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CONNECTION BETWEEN TEMPERANCE AND RELIGION.

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In the remarks which I may be permitted to make on the present occasion, I shall endeavor to exhibit the connection between temperance and religion. My object is not to prove that christianity requires and produces temperance; nor is it to attempt to show that temperance is the same thing or will answer the same purposes as religion; but that the friends of temperance and religion should make common cause in the promotion of this object, and that there should be no alienation or discord between them. I propose

1st. To inquire into the causes which tend in any manner to produce a separation between the friends of temperance and the friends of religion; and

2d. To consider the reasons why they should be united in the temperance cause.

Religion is the patron of every virtue, and calls to its aid every pure and generous feeling in the bosom of man. There is nothing large, liberal, generous, free, and independent in the human soul which religion is not designed to promote, and of which it does not become the patron and friend. If there is ever an apparent separation between religion and those things; or if religion ever seems to array itself against them, or to look on them with coldness or indifference, it is where its nature is perverted or misunderstood, or where narrow-minded bigotry has usurped the place of the large-hearted and generous principles of the New Testament. Something of this kind *may* sometimes exist by the want of a proper spirit among the professed friends of religion; and it is possible, that the friends of what may be generous, liberal, and valuable in a community *may* mistake the nature of christianity, and may cherish feelings towards it and towards the church, alike injurious to the cause of religion and to the ultimate success of the cause which they have at heart. Our inquiry relates now to the question whether any of these things are operating in reference to the great and noble cause of temperance; and the first object which I have in view is to suggest some causes which *may* have had this effect. The question is whether there are any causes at work in the community to make the friends of the temperance reformation alienated in any degree from the christian church, or leading any of the professed friends of Christ to be alienated from the temperance cause. I shall state some reasons which may have a tendency to such an effect, leaving it for others to judge how far that effect may have in fact been produced.

They are the following:

1. The state of things in the christian church, which prevented it from coming up cordially and harmoniously to the temperance reformation. I refer to the fact that when that reformation commenced there were many in the christian churches engaged in the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks; that a large amount of capital was invested in the business; that the members of the churches extensively were indulging in habits quite at variance with what is now regarded as the proper rules of temperance; and that to a great extent the ministers of the gospel were indulging in those habits, and partook of the common feeling. The prevalent feeling was, that the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits was as legitimate and as honest as any other form of manufacture or merchandize, and that the custom of moderate drinking was not inimical to the welfare of man, and was connec-

ted with just views of generous hospitality. The consequences of such a state of things were inevitable, and were such as could have been easily anticipated. The churches came up slow to the work. It was a work not of a day, but of time, to change the usages of society, and to convince men that what had been practiced constantly without any doubt of its propriety, was wrong. It was no easy matter to withdraw capital from a lucrative business, or to convince men that an employment was morally wrong in which they had been trained, and which had been followed without suspicion of impropriety by their fathers. It was not found easy for the ministers of the gospel to speak out on the subject in clear and unambiguous language; and when it was done, it was often attended with alienation and a removal from their charges. Changes in society are not soon made; and reformation is always especially difficult when that which is to be corrected and removed has a connection with religion. Evils are always ramified in society and interlocked with each other, and often interlocked with good. Sin winds its way along by many a serpentine and subterranean passage into the church, and entwines its roots around the altar, and assumes new vigor of growth, and a kind of sacredness by its connection there. It was so with the cause of intemperance in the community, and the consequences to which I now refer of this state of things could not be well avoided. One was the necessity of forming an organization *out* of the church to do what should have been done *in it*; to get up an independent society, having for its object not only to remove the evil, but also the design of influencing the ministers and members of the church to do what they would not otherwise do; of spurring on its lagging ministers by reproaches, and scourging the church into her duty by an indignant public sentiment. The other consequence was in like manner inevitable from the relation which these two organizations held to each other. It was that of producing to some extent alienation. The friends of temperance were in danger of being harsh and severe in their denunciations of members and deacons, and ministers of the church; and many a minister of the gospel, and many a church member who was engaged in the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks, felt sore and chafed as the temperance societies went on one year after another demonstrating, with the utmost coolness, and with array of argument which nothing could withstand, and backed by the concurrent voice of physicians, and by an appeal to courts and almshouses, that ardent spirit was needless; was injurious to the morals, the bodies and the souls of men; was the source of nine-tenths of our pauperism, and three-fourths of crimes; and that as a consequence the whole business of the traffic was immoral and ought to be abandoned.

2. The customs still practised in the church, and the opinions advocated by some of the friends of religion, have in like manner tended to alienate the friends of temperance. After all the advances which have been made in the cause, it cannot be denied that sentiments are sometimes advanced, and that practices are continued in some portions of the church, which are fitted greatly to try the feelings of the friends of temperance. There are not a few, it is undeniable, among the ministers of the gospel and the members of the churches, who do not come up as fully and heartily to the work as the friends of temperance desire or think to be proper. There are not a few who are reluctant to sign the pledge; there are those who continue the traffic in ardent spirits; there are those who strenuously advocate the *right* to drink wine, and occasionally some distinguished minister of the gospel, or professor in a college or seminary comes forth with a learned and labored argument to prove that its use is sanctioned by the Bible, and to array himself against what most of the friends of temperance re-