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TEMPERANCE IS THE MODERATE USE OF THINGS BENEFICIAL, AND ABSTINENCE FROM THINGS HURTFUL.

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Selected Articles.

History of the "Cogniac Club"

From the American Temperance Intelligencer

There are many living witnesses of the truth and authenticity of the following narrative. The place is near, the events recent; many of the individuals whose gloomy history is here narrated, are yet freshly remembered; may their fate prove a warning to others!

No. 1.

Mr. EDITOR,—I have thought with great pleasure of that feature of heaven intimated to us in the Scriptures, which will consist of whole families redeemed and presenting themselves before the Lamb, and constituting each a cluster of diamonds in his crown of glory, while each family will be a distinct corps in the army of the redeemed, "They go from strength to strength, each of them appeareth in Zion before God."

But there will be the awful contrast to all this in the families lost. They will go from stage to stage of depravity, and cluster will be joined to cluster as each shall fill up the measure of their iniquity, and go down to receive the wages of sin in the world of death. How dreadful it will be to these clusters of ruined souls, when they meet in the congregation of the damned, there to sin together, and sigh together, and weep together, and wail together, as a slow eternity shall be plodding by with its ages.

I have such a group in my eye, and with your leave will spread it out upon your pages, that young men and fathers may each be admonished to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life.

I tremble to enter upon the work, because it will hold me conversant with the retributions of heaven. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The annals of depravity, replete as they are, with the most direful scenes, record not even in their darkest pages a tale more interesting and lamentable than the one which I am now to relate. The passions of men unrestrained by education and religion are always unworthy of creatures made in the image of their Maker. But when vice has broken through all these salutary checks, and the passions of men are curbed only by the

fligacy, they then become worthy of demons. But when *Rum* and *Brandy* lend their depraving, withering influence, the wreck of mind and character which succeeds, finds a parallel no where in the vast creation of God. But to my story.

There was formed in a neighbouring state thirty or forty years since, a social club, that took to itself the name which stands at the head of this article. Owing to the Temperance Reformation, and other causes, it long since found a grave, but while it lived, it was the curse of families, and a fruitful source of the tears of broken hearted mothers and widowed wives, where the tender sensibilities of the softer sex had not been destroyed by *Rum*, the monster of the age.

I shall, in giving you the history, use no man's proper name, nor observe any order in the narration, by which any but the men themselves, if they still live, and some few who may have been very intimate with the scene, shall be able to identify them. If in being honest I should wound unnecessarily the good feelings of any man, I stop here to ask forgiveness, and still having asked that forgiveness, let no man think that the writer calculates to be afraid to do his duty in this age of Temperance. If men will act wickedly and then expect that their sin will not find them out, they act on the dark and morbid hypothesis that the truth of God must fail. If men suppose that they are doing deeds, or saying words that never will be known, they should not forget the assurances of heaven, that a bird of the air shall carry the news, and that which hath wings shall tell it.

Besides, iniquity usually stereotypes itself. It is said, I believe, of a section of the family of Israel, "His sin is written with a point of a diamond in a rock." If ever this was true, it would seem that it must have been true in the case of the Cogniac Club. The amount of talent, and of wealth, and education and character that were expended and lost in that Club almost surpasses belief. Indeed, while I write the history, my highest fear is, that I shall sometimes suppress the truth, because the whole truth would not be believed.

The Club in its early history is believed to have been somewhat political, but it ac-

male community, whatever might be their views in politics.

Rum was their standard in every thing. He that would drink the largest quantity of Cogniac was the finest fellow; he that could best pitch the Bacchanalian song was their favorite, and he that could blaspheme most impiously, wore in their depraved estimation, the laurels of the bravo.

It was not from families depressed with poverty or sunk in vice that came the members of the Club, but from the most wealthy, honoured and respectable of the region, a circumstance which in that dark period of our history lent an additional incentive (where surely none was needed) to a vice which had almost driven forever away the weeping and lovely form of virtue.

I will now give you a short account of each of the members of the Cogniac Club.

A—, was one of the elder sons of a very reputable family. An education was lavished upon him, and he followed the profession of the law. His talents were more than ordinary, and he could with perfect ease have risen and shone. He had a noble chance to be elevated, and useful, and happy; had a good farm, a good name, a good business, a lucrative office, and what was better than all, a noble wife to throw around his character her protecting influence. But the Club sunk him down from his elevated station into a bar-room storyteller, lost him his office and his character, his mind, and his business, and brought him early to a drunkard's grave. Perhaps, never was a wife more faithful, or bore a heavier burden while she nursed him and watched him, a superannuated baby in quite early life. The early loss of his mind prevented the entire squandering of his estate. He had enough to the last of *this world's good*, and to spare, but was sadly provided for, for the future. He lived for many years a sour and unhappy man, and probably had no warning of his end, till he appeared before the Judge of the quick and the dead.

B—, a near relative of A—, was once a man of talents, and received a high share of respect. His business was formerly very prosperous. He has a pious wife and a fine family, and might live yet a score of years upon his little farm, had not the