

ORATION

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE SONS OF TEMPERANCE,

AT

CHARLESTOWN, N. H.,

JULY 4, 1850.

BY REV. A. L. STONE,
OF BOSTON.

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At the invitation of the Connecticut River Division of the Sons of Temperance, there assembled at Charlestown, N. H., July 4, 1850, a very large number of the members of the Order and others, from the Valley of the Connecticut, in a beautiful pine grove on an eminence overlooking the handsome village of the town, where tables had been prepared for the occasion with an elegant and sumptuous collation. The exercises were introduced by an address from Gen. Ryland Fletcher, of Proctorsville, Vt., President of the day; when, after prayer by Rev. A. Gleason, Rev. A. L. Stone, Most Worthy Chaplain, delivered the following discourse, which, together with the introductory address are now published by the unanimous voice of the assembled thousands. These were accompanied by other exercises appropriate to the day and the occasion, interspersed with the sweet notes of instrumental and vocal music. The whole afforded a pleasing demonstration of the strength and growing interests of the Order, and cheered with fresh hopes the friends of Temperance and humanity.

S. L. FLETCHER, *Committee of Publication.*

CHARLESTOWN, JULY 17, 1850,

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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

BROTHERS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:—The 74th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence finds us here assembled to commemorate that great and happy event; to pay our annual tribute to the sacred virtues of our ancestors. The annals of the political world present us no epoch so worthy of commemoration, so well adapted to excite the liveliest enthusiasm as the 4th of July, 1776. We owe it to our fathers, we owe it to our children, to mark the return of this day with grateful festivities. It is emphatically the great day of America. Could we consent to let this day pass undistinguished by appropriate honors and grateful demonstrations, we should prove ourselves degenerate children, unworthy of our high lineage. Strangely constituted must be the American whose heart does not yield a cordial assent to the festivities of this occasion; cold indeed must be the heart that feels not the glow of grateful emotions, as this day calls up the recollection of the services and sacrifices of our pilgrim fathers. It was for us, fellow citizens, that so much blood and treasure were freely expended. The heroes and sages of the revolution must have been aware that they were engaged in an enterprise which in their lifetime, could not be brought to its mature and perfect issue. The most they could flatter themselves was, that having planted the tree of liberty, having shielded its tender germs from the rude blasts that beat upon it, having moistened it with tears, and the blood of brave hearts, their posterity might gather the fruit of its branches, while those who planted it lay mouldering beneath its shade. While one verdant leaf remains upon

that tree of liberty, the appropriate topics of this occasion can never lose their interest to American ears.

It is the natural tendency of celebrating the 4th of July to awaken our gratitude and patriotism. It carries us back to other days,—days of awful peril to our beloved country. The thunder of Bunker's heights seems to peal on the ear, and let us thank God that it was not the knell of vanquished liberty; we seem to see the curling smoke ascending in terrific grandeur from burning Charlestown. Let us thank Heaven, that that was not the funeral pile of freedom.

We have met here in the character of "Sons of Temperance" on the 4th of July. Is there anything incongruous in this? I am aware that an attempt to impress moral truth, to promote the interests of a moral institution on an occasion like this, has not the sanction of universal custom. But in my view there exists no good and valid objection to such an attempt. In my judgment we do not pervert the legitimate purposes of this occasion, or wander from appropriate topics while we attempt to promote the great and glorious cause of temperance.

Our pilgrim fathers adopted it as a fundamental principle, that the grand pillar upon which our government must rest, was the virtue and morality of the people. They incorporated into their political fabric a deep and lively regard for the cause of virtue. They have committed this cause into the hands of their posterity. As sons of the pilgrims they bid us promote this cause with the most sacred fidelity. We should look at intemperance not only as it invades the privacy of domestic life, robbing 'sweet home' of its charms, and converting it into a den of horror; but as a *national* calamity unparalleled in the extent of its ravages, and the number of its victims. It is apparent that a self-governed people must be a *virtuous people*. The foundations of Roman virtue were first assailed, and thus her sons prepared for chains. Let the sad fate of former republics read us an admonitory lesson. It would seem that a last experiment is making to ascertain whether order, morality and virtue will be cherished and promoted in our country, or whether we shall add another to the list of corrupted States, and go down with the rest all stained with profligacy and crime to the vast tomb of nations. The physical strength and power of our country operate as a guaranty against aggressions from abroad; we

have nothing to fear from foreign fleets and armies ; but have much to fear from degeneracy in public morals, laxity of sentiment, and depravity of manners. He that would labor most effectually for the good of his country, for the preservation of our happy institutions, for the perpetuity of civil and religious liberty, must labor for the promotion of virtue.

If America neglects to sustain her moral institutions, and thus opens the flood-gate of intemperance, and lets every species of vice, like a river of death, flow through our land ; her republican institutions, her freedom, and her science, will be buried in one common grave, and the sun of American glory will set to rise no more forever.

Pardon me, brothers, for keeping you so long from the pleasure you anticipate. Let me in conclusion ask you to think of wretched Ireland, a colony of England, (as was once America,) with her degraded, starving population, groaning under the weight of an intolerable system of taxation. Look to India ;—for centuries have her tears been mingling with the flood of the Ganges. Think of Poland, of Italy and Spain ; think of any and every country, and then compare them with your own, and you will know the weight of obligation you owe your fathers, and you will learn the reasons which should prompt you to celebrate the 4th of July.

O R A T I O N .

STANDING as we do this morning upon another anniversary of our national birth-day — remembering the times of trial and conflict through which as a people we struggled into Independence — recalling the fearful odds against our sires when poverty, feebleness and inexperience, animated only by trust in God, hatred of oppression and heroic resolves to be free, were matched with discipline, resources, power and almost uniform and immemorial success in arms — and contrasting with the early omens of the struggle its world-astonishing issue, the transition is easy to that nobler Revolution, in which under auspices at first more unpromising, against a bondage more abasing, in the face of hostility more determined and unscrupulous, the bannered Heroes of Temperance are achieving for our country another independence more glorious than the former, won by bloodless victories and fraught with more beneficent results to humanity.

I must think the theme for these exercises happily chosen, from the freshened recollections which this day brings up of events at once so analogous to the history and so inspiring to the hopes of the cause we plead.

Each anniversary is a stopping place where we may pause, though time never does, and give anew our minds to thought, our hearts to praise, and our hands to duty. Such seasons are not less imperative and profitable for associations than individuals.

It is wise for those banded together in great enterprises to keep their birth-days ; mark thus the great stages of their advance, give their errors and their successes alike to History, and renew their covenant. Let us take advantage of this occasion to take up this work of review and forecasting in respect to our own beloved order. What have we gained? What have we lost? What remains for us to do? These are the questions by which I propose to be guided in the remarks that follow. I will trust that you have brought with you your whole stock of patience, for I cannot promise to be short with this task before me.

The Order of the Sons of Temperance now numbers within its ranks not far from 300,000 souls. The power of this array is not its mere numerical force. It is a matter of congratulation, which it were false modesty to pass over in silence, that from the first, men of character and standing have been willing to enroll themselves in the ranks of this movement, and lend all the weight of their personal and social influence to its progress. Such alliances I know are not needed to make this associated effort respectable. The sight of humanity on any of its levels, struggling against the mastery of vice — rising above its yoke — and essaying to disenthral its brethren also — is a spectacle of moral sublimity that of itself commands respect. But the evils against which we are contending has been so long shielded behind the customs and fashions of families prominent in social life — and casting all the consideration of their wealth, refinement and high standing into the scale of self-indulgence, that we must rejoice when we can confront them in their own walks, with an influence, by their scale of estimation of no less mark and price. The wider one's sphere of social consideration, the more may he do for or against the cause of Reform. The wine-cup, when seen graced by the cultivation and elegance of polished circles, has been and is and will be one of the mightiest lures, to habits of gross inebriety that ever wrecked human hearts and hopes. The ring of the social glass on the sideboards of the

rich, chimes with the same music in the haunts of beastly intoxication, and gives evermore 'aid and comfort' to the revelers there. And when we may draw our champions of abstinence from such an influential sphere, and meet this potent hostility with its own weapons, our hearts justly grow hopeful of wider good, and more difficult victories. The profession of medicine, the pulpit, the bar, the university, the first walks of mercantile life and the mechanic arts, and the stainless yeomanry of the plow, have poured in their volunteers to swell our ranks. Such a membership as a feature of our progress hitherto, and an element of power in our working, we point to this day as a good omen for times to come.

But there is yet another portion of our membership upon which we may congratulate ourselves no less justly and heartily. There are changed men among us—men who have found strength to rend their chains and stand up from bondage—taking back from the tyranny of appetite their long-lost liberty. The eye of wife, mother and sister, looks this hour with joy and pride upon faces and forms in our ranks so renewed, for whom so late it wept in secret, or looked to heaven in sorrowing prayer. Silent benedictions are in those looks that might cheer a martyr at the stake, that outweigh a world of calumny. And the objects of such grateful regards, would not barter one pulse of their new life, their sense of recovered freedom, their freshness of health, physical and mental, their approving conscience, and the happy households to which they shall return from this jubilee, for the wildest pleasure that ever reveler boasted—the richest treasure ever Avarice locked. It is not a small beneficence to have had the agency of such a regeneration.

Of still higher moment perhaps is the good we have wrought by way of prevention—a kind of good the world is always slow to appreciate. And yet he who saves a fellow from crime or misfortune, is more his benefactor than he who rescues and restores him fallen. He saves him the guilt and the sorrow; he saves him the remorse, the self-accusation, the bitter peni-

tence ; he saves the hearts bound up in him their desolation and anguish ; he saves him the immortal memory of his degradation and the shame ; he saves society the infection of his example and influence. He who *restores* is worthy his reward, and it is no mean reward ; but he can never undo the past, he cannot give back wasted years, and misspent energies, and freight the accusing hours gone by with worthy deeds. The friend who goes far to overtake a traveller upon a wrong road and lead him back to the true path, may indeed have put his friendship to a severer task, but had he only stood as a guide-board at the point where the roads parted and the wandering began, and pointed out the safe track, he had done the wanderer a more real service. Look now upon the young men gathered in this association, and the lads marshalled in the younger affiliated branch of the Order. Starting in life with the guardian pledge they have here invoked, to be kept by it from the sin and shame of intemperance, the ruin of fortune, and health and hope ; the lost manhood, social confidence, and self-respect ; and estimate, if you can, the extent of such benefactions. There is no glitter or noise in such an achievement ; no sudden transformation, but there is a mightiness of restraining and saving power in it beyond the expression of superlatives.

In this way, too, have we worked upon public sentiment — not so much indeed upon that which exists, though here efficiently, as upon that which is shortly to have the ascendancy. The generation, thus in its first advances taking sides upon the questions of our Reform, will soon sway the public mind. It will not be easy to withstand their united testimony against the vice they have forsworn. They who pander to human appetite will shrink from facing such a front of rebuke. The anathema of a public sentiment uttered by so many voices will wither their bad courage and abolish the craft.

Such occasion is there, my brethren, to speak to each other this day words of congratulation as we record our progress thus far.

It is true there have been some defections from our ranks.

Some have forgotten their sacred vows, and yielding to accursed temptation, in an evil hour, have given themselves over to their old captivity and blighted the fair augury of reformation their turning had ministered. I know not whether there are hearts base enough to exult in this, but I do know that many hearts have mourned. We do not deny that such betrayal hurts our cause; let those rejoice over it that will. Every brother so falling away not only brings upon his soul the guilt of a broken vow, and enslaves himself afresh, but puts off the day of deliverance to other captives, strengthens the hands that forge the chains, and blocks the car of emancipation. But we do not need such evidence to prove to us that the ungovernable demands of appetite are sometimes beyond the pale of our constraint. Over these lost brethren, while they stood, we watched with fear and trembling. It cheers us that we sought to save them, though we have failed. It is something to have given them a taste of freedom, though the cup has to them a keener relish.

Others still, though they are few, have left our side for other causes, best known to themselves. Some doubtless from motives that do them no dishonor — some perhaps wearying of so rigid a self-restraint, or constrained by more powerful social influences, or unworthily influenced by personal enmities, or charmed no longer by novelty, or piqued at fancied slights, we can only conjecture. If they are satisfied to have no part in so good an enterprise, the greater loss, we think, is theirs.

There is still one other point in the review to touch upon, and then I will ask you to look forward. I have spoken of losses by defection and withdrawal. There have been yet other losses which we cannot this day forget. Death has greatly spared us, but still he has locked his hiding turf above not a few of our brethren. Their places are vacant this day in our ranks; their places are vacant where they always stood at posts of duty and honor; their places are vacant beneath the roofs where the widows and fatherless feel each hour the loss of their stay and counsellor. But here, *here* in our hearts their place is

not vacant. Peace to the memory of our departed brethren! And when coming and not distant days shall add another and another name from our number to the lengthening scroll of death, let each anticipate for himself this living remembrance in the hearts of survivors.

But I will keep you no longer upon this retrospection. I did but mean to make it introductory to my main design, and have lingered upon it I fear beyond your patience. I invite you now to set forward with me upon the other question I proposed at the outset — “What remains for us to do?”

1. My brethren, we must determine upon and fill up some sphere of action. We must not suffer the calumny to become history, that we lose in the social arrangements and amenities of the Order our activity as reformers. Our interest for the peace and prosperity of our Division is not to absorb all our zeal and devotion as Sons of Temperance. We have a work to do for the common cause. We are not associated for the mere purpose of holding pleasant fellowship and reciprocating fraternal offices. The final victory is not yet by many a battle-field and campaign. It will be time enough to sit down at our ease and tell our stirring tales of struggles past, when our foe is routed from his last stronghold. At present we have something else to do besides toying with the machinery of our organization, and regaling ourselves with its entertainments and harmonies. The great pestilence, if it be somewhat abated, still rages on every line of latitude that crosses the abodes of men. The signs of it are visible everywhere — in the flushed cheeks of gay saloons; the neglected husbandry of once thrifty hands, the gloom of the domestic hearth, the cheerless beggary of ruined fortunes, the evening shouts of shameless rioters, the virulence of a thousand diseases. It blasts, as of yore, the ruddy health of youth; it drains the vigor of manhood; it dishonors the grey locks of age; it palsies the nerve of thought, and films bright-eyed fancy. It walks in senate chambers and legislative halls; it follows the camp; it flies with the white wings of commerce over the sea; it ob-

trudes itself by the bridal altar. Not yet is the time of repose. Idly to rest now, were to be most unprofitable servants.

2. Nor is it enough to aim merely at our own enlargement. It is true that every opposer we gain to our pledges, weakens by that unit the array of the enemy, and adds a helper to our endeavors. Every rescue we effect is progress of the right sort, another redemption from the curse, and sends dismay to the hearts of those who live on the spoils of humanity. But our work is a more comprehensive one than this. Why are we banded together by such an elaborate compact? For what purpose this consolidated array? *Simply*, to stand closer around a tempted brother, and give him a warmer sympathy? This end may be worth the cost, but we mean more than this. Here we have a disciplined troop, inspired by one spirit, moving as with the impulse of one mind, ready, from its compactness, to fling the whole weight of its charge upon any given point. Each volunteer that joins us, each recruit we enlist, swells the ranks and adds to the momentum of our advance. All our drilling goes to perfect the tactics of these forces. But shall we be forever mustering and drilling and enlisting, and never march to battle? What expedition shall these forces, when equipped and disciplined, undertake?

3. We must go forth upon aggressive movements — where our whole strength will tell. Our work of recruiting we must not intermit, but our perfected array must see service. This discharging single guns from a distance is not going to end the war; we must come to close quarters and put our efficiency to the test of hot work, else is our boasted championship of the cause of temperance so much idle talk. And so only, I warn you, can we keep in our enclosure those who sought it to labor for temperance. And so only can we win to our enclosure, the old fast friends of the cause still without. They will not join us from mere love of good fellowship. They will be brought in only by the conviction that we possess superior facilities for doing the work they have at heart, and mean faithfully to em-

ploy them. And with many of these minds we have this very prejudice to combat, that we are mere holiday maskers, about child's play with our badges and gewgaws, and not earnest men about earnest work.

This point then is settled, that each Division of our Order has, in its own community, something to do over and above the spending an evening together weekly to enjoy each other's society and keep high ceremonials.

And now what shall be our task? what specific line of operations shall we attempt? I shall content myself with suggesting one direction only for our efforts. Not that it is the only one, nor perhaps the most important; but it is one the merits of which it is time temperance men had settled, and, I must remember, that your courtesy may have its limits.

The point then, one point upon which I would have our forces bear, in every community, is the traffic in ardent spirits. And I refer not now to political action, or restraints by law, though I am a believer in these, but to the efficacy of our personal and combined moral influence.

What position then is it competent for us to take in the premises? It is clear we cannot take ground against all manufacture of Alcohol in its various combinations, nor all dealing in it. It is of such high importance as a chemical agent, the universal solvent, indispensable in the arts and in many of its combinations as well as in its pure state so valuable for medical uses, that to proscribe entirely its manufacture and sale were to show a very intemperate and shortsighted zeal. Some must make it, and some must vend it. But it is competent for us to set our faces against the sale of it as a beverage, to mark if possible that dealing in it which sets it invitingly forth to tempt the excesses of ungoverned appetite, whether open or concealed, without pledges or against pledges, with the brand of public infamy. To make such vending illegal I consider a great triumph, but to make it infamous a greater. For one may evade or defy a law, and plume himself upon his dexterity or boldness, but to bear the weight of public con-

denunciation and scorn is another matter. This is our enterprise, to make the sale of ardent spirits as a beverage in each community, by high or low, rich or poor, a disgrace so withering that no man can long underlie it. I group in this remark all classes of venders without distinguishing, because however much the more respectable in standing may look down upon the baser and more notorious, they are in fact all of one craft, and the latter live on the respectability of those who better grace the traffic. There is no possible way of making the degraded keepers of drunkards' haunts feel their shame, while it is reputable for other men before their eyes to sell genteelly to fashionable customers. The only efficient arrest to the heady current is to lay the crushing weight of a public odium upon the whole business. To attempt less, is, if we succeed, to effect nothing. And the question is now, *how* shall we make our demonstration against this formidable array? I call it formidable, for I am aware how strongly intrenched it is in the midst of us — what sort of patronage in public and in private gives it countenance, and what unscrupulous allies would rally to its defence. But I am persuaded that this is the great battle to be fought in this cause, before any decisive victory is gained. And as to the mode of operation, I am as fully persuaded, that it is our duty as Sons of Temperance, and equally the duty of all temperance men, *to withdraw all patronage in trade from those who publicly or by stealth sell ardent spirits as a beverage.* I shall undertake to give my reasons for this conviction.

1. What then are these places of which we speak, and what their influence? With some of them, there are the unmistakable signs of lowest debauchery, with others an air of decency and high respectability. They are visited by very different classes of the community, though for the same object. Their influence in kind is the same, in degree somewhat varied. Let a philanthropic and thoughtful man pass by one of them, what are his reflections? How different from those which other objects of interest by the wayside fasten upon his mind.

He passes a school-house, and his thought is, here is a generation training in the elements of useful knowledge, laying broad and deep that basis of intelligence which, combined with virtue, is the only safe foundation for the character of the nation's sovereignty. The busy *scene within*, is pictured to his eye, as the drowsy hum steals out to his ear, or the music of a young voice leaps up, and he goes on his way with only pleasurable and hopeful thoughts. He passes a church of Christ, and as his eye measures the height of the spire pointing heavenward, his thought is, here is a house for training men to immortal destinies, here is published the inspired word, and God is worshipped. He thinks of the *scene within* when those courts are thronged, and hears in fancy the voice of prayer, and address, and sacred song. He goes on his way with no sadness. He passes the abodes of industry and thrift; the sturdy stroke of the sledge rings out to him, the harsh whisper of the plane is audible, the sound of the shears, the jar of many looms. He catches a glance of the *scene within*, and leaves a blessing only at each threshold. Not thus can he pass the doors upon which our regards are now fixed. With far other thoughts must he picture the *scene within*. There are none training there to serve and adorn the community; there are other voices there than those of high devotion; there are no products of skill there fashioning for human use or luxury. There is no health or wealth or hope there gathering to bless the age and race. Men enter in and come forth again, not with clearer eye and brain, with firmer step and nobler look, with better strength to toil and better reason to judge, with fair prospects for life's successes, and stronger claims to human confidence. There begins the descending way of ruin, there opens the fatal drainage of fortune, there are sown the seeds of early infirmity and disease, there a shadow falls upon the good name, there withers trustworthiness, there hope's promises are blighted, and the sacred treasures of household peace flung away like pearls cast before swine. These are the places of which we speak.

2. What is it now that sustains these establishments? I

have already said, that no blush of shame can be produced with the most infamous in the trade, while there are so many reputable partners in the traffic to lend them countenance. And what supports in their calling this higher class, whose respectability shields from utter disrepute all beneath them. One word answers the question — *patronage*, PATRONAGE. Not that only, or chiefly, which enters in to drain a glass or fill a cask, but the more indirect and unconscious patronage. Were the former all, upon which these tradesmen who have character to lose, could rely, they could not prosecute their occupation a day. The sort of countenance which is of most value to them is the presence and trade of those who have personally no connection with the evils of intemperance, are totally free from the vice of drinking, and bring their custom to these counters to serve their domestic necessities. So long as these families enter their doors they are unimpeachable. You cannot disgrace them if they can keep such company. Here are their living recommendations, their testimonials known and read of all. They need no advertisement; it must be safe to follow in such footsteps as those which daily cross their threshold. They can *afford* to do better by such customers than other dealers can; to offer inducements in the excellence and cheapness of their goods to continued patronage; nay, they can afford to give away their goods to such families for, the sake of the position their influence thus lent secures to them, while engaged in another sort of dealing with another set of customers that ought to cover them with reproach. The simple philosophy of the thing is this. These dealers wish to make money, and they wish to be respectable. They can make money by selling ardent spirits more than by the sale of any other article they can keep. But this deal of itself and alone is not quite respectable, and they must be respectable for they have families and they have consciences, and respectability is a great relief to conscience. Now they can secure both objects if they can induce men of a certain character to frequent their sales-rooms, and be by their presence their endorsers and referees, and

while they can point to such men, men that never drink, good temperance advocates, church members, day by day beneath their roof, and supplying their households from their shelves who will credit the tale that there is disgrace in the unholy trade they drive?

3. And now for the *remedy* — what shall it be? The evil peremptorily suggests it. It is this patronage of good men that keeps alive the mischief. Let these good men withhold their patronage, and you shall see something of the omnipotence of public sentiment. Let each friend of temperance, of light taxes, of good order and public morals, resolve that he will not help make rumselling respectable by giving his custom to those engaged in it, and a fatal blow is struck. You may judge of the certain efficacy of such a measure by anticipating the effect of the proposition only upon those it is designed to reach. As no movement could touch them in a more vital point, so none would probably be less welcome, or stir the bile so deeply. Let the membership of this Order, banded together in a covenant like ours, take the stand which I am advocating, and keep it with all possible consistency, and the act would tell upon that bad traffic like a scourge from Heaven. We should become an example to others, who would follow so bold a precedent, a rallying point for all true lovers of their kind in the midst of us, around which fresh forces would gather in ever increasing array, a terrible front of rebuke. Who does not believe, that if the *Christianity* and *morality* of our communities would adopt this simple policy of buying *nothing* of the men that put the glass to their neighbor's lips, attempt no persecution, avail themselves of no law even, but just let them alone, pass by their doors when out for purposes of trade, it were doing more toward cutting off the streams of the great evil, than all expedients beside? To know that the public eye marked this significant passing by, and took note that only spirit-bibbers entered those retreats, to understand that the respectability of principle if not of fashion kept the temperance side of the way, would be with these dealers an instrument of conviction which

they could not resist. The day that sees this experiment tried will see the opening of a new era in this reform. I believe every one who reflects upon the natural working of such a demonstration, will be satisfied that we have not overrated its influence; and if we hold such a power in our hands, where is our sincerity of profession, where our allegiance to principle and conscience, where our common humanity, if we can hesitate to employ it, and at once for so great a good. I seem to hear the chorus of benediction from the many ready to perish, that should be shouted over us as the agents of so glad a change. I read the unspeakable gratitude that should beam in the eye of trembling mothers and sorrowing wives, when such temptations are removed from the path of husbands and sons already leaning to their fall.

I do not forget that there will probably be with honest minds some scruples and difficulties in regard to the measure I have urged. I hope I am prepared to give these a candid consideration.

1. It will be said, perhaps, that this principle carried out would oblige us to suspend business intercourse with all whose sentiments, or practice on any subject, we cannot approve. That we must give the same testimony against profanity, infidelity, sabbath-breaking, and finally against everything that we regard as sinful. But this is a mistake. The principle does not extend to these cases. The difference is this. The trade I may give a profane man does not help him swear, does not put him in a position to swear more roundly, does not multiply the occasions of his swearing, or lend him an influence to be more and more abusive with his oaths. His swearing, or his infidelity, or his sabbath-breaking, is a thing independent of his business entirely. If I could shut his shop by withholding my patronage, I could not thus cure the evil; I could not in that way shut his mouth or make him a believer in Christianity. So that the principle which leads me to arrest if I can an injurious business, by detaching myself from all connection with it which sustains and encourages it, does not apply to the cases supposed.

2. Again, it will be questioned by some whether the influence now invoked, is the right sort of influence to employ in a moral reformation. It looks like starving men into orthodoxy; compelling a man to think right and act right, by taking away his bread. To this it may be answered that we touch nothing that is actually his; we lay not a finger upon his person or his acquisitions; we impose no physical restraint upon his freedom. The patronage which we withhold he has no claim to unless he be worthy of it, and in the disposition of it we have some freedom too. He cannot set up a demand that all purchasers should buy his goods. If any man can urge an obligation of this sort, it is rather that man who invites our patronage while conscientiously abstaining from a profitable but demoralizing traffic. And how shall we bring a moral influence to bear upon the minds we wish to reach? How shall we testify disapprobation and make the utterance impressive? We may protest ever so loudly, and of what avail is it all, while we still lend a countenance that magnifies and fortifies the wrong? How potent is that man's moral influence over a dealer to reform him, who stands all the while his surety with the public, holding him up with a hand of antagonism against the force of his traffic, to drag him down to deserved infamy? The remedy proposed is a moral remedy, the only efficient moral suasion. It has its chief force, not in its physical working, as reducing by so many dollars annually the profits of the establishment, but in its silent but pointed argument on the score of respectability. If these good men bought things at cost or below cost all the year round, their patronage were nearly as valuable to the dealer. It is not the amount of money they pay that settles the price of their influence, it is the respectability, the endorsement they lend. And when that influence is withheld it is almost exclusively the moral considerations which give weight to the act. So that this is a legitimate influence to employ, being, as we may say, in its whole force a moral influence.

3. But there is a practical difficulty in the way which will occur at once to practical men, and must not here be over-

looked. It will happen often that in the course of exchanges of products and of labor, a producer or an artisan, if he find a market for his products or his labor, *must* be brought into business intercourse with the class of dealers under notice, must take trade at their counters, must sell to them, or work for them, or accept orders upon them, and thus be obliged to open accounts with them and take their wares. The smith must shoe horses for these men, the baker must bake bread for them. The tailor must make coats for them, and the doctor pills, and must take their pay, if they have the business, from their shelves. I do not say now that these classes of artizans and professional men must forego this business, and give up so much of their dependence for a livelihood. I do not think this step is demanded of them, and for this reason. These men are not patrons of the dealers in question. They do not set out voluntarily having it at their option where to go, and freely and of choice bestow their custom upon these dealers. Their resorting to them is a matter of necessity, a step they take to collect a debt or be paid wages. Such negotiations have not the sort of protecting and comforting influence which we complain of and would arrest. These men are never pointed to, or relied upon by these dealers themselves, as sanctioning their questionable traffic, for they understand and they know well that others understand, that this sort of patronage is not a spontaneous tribute to their honor and honesty, but an arrangement of mere convenience, or of absolute necessity for the purpose of settling accounts. They know that these customers would not have come nigh them, but for the constraint of a commercial reason, and will abandon them as soon as this reason ceases to exist. The stand I am advocating, therefore, does not compromise these involuntary customers, or place them in a false position, or oblige them to sacrifice any portion of their lawful business. It may be unpleasant for them with their principles to have such connections; but there is an explanation to be given that excuses them, an explanation that precludes the other party from the possibility of making capital

out of the thing to bolster themselves up in their iniquity. It is of free, unconstrained, voluntary patronage that we speak; that which is at liberty to go where it will, make its selections, and offer its custom on grounds of confidence which satisfy itself. This is the patronage, and this only that does the mischief; and the measure for which we have argued is not liable, when understood, to the objection of being impracticable.

The proviso ought here however to be inserted, that to make it a mere matter of convenience, to give or withhold the patronage where one is free to do so, declining a longer walk, or swayed by a scruple about the quality of the article, or disturbed by the necessity of a brief delay,—is a mockery of consistency, betrays an utter absence of principle, argues a wantonness and levity in respect to moral obligations, that are destitute of all vestige of a conscience.

4. There is one difficulty more that may exist with some minds, which I will glance at, and then hasten to relieve your well-tryed patience. It is a doubt whether the men at whom we aim may not be considered as acting conscientiously and blindly, and therefore entitled to a corresponding lenity of treatment. What then are these cases of conscience? Do these men really believe their traffic to be beneficial and wholesome? Do they believe that it adds to the health, wealth and virtue of the community, that they contribute thus to the prevalence of good order, and promote the peace of families? Do they not know that when a young man enters their retreat, sage experience shakes its grey locks sadly over that bad omen, the eye of affection follows him tearfully, the agony of prayer goes after him? Are they ignorant that such a beginning, however graced by the generosity and pride of youth, is prophetic of an end of misery and shame? Are their eyes like their conscience hooded that they cannot see the wretched objects bloated, tattered and forsaken, that wander in their daily path, wrecks of humanity; and do they not know where they took leave of safety and hope? If we can suppose them to be in so deep a moral darkness, if this supposition does not insult their reason

and the full light of the age, it is high time that by some significant expression of public opinion, they should be better taught. If all the light that has blazed upon them, all the truth that has called to them, the soft motives of humanity that have uttered their appeal, have failed to touch their conscience, they need a more palpable influence, a sterner awaking; something that *shall* carry to them a late conviction of their guilt and folly. No, these men are not entitled to any special forbearance on the plea of conscience; the mantle of charity is wide, but too scanty for such a nakedness of avaricious inhumanity.

Who then will not take the stand I have urged. It is time to take it. The influences about our children demand it; the cause of humanity, of moral purity, of truth and God. I call upon you, my brethren, unitedly to take it and manfully to keep it. We have advantages for such action which other circles do not possess. We can move in concert, and sustain each other, and bring the power of an organization to bear upon this point. I call upon each lover of temperance and man to take this stand. Let us all have moral courage enough to face the whirlwind of opposition, and let it blow its fiercest blast. This victory won, the war is well nigh over. Our skirts at least shall be free from blood-guiltiness. No accusing finger of wretchedness or retribution can point to us as obstacles in the way of reform. So released, the chariot of human progress shall roll on for a mighty reach toward the goal to which prophecy and Providence ever turn the sight and hope of man.

My brethren, I have traversed thus hastily the range of inquiry proposed at the outset. If I have spoken plainly, I have spoken honestly I know, and from deep conviction. I believe I have urged only a high and solemn duty, your responsibility to which I may safely leave your consciences to settle.

Still let us labor on also in our accustomed ways of working. The voice of the long enslaved, the struggling captive, the bondman pining to be free calls to us for help. The voice of sorrowing household affections, a chorus of childhood and age, of

wives more than widowed, of children more than fatherless calls to us, if we have any gift of healing to save and restore. Our own vows have an utterance. They speak to us from Heaven's book, where they stand recorded. They bid us remember that God's ear was open when we spake our pledges, and God's eye watches in darkness and light their keeping. Stand firm in the strong hour of temptation; be true, be faithful. More than earthly interests are at stake. That awful Scripture remaineth, —no drunkard "shall inherit the kingdom of God."

And grudge not, ye wives and maidens the hours we borrow from the society of our homes for our weekly communion. It is to make other homes bright and glad; to diffuse comforts and smiles in other domestic circles; to restore to cheerless hearths the melodies of joy, thanksgiving and praise, that we leave our own awhile. And finally, let us attempt nothing without seeking a divine blessing, the patronage and favor of Heaven, the living energy of the gospel of salvation, the overturning power of mighty providences, and in the faith of old prophecy look and labor and pray for the promised redemption of man.