

who are tempted to begin. I would entreat them to consider how difficult and rare it is to recover into habits of sobriety after having reached a certain point. Let the beginner draw instruction in time. Let him take to himself the thought; arrest the beginnings; pluck out the habit whilst its roots are young and green; and shield himself with caution. Let him draw lessons from bad, as well as from good, examples. There was a nation of heathens, the ancient Spartans, who held this vice in such horror, that though they never drank to excess themselves they intoxicated their slaves; that they might show their children by example to what a condition drunkenness brings our nature. You, alas! have no occasion for such an expedient. In every street and on every road, men calling themselves Christians will read you this lesson: the land reels with drunkenness. Consider it well and take profit to yourselves. Turn over in your minds the anathemas of the Apostle and the woes of the Prophet until they inscribe themselves in your heart, and the fear of them becomes a portion of your being. Mark them written on the brow of the daunkard. Watch him in his career until you see them all accomplished. Write them over your door, inscribe them over your chimney-piece, in your chamber, on your table, in the bottom of every glass; utter them in your devotions; hear them in the sounds of every tavern as you pass; and read them on every sign board. Better you should pass your whole time in studying the woes of drunkenness, than spend your life in feeling them and your eternity in suffering for them.

Do not ask me, how you are to break yourselves of this degrading habit? The

general rule is very simple. Have a willing mind: shun the occasion: fly idleness. Fix for yourselves a measure in your friendly domestic meetings, beyond which you are never, whatever be the occasion, to exceed, and never see the inside of a tavern. Be fully assured, that you cannot go beyond your measure, however little, on one occasion, without going beyond it always. Consider in what places and with what persons you are most tempted, and avoid them. "Those that love the danger shall perish in it." Let no motive, no wish to appear hospitable, no cruel invitations, no pressings of seeming friendship induce you to forget the friendship which you owe yourself. Repeat your resolution each morning when you rise, and pray for strength to keep it. Examine how you have kept your engagement each evening when you go to rest. If you have failed once, be not discouraged: try again. Nothing delights the eye of heaven more than to see us wrestling manfully with our infirmities; rising courageously after our falls; drawing humility from our weaknesses, and caution and strength from our humiliation. Only he who gives up in despair is conquered. Renew your resolution; strengthen it with prayer; observe the occasion of your past fall and remove it. The last advice which I shall give you is one of great importance. Put yourself, with all obedience, under the guidance of a spiritual director. There is a sort of fascination about this vice which often renders the drunkard powerless for his own deliverance; temptation acts upon him like a charm, he requires the hand of another to free himself from her enchantment. Fly, then, to your pastor. The grace of God not be wanting. And let the counsel