

viting their friends to the entertainment, either in the idol's temple, or in their own houses. It appears that, as to the lawfulness of this practice, the Corinthians had requested the advice of the Apostle. In his answer he admits that an idol is nothing in the world, that it cannot change the nature of the meats offered to it, and that, in eating them, there was nothing sinful, considered in itself. But every one did not possess this knowledge. Some, who were not fully instructed in their Christian liberty, would eat this meat with some superstitious veneration for the idol; and their consciences would thus be defiled. The Apostle, therefore, warns the Corinthians that, if they used the liberty of eating meats which had been offered to idols, others, who were less fully instructed, would be emboldened, by their example, to do so also, with veneration of the idol. In this case they would wound the consciences of their weak brethren, and thus sin against Christ.—“Wherefore,” he says, “if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

It is evident, then, that when our example becomes the means of leading others into sin, it is improper to do that which is in itself lawful. But who does not see that this is the case as regards the practice of drinking. Has it not lead many to intemperance? Look around you in the world, and cast your eyes on some of the victims of intemperance. You will be at no loss for examples.—These, alas! are lamentably numerous—so numerous, that they who have never attempted to calculate the amount, would, if it could be stated to them, reject it as incredible. Were those persons born drunkards? Had they a natural appetite for intoxicating liquors? Has there not been a period in their history when they were sober men, and when they would have been offended, if you had even insinuated that they would become drunkards.—But they did not wholly renounce the liquid poison. They partook of a little of the intoxicating liquid. At first they had no particular relish for it, but, by frequent use, an appetite was produced. This, by degrees, became stronger and stronger; while their powers of resistance became less and less. The moderate drinker is like the vessel that approaches the destroying whirlpool. At first its influences are slightly felt. As she draws nigh, the