

wiping the tear from the eye of the affectionate wife, and of causing the helpless family of the well-nigh ruined drunkard to exchange misery for joy, turbulence for peace, and poverty for comparative wealth.

7. A seventh advantage of Templarism is, that it exercises a friendly—nay, more, a brotherly—oversight over the drunkard, who has been snatched as a brand from the burning. It was urged against the “old society” that, while it gathered names almost by hundreds to the pledge, it made little or no provision to watch over its members, either to prevent the breaking of the pledge or to reclaim those who had wandered. But British Templarism, by systematic organization and regular meetings, keeps a constant guard over its members, and holds out an ever-sympathizing hand to invite the tempted and straying back to the fold of sobriety. A moment’s reflection will convince any reasonable mind that to get a drunkard to sign the pledge is not all that is necessary; care must be taken lest he backslide. Now, to illustrate my meaning; and before I begin at my simile, let me say, you need not fear, I am not going into sectarianism. But to the simile: The beautiful appellation which the Redeemer-Divine gave to his ministers was “fishers of men.” Well, then, I ask what is their business? To catch men. Very well. For what are church organizations? I answer, To hold the men who have been caught. Precisely so. The founders of these organizations, well knowing that men cannot stand alone—that they need company—that the social principle of our nature must be carried out—that they must be banded together in order to help each other in their work, and to save each other from falling and returning to former ways. So, brother Templars, is it with us. We know how difficult—nay, I had almost said impossible—for the poor drunkard, who has had his host of old brother sots, to forsake his long-frequented tavern—to forsake his deep-seated habits and customs, that have now become almost second nature; we know how hard it is for such a man to simply sign the pledge, and then stand alone, without one to take him by the hand, or to give him a word of warning, or a counsel of advice, or an exhortation of encouragement. We well know how easy, in such a case, is the return to former old companions and to former habits of drinking, until new associates are formed and new habits are established. There has not only been the habit of drinking at certain times, but in certain places with certain accompaniments. There has been the addition of society, music, dancing, novel-reading, and perhaps theatrical performances, cards, checkers, or games of some kind. And the new convert to Teetotalism finds a vacuum, a void which it becomes necessary to fill up. Lest those hours that were formerly spent in drunken glee in the tavern should hang heavy upon him, and he should again sigh for the cup of poison with all its dangerous accompaniments. Now, it is precisely in the interval between the forsaking of old companions, old taverns, and old habits, that “Templarism” is most needed. We see the old toper look dull, gloomy, and melancholy, and, like Lot’s wife, as it were, taking a look back; but at that moment we step up, as the angel did to Lot, take the old toper by the hand, and say, We will fill up this void—come to our friendly Lodge—we will show you a real loving, happy, singing band of brothers and sisters, every one of whom by mystic chain will grasp you by the hand. Here, then, is something to fill the place in your affections that was formerly filled by the noisy, swearing, gorm-grinding host of old sots who surrounded you. Within the hallowed enclosure of our Lodge, you shall hear the voice of singing—