment;—it is a fiery intoxicating poison. The mischief of example is palpable and undeniable. The "destruction" brought upon weak souls is temporal and eternal. *He then, whose example goes to countenance the use of strong drink, is a destroyer of souls.* I charge it upon him fearlessly. I lay my finger on the word of God—and show him, that God holds him guilty of "destroying them for whom Christ died." You have something *more than the harm which you do to yourself* to answer for. If, like Cain, you should inquire, "*Am I my brother's keeper?*"—still "*Your brother's blood would cry unto the Lord from the ground.*"

On this ground do I take my stand, that, under the present circumstances of the case, the bible forbids the use of strong drink. I ask for no critical exegesis to limit or extend the meaning of some particular word or phrase. I ask for no chymical analysis to determine how much of poison is mingled with strong drink, or wine of any kind or name. Here is a general law; clearly applicable to the case in hand; and much more so, than one case in ten upon which our highest judicial courts make up their decisions, in causes where a vast amount of property is concerned. A judge who should decide against such a law, would sink under the frowns of an injured and an indignant community.

Say not that it is a *recommendation*, rather than law. A recommendation from heaven, under such circumstances, and accompanied with such reasons, *is law*; and will be recognised as such in the last judgment, from which there is no appeal. Say christian,—do you need the specific penalty of eternal wo subjoined, to give a recommendation from heaven *authority* with you? Has the Almighty no power to bind the conscience, save by descending to all the technical forms and accumulated synonyms, which are useful in human laws? Away with such licentious subterfuges. How dare you think of them in your transactions with the heart-searching God!

We have dwelt mainly on the mischief produced by strong drink to the community in this life. But as a stronger motive to abstinence, let me ask you to think of the eternal woes which strong drink occasions. That is surely a baneful poison, which reaches hold on two worlds, and not content with destroying health, peace, character, and reason,—destroys the soul. Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Yet thirty thousand drunkards are yearly hurried to the judgment of Him, who has beforehand, revealed this unalterable rule. Who can number the myriads more, who are blinded, and hardened, and ruined for eternity by the same deceitful foe?

Oh, could the cry of the souls so sadly lost come up before us from their place of torment, men would forget the cost in silver and gold; they would forget the sufferings of the dear abused dependents whom drunkards tormented here; men would cease from their labor, and the earth would stand in aching silence—to hear the loud wailings of the souls ensnared and ruined by strong drink.

That loud cry of wailing should be a dreadful sound in the ears of the man who will traffic in the poison for gain. His daily food is seasoned with the drunkard's blood. That loud cry of wailing should be a dreadful sound in the ears of him who decks his bar with every thing that can lure the eye and excite the appetite of the wretch, in whose veins the poison has already begun to work. Talk not of "reputable men" and "reputable travellers," and "the necessity of a little refreshment:"—it is a work of vice. It is barter in the blood of men. It smells too strongly of corruption; it speaks too loudly of the widow's tears and the orphan's cries. It is wicked—unjustifiable business. Make what excuse you can for the force of prejudice;—it is wicked business. The light is come with full blaze into the world. It is too late for any man to plead ignorance.

Men should not be afraid nor ashamed to call it *dishonorable—wicked business*. It produces nought but pure—unmingled evil. It feeds upon the wages of iniquity. The community should speak out. Heaven save us from the complaisance that costs the blood of souls!

Let no man say that I am endeavoring to injure the business of any one, or inveighing against the exercise of his proper rights. Injure business! What business? The business of getting money from poor deluded men, by throwing them out of employment, crippling their limbs, destroying their reason, killing them inch by inch, bringing unutterable wo upon their families, endangering the peace, and preying upon the wealth of the community! Job said, that "When the ear heard him, then it blessed him,"—because in delivering the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, he "*brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth.*" Most solemnly do we disavow all desire to injure individual prosperity. But most solemnly do we protest

against the right of any man to engage in business, that necessarily produces so much mischief. So the community,—so the laws have judged,—in denying the right to the mass of the people, and restricting this business to certain *privileged* men. Why have they done this, unless they judged it mischievous and dangerous business? And yet these privileged men in whom the laws “*reposed especial confidence*” have brought wo enough upon the community to clothe a world in mourning.

Our granting to individuals the monopoly of selling rum, is like Louisiana granting to individuals the monopoly of keeping gambling tables; and like the French government granting to individuals the monopoly of keeping brothels:—with the difference of mischief vastly on the side of the business of selling rum. Yet these keepers of gambling tables, and these keepers of brothels, plead their “lawful calling!” “The laws give them license”—forsooth,—“so to do!” What right has any one to “*injure their business*,” by exposing the mischiefs which it occasions!

But in behalf of many aggrieved sons and daughters, and fathers and mothers, and wives and children, I desire to *put in a plea* against the right of the community to grant monopolies for doing mischief at so enormous a rate. If it were a monopoly to a band of highwaymen, to rob, and plunder, and burn, and destroy,—it would do less mischief. People might go armed; and if overcome, they might lose neither their reason, their character, nor their souls. If husbands and fathers of families fell, it would not be with so much shame and misery to their wives and children.

Now if money must go, that can be spared. If the community *must* be taxed for the benefit of a few, so be it. I plead, that, at least, *the taxes may be gathered in a mode* which will not cause so much wretchedness to families, and so much unnecessary burden upon the community.

“The men who die drunkards are not forced to drink.” True. But the families of drunkards *are compelled* to endure all the shame, and want, and suffering, which their drunkenness occasions. The community *is compelled* to pay an enormous amount of taxes for the prosecution of criminals, and the maintenance of paupers. The State *is compelled* to receive multitudes of ill-educated, thriftless, and vicious citizens, in the persons of hard drinkers and their immediate posterity. Again I say, if there are individuals who *need* the money, let the community provide it *in a mode* which will not create so much *unnecessary* evil.

I call upon the community to protect *the rights of injured families*; or if *protection* be denied, let these rights be, at least, *respected*. Why shall the authority of the people *license* men to prey upon the peace of so many thousand families?—so many thousand *happy* families, were it not for this unhallowed compact between the State and the monopolists in the business of selling rum? I plead in be-

half of widows and orphans, and of wives and children involved in ten-fold more misery than orphanage or widowhood, that *such a compact is a flagrant violation of the great Constitution of nature and humanity.*

It is grinding—intolerable oppression over the weak and the defenceless. The people—the people, I call upon to correct this odious tyranny. God has given no rights to civil power to license such oppression. The assumption of such powers is treason against society: it is high-handed wickedness. It has already brought upon us innumerable and insupportable calamities.

Men and brethren, you have heard our reasons for total abstinence. You are aware of the vast benefits which will result to the community, if this principle generally prevails. You know how vast the evil has been, and how vast it will continue to be, if the principle of entire abstinence does not prevail.

Before any one rejects this principle, let me ask him, *what harm can follow from adopting it?*

What loss will accrue to individual *health*, to the temporal *prosperity*, or to the *family* of any man who adopts it? None.

What harm will it cause to individual *character*? Who ever heard any man seriously alledge it as a blot upon another's character, that *he drinks no rum*? What man of business ever said of a candidate for employment, he is capable and honest, and in all other respects unexceptionable, but *I cannot trust him, because he uses no rum*? What merchant ever said of a customer, he is industrious and in good circumstances now, but I fear he will not continue so, *because he utterly refuses to taste of rum*? Who ever expected, that the duties of any man, in public office or employment, would be discharged with less fidelity or capacity, *because the individual entirely and most faithfully abstained from the use of distilled spirits*?

That there would be no less of public *wealth*, or *happiness*, or *enterprize*, no one can doubt. There is *no* loss. *All* is gain. Judge, now, whether a prudent man, who loves his country and the happiness of his fellow creatures should abstain. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." Let the better feelings of humanity, let reason,—let religion prevail.

Let me now ask you, if you approve of entire abstinence, and will practice it, to avow it to the world. If we have your approbation of the work, and your concurrence in it, give us the influence of your name.

Our fathers in the revolution understood the necessity of an open avowal of sentiment. He was not deemed a patriot, who wished to hang on middle ground, between the foe and his country. He was deemed a poor patriot, whose patriotism was not courageous and decided enough to make him pledge himself to the cause of his country, and let the world know it. Had there not been virtue and

decision enough in the land for an *avowed determination* not to use tea, or to wear imported cloths, when the good of the cause required it, the country would have been lost. For nothing did the enemies of our fathers labor more strenuously than to divide them. To the people of the land, our fathers held up the motto, "UNITE OR DIE." What could the country have done against the armies of Great Britain, had the people concealed their patriotism in their own bosoms;—or feared to avow it, lest it should look like drawing the sword and throwing away the scabbard, and so leave no ground for an honorable retreat;—or had each insisted on going alone to fight, out of sight, behind walls and hedges? Indeed—our fathers have taught us a better lesson than this.

Now there is the same reason for an open avowal of sentiment, that there was in the days of the revolution. *Nothing else can accomplish the work.* Let sober men withhold their avowed determination, and if *all* do so, the whole ground, that has been gained, is lost. The country is ruined.

Does any one answer, "I am in no danger, I need not join a Temperance Society?" I am not inclined to dispute the point of danger with you. Be it so, that *you* are in no danger. I would not, however, do you the injustice of supposing that you have no care for your country, or for injured humanity. He is surely an object of pity who can sit comfortably by his fire-side, amid the storms of winter,—and, when the widow and perishing orphans knock at his door,—answer—"Depart; I am in no danger of freezing or starving,—I am well fed and warm." Who is willing to avow that he acts on the principles of such miserable selfishness?

Does any one answer, "Have I not the right to do as I choose?" The *power* you have certainly. But God has conceded to no man the *right* to neglect his duty. You have the *power* to see your neighbor perishing in the flames, without giving him the alarm; or drowning in the waters, without reaching out your hand, when by so doing, you might save him; and though men might detest you, for your criminal neglect, *they* would have no right to punish you for it. But at the BAR OF GOD you are responsible. The servant who had but one talent, was not condemned for doing mischief with it, nor for squandering it; but for burying it in the earth:—because he had **NOT DONE** his duty. Hear the word of the Lord; "He that knoweth to do good, and **DOETH IT NOT**, to him it is sin. "Curse ye Meroz; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because **THEY CAME NOT UP** to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Does another answer, "I am a friend to Temperance, I can do as much good without joining a Temperance Society?" "If you really act on the principle of entire abstinence, and avow it to the world, we hail you as a true member of the Temperance Society. This is all the pledge that any of us give. We act upon the principle of entire abstinence, and avow it to the world.

But if under this profession there lurks any secret reserve, as though the heart and hand were not fully committed,—we stand much in doubt of such friendship. Besides, the world has waited in vain to see what these single-handed—half-committed friends of temperance have done. They ought to be aware, that they are claimed by the foes of Temperance. Moreover, the cause of temperance is an honest cause. It will bear the light. It requires none of its friends to hide their colors. It needs no disguised compromising friends—to do that by management, which cannot be done in open day. It requires none to sacrifice the solid satisfaction of being its avowed and decided friends.

“But,” says one, “I do not like the giving of pledges.” Why should any man be afraid to pledge himself to do right? Is this the only cause in which men must form no determinations, and avow no resolutions? Who thinks the worse of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence, because to support their righteous cause, they dared to “pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor?” Who then was afraid of pledges? Who does not know with what mournful interest the country recently heard, that the “last of the signers” was gone?

A Christian too! and afraid to give a pledge in a holy cause! What then meant the solemn vows which you took upon yourself before men and angels, when in these sacred courts you *did pledge* yourself forever to the service of the Lord? You are already enlisted for life. You cannot but know this to be the cause of God; and fight you must, or be guilty of treason to the great Captain of your Salvation.

An honest—upright man—fear a pledge to do right! Where is the courage of virtue and honesty gone? Fear a pledge! An upright man should throw himself into the breach, and die there, if the cause require it.

Men and brethren, the cause will go on. Many are laboring with a zeal which nothing but death will quench. Ten thousand advocates of Temperance are—at this moment—pleading her cause before ten hundred thousand freemen. This, we trust, is to be a glorious day in the history of this glorious reformation. Many are sending up prayers to God, that he will prosper the cause. The Almighty has already set his seal of approval to the work; and where the standard of temperance has been raised, there the spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard of the Cross, and drawn men to Jesus Christ.

The cause will go on. The vice,—the wo which distilled spirits have caused, and the baleful fountain of evil itself *must* be removed from the earth, as the latter day glory comes on. He who sets himself against the work, sets himself on the side of all unrighteousness, against the cause, the promises, and the omnipotence of God. This earth shall yet become a mountain of holiness.

The cause will go on. God has prospered it here. We honor the men, who, when the light came, cheerfully banished the poison from their stores, their shops, and their fields. May the God of the fatherless and the judge of the widow reward them.

Give to the cause the countenance of your prayers, your example, and your name,—and the people of Norwalk,—whose forefathers with honest indignation ordered off the first barrel of rum that ever came to their shores, as though it had been charged with pestilence,—will not be behind the rest of the world in this happy and glorious revolution.

An opportunity will now be afforded such as will embark with us in the cause, to give their names. Most respectfully do we solicit them. Most cordially will we welcome you as fellow laborers in the work. Will you give us this countenance? Men and brethren, *shall it be?* I ask you, as in the presence of the Most High;—here in his house, where every good work ought to find a welcome to the heart; SHALL IT BE? Will you decide, so that you can stand up here now, and with your hand raised to heaven declare; SO MAY THE BLESSING OF THE ALMIGHTY REST UPON ME, AS I NOW ACT, OR FORBEAR TO ACT, ACCORDING TO THE HONEST CONVICTION OF MY HEART.

