

of Bath Chambers

THE OHIO ORGAN, OF THE TEMPERANCE REFORM.

ETERNAL HOSTILITY TO THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

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Address

From the World's Temperance Convention, held in New York, September, 1853, to the Governments of the Earth.

The sacredness of our cause, the great interests involved in its issues, and the earnest attention which it is exciting in the public mind, prompt us to address you. Assembled in Convention to give new stimulus to the Temperance Reformation, and to kindle with fresh ardor its friends in this community, we desire to reach you by the force of our opinions, and secure your earnest co-operation in the noblest and most urgent philanthropic enterprise of modern times.

God, in his providence, has placed in our hands an instrument the most effective ever wielded against the monster, Intemperance. All former measures we may regard as so many voices crying in the wilderness of this mighty evil, prepare ye the way for a prohibitory law. Moral efforts, and the diffusion of information in regard to the extent and enormity of the evils of the rum traffic, were indispensable to create the power to secure and sustain this legal enactment. And, as in the history of the past, we have seen that the mightiest reformations are often brought to a successful triumph by the simplest means, so in this, in a season of darkness and discouragement, we have beheld one arise, before unknown to fame, who, by securing the passage of a simple law, has in his

vice, rolled back the swelling tide of temptation, restored to wretched homes peace and happiness, taken the curse from a father's lips, and the fiend-like spirit from a husband's breast, and demonstrated to the world what can be done by the force of public opinion embodied in law. We make no extravagant utterance when we say that what Newton was to science—what Fulton was to progress—what Washington was to true liberty—Neal Dow is to the Temperance Reformation. The work which he has wrought has already entered as an element into the civilization of the nineteenth century, and will advance with the progress of that civilization in all lands.

Archimedes said, "Give me a spot upon which to rest my lever, and I will move the world." In a prohibitory law we have the fulcrum, and all that we wait for in this country and in Europe, is the lever of public opinion with which to move the world from the darkness, and wretchedness, and carnage of the chief of vices, and lift it into the sunlight and purity of Temperance. And we are confident of the ultimate success, because the God of virtue, purity and religion is with us. The conflict with adverse powers may be protracted and severe. Our foes may be numerous—may be entrenched in a thousand citadels—may be sustained by a vast multitude who are under the dominion of appetite; yet in the movements of Divine Providence we hear the trumpet's blast calling the Temperance hosts to a quicker march, and thrilling them with new zeal to assail the strongholds of the enemy.

In seeking your co-operation, we are impelled by the enormity and aggravated character of the evil which we are laboring to suppress. Words lose their force when we attempt to describe it; language breaks down under the weight of the sufferings and crimes which it occasions. Images, epithets, the most comprehensive and intense utterances, fail to set forth the evil in its true light. Under statistical reports there are living forms of degradation and sorrow, which, should they appear before us, would fill the mind with horror. Even the dealer in

alcoholic drinks could not view his own work, if fully revealed to him, without staggering. His countenance would be blanched with the paleness of a corpse—his heart would beat with fearful rapidity—with trembling limbs and quivering lips he would plead to be released from the view even at the price of his avarice.

All must allow that so far as the evil has powers it takes away a man's health, and leaves him diseased; takes away his human feelings, and leaves him a wild beast; takes away his religion, and makes him a scoffing atheist; takes away his manhood, and leaves him a degraded outcast. It robs, by its tempting power, the industrious of their hard earnings; it burdens cities and nations with enormous taxation; it produces every crime in the catalogue of human wickedness; it swamps every virtue, every tender tie and noble feeling of the human heart. All the commandments in the Decalogue and precepts in the Bible, are swallowed up in this great maelstrom of vice. It is more destructive to human life than war, famine, pestilence and fire combined. It sends its victims to the grave in far greater numbers than the legions of Cæsar ever fell upon the battle field, or the armies of Napoleon were ever sacrificed to his cruel ambition. At this moment we are appalled by the ravages of the yellow fever, and by the frequent railroad and steamboat disasters; yet all these are of but little account compared

with the ravages of this terrible vice. It would require six hundred Norwalk disasters every year to equal the number of deaths annually produced by the rum-traffic. The yellow fever is confined to certain cities and localities. But this plague spreads over Christendom. There is scarcely a town, village or family, that has not furnished its victims. Its funeral processions are constantly moving, and at this hour thirty thousand of the citizens of the United States are in a course of preparation to be offered up as sacrifices to this cruel Moloch during the coming year.

We appeal to those who occupy the seat of authority throughout the civilized world, and ask how long should so gigantic an evil be permitted to curse society? How long must the wailings of orphans and the agonizing cries of widows be heard in every city, and the dearest interests of humanity be sacrificed to a burning avarice? How long must this monster be retained in the midst of the light, intelligence and virtue of this nineteenth century? Is it not time that, instead of man, God's image, lying in the gutter, that rum should take its turn to lie there? Is it not time, while we are devising means in other departments to protect and prolong human life, that efforts be made to clear our skies from the storm-clouds of this calamity, and avert the lightning-flashes from the thousands of homes that are liable to be struck?

The provisions of the law to which your attention is respectfully solicited, contain no new principles of legislation, but only such as are acted upon in every civilized community. The right of society to protect the health, property and lives of its citizens, by legal enactments, is recognized by every government, legislature and court in Christendom. It cannot be disputed without assailing the basis upon which society rests. It extends, according to the opinions of the most eminent jurists, not only to the enactment of general laws for self-protection, the execution of penalties, the appointment of a police, and the raising of armies for suppressing rebellion or resisting foreign invaders, but to everything that tends to injure society.

This principle is acted upon in the laws which are passed against gambling, lotteries, Sabbath-breaking, counterfeiting money, smuggling, the storage of gunpowder, the exposure and sale of demoralizing prints, and any business that endangers the public health or morals. We do not depend upon the influence of moral suasion to protect society against these evils. We do not go to the gambler and appeal to his conscience, his humanity, his regard for the public welfare. We do not plead with the incendiary and portray before him the suffering which he occasions, depicting in vivid colors the horrors of a midnight conflagration. We do not depend upon public meetings, speeches and the force of mere argument, to prevent men from stealing, or forging, or uttering slander. Society decrees that these evils shall not be permitted. It employs its whole force to annihilate them; it does not admit for a moment the plan of regulating them. Governments do not license annually, out of regard for public depravity, so many incendiaries, or thieves, or counterfeiters, or dealers in tainted meat. All, therefore, that we contend for, is the application of this principle of legislation to the evils of Intemperance, which is applied to other and lesser evils. And we are confident that as civilization advances, and humanity gains over barbarity, and the iron chains of a degrading avarice fall from the hearts of men, that a statute, similar in its aims to the Maine Law, will be adopted by every nation that is free to enact and enforce its own laws. And we believe the time has come when a holy alliance should be formed by the governments of the world against their common foe, the rum-traffic. The trumpet-blasts to accuse the nations should be sounded from every hill-top, and echoed in every valley. The hosts should be marshaled upon every plain, and the war should be one of extermination. None but a Waterloo victory should induce the friends of Temperance to lay down their arms and retire from the field.

The extent to which liquors are drugged, and the baseest compounds sold under the names of wine, brandy, &c., is a feature of this traffic which should excite universal indignation and abhorrence. As though alcohol itself were not a sufficiently violent poison, it is mixed with deadly drugs, and thus distributed through the community. Liquors thus prepared are sold with a full knowledge that they will rapidly increase the thirst for strong drink, undermine the health, and fill the mind with indescribable wretchedness. The slave-trader can do no worse with his victims than these men do with those who fall into their grasp. The unholy inquisitor cannot invent more exquisite tortures for the unfortunate inmates of his prison, than these men invent for the poor drunkard, whom they lash to the rack of *delirium tremens*, and pass through the horrors of one dark dungeon after another in his passage to an ignominious grave. Such stupendous wickedness should arouse to the most decisive action every one who has not lost all sense of right, in whose heart the last spark of humanity has not become extinguished. Rulers, legislators, philanthropists and Christians of every name, should unite in a crusade to rescue the interests of society from the power of this traffic.

It is almost needless to add that with the success of the Temperance cause is connected every philanthropic and Christian movement of our times. In every advance that is made, we suppress crime, prepare the way for the spread of the gospel, and move forward the civilization of the world. We stimulate with

fresh zeal the embattled hosts who have enlisted in the sacred cause of enthroning the King of kings over the nations, and securing to them the blessings of his everlasting reign.

Can you desire greater honor than that of being instrumental in the accomplishment of so noble a work? Can purer or nobler aspirations fill your souls than those which prompt you to stay the ravages of the chief of vices, deliver thousands from a bondage which is the nearest akin to death, and prepare the way for the universal triumph of virtue and religion.

Commending you to the God of Heaven, we earnestly pray that He will graciously aid you in the struggle, and grant you a complete victory. And we close by recommending to you, one and all, the adoption of the following sentiment: "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my heart and hand to the enactment and execution of the principles of the Maine Law throughout the world."

RUFUS W. CLARK,
Chairman of the Committee.

DEATH OF THE SLEEPING MAN.—Cornelius Vrooman died at his brother's residence, in Clarkson, on Monday, the 17th ult. While on exhibition in New York, says the "Rochester Democrat," he was taken sick, which seemed to induce a wakeful state for a short period, and then a stupor ensued, which was not wakefulness, until he was brought home on the 14th. He talked very little, inquiring after his mother who had been dead two years, his father and brothers, whom he seemed partially to recognize. He complained of great internal heat, and soreness of his throat and stomach. On the morning of the day of his death, he called for food and ate a hearty meal, and from that time seemed to be in pain until about 2 o'clock, P. M., when he died without a struggle. His age was thirty-five years.

THE OLDEST POSTMASTER.—Mr. J. Bickel, of Johnstown, Lebanon co., Penn., is the oldest postmaster in the United States in point of official relation.

In a letter to the Department, of a recent date, he speaks of his appointments as follows:

"My father's name was John Bickel, and I was commissioned John Bickel, Jr. My father was in the revolutionary war, and lived to the age of eighty-nine years. He died about six years ago. I was appointed postmaster under Jefferson's administration by Gideon Granger, on the 23d September, 1803, so that I have held the office fifty years and eleven months. I am now seventy-eight years of age, and do all my business myself."

"NAKED TRUTH."—The late eccentric John Homes used frequently, in his addresses to different juries, to explain the meaning of the phrase "naked truth," by relating the following fable:

"Truth and Falsehood traveling one warm day, met at a river, and both went to bathe at the same place. Falsehood coming first out of the water, took his companion's clothes and left his own vile raiment, and then went on his way. Truth coming out of the water, sought in vain for his own proper dress, disdaining to wear the garb of Falsehood. Truth started, all naked, in pursuit of the thief, but not being so swift of foot, has never overtaken the fugitive. Ever since he has been known as 'naked Truth.'"