

with complacency and self-gratulation on this respectable meeting, and exclaim "here am I and the children thou hast given me!" Their success is no longer a matter of speculation, nor their society a subject of irony; the fruition of their most sanguine hopes is being realised.

I must now, as this assembly is a mixed one, say something of the nature of the Institution, as there may be those present who, if they thoroughly understood its merits, would deem themselves highly privileged to have their names enrolled in our books. Some, and I was once of the number, think that, because we have adopted a scriptural designation, so we hold peculiar doctrinal tenets. To such I would say that, so far is this from being the case we do not even admit religious discussion within these walls; and the only credentials which we demand is a sound constitution of body, and a good moral character. Our devotional exercise, as a Tent, simply consists of an invocation for a divine blessing, and the chaunting of a few hymns appropriate to our circumstances. Any good Christian might conscientiously join in either. Let no one therefore be deterred from joining us from religious scruples; we are engaged in the cause of humanity, of virtue, against vice; and we ask no man who will join us whether he be Jew or Gentile. To explain away any misgiving on this subject, and to account for our adopting this designation, I would refer to the 35th chapter of the book of Jeremiah. I remember, Sir, when a similar misapprehension obtained respecting the Odd Fellows; their designation seemed to indicate celibacy,—a very odd, unnatural thing truly, and many good and pious persons (a voice, "old maids,") no, Sir, not old maids, but good and pious matrons, who feared that some of their fair daughters might attain to that distinction, abominated the very name, "odd," and thought of them as a set of bachelors, who had not a heart to bestow upon the loveliest of Eve's lovely family, and who would most assuredly and most justly be found, one of these mornings, dead of frozen feet, for want of help-mates to darn their stockings! (Cheers.) But it is now, Sir, pretty generally understood, that the Odd Fellows are not such an unnatural set of hybrids after all; that the fair sex have no small interest in their lucubrations, and that they form an excellent charitable society, from which many a desolate and death-stricken hearth has derived consolation and comfort. The Rechabites are also a Beneficial as well as a Benevolent Society, with specific funds to meet the various contingencies and casualties, to which its members are exposed in their journey through life. But, Sir, we have a far nobler and extended aim and object than this, we aim not only at the promotion of earthly benefits; but, we aspire to the glorious distinction of winning souls from vice to virtue. The Institution of Odd Fellows excellent as it is, is not as comprehensive as ours, and it is open to the serious objection, that it associates on the same bonds and on the same terms, the immoral, vicious and incontinent, with the virtuous, temperate, and producing; compelling, as it were, the temperate, whose habits are conducive to health, longevity and immunity from accidents, to create a fund to meet the various casualties which crowd the path of the drunkard, in his often brief and distempered career. From this imputation Rechabism is most happily free; no man of ascertained evil habits is admitted until he has pledged himself to reform; or, if admitted, can be retained in our ranks, so that each brother has a fair and equal title to the relief which we provide against the various contingencies of life, accidents, disease and death.

Another feature in our constitution and practice, and one which ought to recommend us to favourable consideration, is the manner in which the brother treats the miserable victims of intemperance. Go into the broad walks of this world's society, and see how the wretched drunkard is treated there. Where are now the friends that clubbed so closely with him in the earlier stages of his unfortunate

career, and who mayhap, first lifted the poisoned cup to his inexperienced lips? Where I ask are these dear friends now? Echo answers, *where?* Those of them who have still managed to keep on the outer edges of the dread vortex in which he has been engulfed, pass him on the street as of inferior nature, scarcely or not at all deigning the slightest nod of recognition as they mutter to themselves with up-lifted head and supercilious *huteur*, "go bye I am holier than thou!" What now has become of the bland smile, the welcome salutation and the tight grasp which erst characterised their greetings? Alas! where is it? The hands that often pressed the damning cup to the resisting lips of the doomed one, will not now be lifted up to aid him in the hour of the last extremity, or to pour a solitary drop of water on the parched tongue, to quench the fire that is consuming his vitals, and which they were the first to kindle. Yes, the individuals who freely owned him as a congenial spirit, can now cherish no better feeling for him than scorn and derision. But do the Rechabites thus resign to utter destruction the unfortunate inebriate? Not at all. We go into the lanes and alleys and not only invite but press away from the haunts of infamy their most helpless victims; we sustain their tottering footsteps; we entreat and encourage them, with the tenderness of brothers to resign their evil habits, and when we have persuaded them to do so, we bid them welcome to the Tents of Rechab, where we make glad with them as with a child who was "dead and is alive again, who was lost and is found." Let the moderate drinkers, who form the press gang, so to speak of Intemperance, reflect upon this; and, instead of casting out of the pale of society the unfortunate drunkard, whom they have themselves helped to make such, let them imitate our example; or, better still, become of us, and endeavour to reclaim the lost ones to whose ruin they may have contributed by their example. Sir, it is not my intention now to debate upon the evil tendencies of intemperance in general, or to exhibit an appalling array of figures indicating its desolating statistics, I had expected others to be present better able and better prepared to occupy this ground. Indeed I do not know that the frequency with which these details are presented to our imaginations, may not have the effect of rendering our feelings callous and less sensible to their enormity. The very vastness of the moral and physical devastation, which follows in the train of intemperance, seem to overwhelm our perceptions. We contemplate the courage of a Sulley or Beresina, or a whole campaign of international butchery, with a degree of calm astonishment instead of horror, whilst our souls sicken and sink at the recital of a single murder. In the same manner if we analyse some single glaring drunken career which has come within our ken, we shall find enough in it to make the blood curdle in our veins, and to make us exclaim, "*from such a fate good Lord deliver us!*" Sir, occupying the position you do, you cannot fail but regard this occasion as one not only of exciting interest, and innocent hilarity, but also of deep and solemn importance,—pregnant with responsibility, not only to the Rechabites as entertainers, but also, and perhaps in a more personal sense, to those who are here in the quality of guests, in as much as it affords to every one, not already of the number, an auspicious opportunity of joining the Cold water Army, and for ever abjuring the use of intoxicating drinks. And what, young men, what in the name of high heaven, is there to deter you from seizing this admirable opportunity? What hinders you from raising one universal shout of adherence to the pledge, and exclaiming, like the Rechabite of old, we will drink no more wine, neither we nor our children for ever? And young ladies, permit me to address a few words to you, let me appeal to you and invoke your assistance in this holy cause. Your influence with the ruder sex is confessedly great, and it ought to be so. O, do exert that