

of stomach, essential to cheerfulness and muscular vigor, entirely above the power of the regular sustenance of nature to sustain, and creates a vacuum, which nothing can fill, but the destructive power which made it—and when protracted use has made the difference great, between the natural and this artificial tone, and habit has made it a second nature, the man is a drunkard, and, in ninety-nine instances in a hundred, is irretrievably undone. Whether his tongue falter, or his feet fail him or not, he will die of intemperance. By whatever name his disease may be called, it will be one of the legions which lie in wait about the path of intemperance, and which abused Heaven employs to execute wrath upon the guilty.

But of all the ways to hell, which the feet of deluded mortals tread, that of the intemperate is the most dreary and terrific. The demand for artificial stimulus to supply the deficiencies of healthful aliment, is like the rage of thirst, and the ravenous demand of famine. It is famine: for the artificial excitement has become as essential now to strength and cheerfulness, as simple nutrition once was. But nature, taught by habit to require what once she did not need demands gratification now with a decision inexorable as death, and to most men as irresistible. The denial is a living death. The stomach, the head, the heart, and arteries, and veins, and every muscle, and every nerve, feel the exhaustion, and the restless, unutterable wretchedness which puts out the light of life, and curtains the heavens, and carpets the earth with sackcloth. All these varieties of sinking nature, call upon the wretched man with trumpet tongue, to dispel this darkness, and raise the ebbing tide of life, by the application of the cause which produced these woes, and after a momentary alleviation will produce them again with deeper terrors, and more urgent importunity; for the repetition, at each time renders the darkness deeper, and the torments of self-denial more irresistible and intolerable.

At length, the excitability of nature flags, and stimulants of higher power, and in greater quantities, are required to rouse the impaired energies of life, until at length the whole process of dilatory murder, and worse than purgatorial suffering, having been passed over, the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken, the wheel at the cistern stops, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it.

These sufferings, however, of animal nature, are not to be compared with the moral agonies which convulse the soul. It is an immortal being who sins, and suffers; and as his earthly house dissolves, he is approaching the judgement seat, in anticipation of a miserable eternity. He feels his captivity and in anguish of spirit clanks his chains and cries for help. Conscience thunders, remorse goads, and as the gulf opens before him, he recoils and trembles, and weeps, and prays, and resolves, and promises, and reforms, and "seeks it yet again,"—again resolves, and weeps, and prays, "seeks it yet again!" Wretched man, he has placed himself in the hands of a giant, who never pities, and never relaxes his iron gripe. He may struggle, but he is in chains. He may cry for release, but it comes not, and lost! may be inscribed upon the door posts of his dwelling.

In the mortal time these paroxysms of his dying mortal nature delude, and a fearful apathy, the harbinger of spiritual death, comes on. His resolution fails, and his mental energy, and his vigorous enterprise, and nervous irritation and depression ensue. The social affections lose their fullness and tenderness, and conscience loses its power, and the heart its sensibility, until all that was once lovely and of good report, retires and leaves the wretch abandoned to the appetites of a ruined animal. In this deplorable condition, reputation expires, business falters and becomes perplexed, and temptations to drink multiply as inclination to do so increases, and the power of resistance declines. And now the vortex roars, and the struggling victim buffets the fiery wave with feeble stroke, and warning supplication, until despair flashes upon his soul, and with an outcry that pierces the heavens, he ceases to strive, and disappears.

A sin so terrific should be detected in its origin and strangled in the cradle; but ordinarily, instead of this, the habit is fixed, and the hope of reformation is gone, before the subject has the least suspicion of danger. It is of vast importance therefore,

that the various occasions of intemperance should be clearly described, that those whose condition is not irretrievable, may perceive their danger, and escape; and that all who are free, may be warned off from those places of temptation and ruin. For the benefit of the young, especially, I propose to lay down a map of the way to destruction, and to rear a monument of warning upon every spot where a wayfaring man has been ensnared and destroyed.

The first occasion of intemperance which I shall mention, is found in the free and frequent use of ardent spirits in the family, as an incentive to appetite, an alleviation of lassitude, or an excitement to cheerfulness. In these reiterated indulgences, children are allowed to partake, and the tender organs of their stomachs are early perverted, and predisposed to habits of intemperance. No family, it is believed, accustomed to the daily use of ardent spirits, ever failed to plant the seeds of that dreadful disease, which sooner or later produced a harvest of woe. The material of so much temptation and mischief, ought not to be allowed a place in the family, except only as a medicine, and even then it would be safer in the hands of the apothecary, to be sent for like other medicine, when prescribed.

Ardent spirits, given as a matter of hospitality, is not unfrequently the occasion of intemperance. In this case the temptation is a stated inmate of the family. The utensils are present, and the occasions for their use are not unfrequent. And when there is no guest, the sight of the liquor, the state of the health, or even lassitude of spirits, may indicate the propriety of the "prudent use," until the prudent use becomes, by repetition, habitual use—and habitual use becomes irremediable intemperance. In this manner, doubtless, has many a father, and mother, and son, and daughter, been ruined forever.

Of the guests, also, who partake in this family hospitality, the number is not small, who become ensnared; especially among those whose profession calls them, to visit families often and many the same day. Instead of being regarded, therefore, as an act of hospitality, and a token of friendship, to invite our friends to drink, it ought to be regarded as an act of incivility, to place ourselves and them in circumstances of such high temptation.

Days of public convocation are extensively the occasions of excess which eventuate in intemperance. The means and temptations are ostentatiously multiplied, and multitudes go forth prepared and resolved to yield to temptation, while example and exhilarated feeling secure the ample fulfilment of their purpose. But when the habit is once acquired of drinking even "prudently," as it will be called, on all the days of public convocation which occur in a year, a desire will be soon formed of drinking at other times, until the healthful appetite of nature is superseded by the artificial thirst produced by ardent spirits.

Evening resorts for conversation, enlivened by the cheering bowl, have proved fatal to thousands. Though nothing shall be boisterous, and all shall seem only the "feast of reason, and the flow of soul," yet at the latter end it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder: many a wretched man has shaken his chains and cried out in the anguish of his spirit, oh! that accursed resort of social drinking; there my hands were bound and my feet put in fetters; there I went a freeman and became a slave, a temperate man, and became a drunkard.

In the same class of high temptation are to be ranked all convivial associations for the purpose of drinking, with or without gambling, and late hours. There is nothing which young men of spirit fearless, than the exhilaration of drinking on such occasion; nor any thing which they are less able to resist, than the charge of cowardice when challenged to drink. But there is no one form of temptation before which more young men of promise have fallen into irretrievable ruin. The connection between such beginning and a fatal end is so manifest, and the presumptuous daring of Heaven is so great, that God in his righteous displeasure is accustomed to withdraw his protection and abandon the sinner to his own way.

Feeble health and mental depression are to be numbered among the occasions of intemperance. The vital spring, and muscular debility, and mental darkness, are for a short time alleviated by the application of stimulants. But the cause of this momentary alleviation is applied and repeated, un-

til the habit of excessive drinking is formed and has become irresistible.

Medical prescriptions have no doubt contributed to increase the number of the intemperate. Ardent spirits, administered in the form of bitters, or as the medium of other medicine, have let in the destroyer; and while the patient was seeking health at the hand of the physician, he was dealing out debility and death.

The distillation of ardent spirits fails not to raise up around the establishment a generation of drunkards. The cheapness of the article, and the ease with which families can provide themselves with large quantities, the product of their own labor, eventuate in frequent drinking, and wide spread intemperance.

The vending of ardent spirits, in places licensed or unlicensed, is a tremendous evil. Here, those who have to stated employment loiter away the day for a few potatoes of rum, and here those who have finished the toils of the day meet to spend a vacant hour; none content to be lookers on: all drink and none for any length of time drink temperately. Here too the children of a neighborhood, drawn in by enticements, associate for social drinking, and the exhibition of courage and premature manhood. And here the iron hand of the monster is fastened upon them, at a period when they ought not to have been beyond the reach of maternal observation.

The continued habit of dealing out ardent spirits, in various forms and mixtures, leads also to frequent tasting, and tasting to drinking, and drinking to tipping, and tipping to drunkenness.

A resort to ardent spirits as an alleviation of trouble, results often in habits of confirmed intemperance. The loss of friends, perplexities of business, or the wreck of property, bring upon the spirits the distractions of care and the pressure of sorrow; and, instead of casting their cares upon the Lord, they resort to the exhilarating draught, but, before, the occasion for it has ceased, the remedy itself has become a misery more intolerable than the disease. Before, the woes were temporary; now, they have multiplied and have become eternal.

Ardent spirits employed to invigorate the intellect, or restore exhausted nature under severe study, is often a fatal experiment. Mighty men have been cast down in this manner never to rise. The quickened circulation does for a time invigorate intellect and restore exhausted nature. But for the adventitious energy imparted, it exhausts the native energy of the soul, and induces that faintness of heart, and flagging of the spirits, which cry incessantly, "give, give," and never, but with expiring breath, say, it is enough.

The use of ardent spirits, employed as an auxiliary to labor, is among the most fatal, because the most common and least suspected, causes of intemperance. It is justified as innocent, it is insisted on as necessary: but no fact is more completely established by experience than that it is utterly useless, and ultimately injurious, beside all the fearful evils of habitual intemperance, to which it so often leads. *There is no nutrition in ardent spirit. All that it does, is, to concentrate the strength of the system for the time, beyond its capacity for regular exertion.* It is borrowing strength for an occasion, which will be needed for futurity, without any provision for payment, and with the certainty of ultimate bankruptcy.

The early settlers of New-England endured more hardship, and performed more labor, and carried through life more health and vigor, than appertains to the existing generations of laboring men. And they did it without the use of ardent spirits.

Let two men, of equal age and firmness of constitution, labor together through the summer, the one with and the other without the excitement of ardent spirits, and the latter will come out at the end with unimpaired vigor, while the other will be comparatively exhausted. Ships navigated as some now are without the habitual use of ardent spirits—and manufacturing establishments carried on without—and extended agricultural operations—all move on with better industry, more peace, more health, and a better income to the employers and the employed. The workmen are cheerful and vigorous, friendly and industrious, and their families are thrifty, well fed, well clothed and instructed; and instead of distress and poverty, and disappointment and contention—they are cheered with the full flow