

temptation inflict a wound on your character that may take years of watchfulness to cicatrize? May you not, at some unguarded moment, be so overcome as to leave a blot on your life, which tears of bitterness may vainly attempt to obliterate?

Fourth,—Suppose it were true that you may use liquors as you now do without injury, and you had a perfect confidence that you never will hurt yourself, let it still be inquired, may you not hurt another, if not yourself? You are so linked with your fellow-creatures as to make it inconsistent with your condition as a man, and much more as a Christian, to say as Cain, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” It is impossible to say what may be the result of your present course upon others, however moderate you may deem it. If you very seldom taste, it is probable that, as you have no particular inclination for intoxicating drinks, you would not go and drink by yourself: this would betray a strong desire for the intoxicating cup. When you do take a little, it is usually because you are in circumstances that lead you to partake; you are treated by a friend, or you treat him; or you are making some bargain, or transacting some business, or otherwise led into company. Now, although you may think that you take nothing to hurt *yourself*, may you not hurt your *friend*? May you not countenance *him* in the use of the cup?—may you not beget or awaken a depraved appetite in him? And though you were possessed of moral courage and strength of principle always merely to taste and to leave off before you have sustained any injury, as you may suppose, yet your countenance and example may tell most injuriously on your acquaintance or companion.

Are you a parent? Though you do not hurt yourself, may you not hurt one of your dear children? Oh! how many have been ruined in time and eternity by the intoxicating cup, which, when children, they began to sip beneath the parental roof.

Are you a husband? May you not injure your wife? Or a wife? may you not injure your husband? Are you a master? May you not hurt your servants? Are you a man of wealth, and hospitable? May not your hospitality prove a curse? Are you a minister of Jesus Christ, a magistrate, or a physician? May not your example in this respect be awfully ruinous to some? From the highest official stations, down to the obscurest private conditions, there is an influence concomitant with the use of intoxicating drinks, moderate though the use may be, that may tell with fearful injury on others, although those whose example was an abettor of the evil, may partially escape themselves. The fact of the sociality connected with drinking should lead you to consider the influence not merely on yourself, but also on others.