THE GETTYSBURG STAR & REPUBLICAN BANNER.

☞ Devoted to Politics, Foreign and Domestic Intelligence, Literature, Science, Agriculture, the Mechanic Arts, Internal Improvement, and General Miscellany. ☜

to take some decided measures, but how to act I knew not. I reflected all night, and the next morning (that is, according to my usage—action) I resolved the business. Whether it was that cunning or weakness occasioned it, I cannot tell, but either way, I drank too much wine, and was ready for any daring deed, when Melchior again opened the door.

"Sir Henry will not accept of your terms. I thought not," said Melchior. "I am sorry—very sorry."

"Melchior," replied I, starting up: "let us have no more of this duplicity. I am not quite so ignorant as you suppose. I know who Fleta is, and who you are."

"Indeed," replied Melchior; "perhaps you will explain?"

"I will. You Melchior, are Sir Henry de Clare; you succeeded to your estates by the death of your elder brother from a fall from hunting."

Melchior appeared astonished.

"Indeed!" replied he! "pray go on. You have made a gentleman of me."

"No, rather a scoundrel."

"As you please; now will you make a lady of Fleta?"

"Yes, I will. She is your niece." Melchior started back. "Your agent, M'Dermott, who was sent over to find out Fleta's abode, met me in the coach, and he has tracked me here, and risked my life, by telling the people that I was a tithe proctor."

"Your information is very important," replied Melchior, "but you will find some difficulty to prove all you say."

"Not the least," replied I, flushed with anger and with wine. "I have proof positive. I have seen her mother, and I can identify the child by the necklace which was on her neck when you stole her."

"Necklace!" cried Melchior.

"Yes, the necklace put into my hands by your own wife when we parted."

"Damn her," replied Melchior.

"I not damn her, but I damn myself for your villany, and its being brought to light. Have I said enough, or shall I tell you more?"

"Pray tell me more."

"No, I will not, for I must commit others, and that will not do," replied I; for I felt I had already said too much.

"You have committed yourself, at all events," replied Melchior; "and now I tell you, that until—never mind," and Melchior hastened away.

The door was again locked, and I was once more alone.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TEMPERANCE DEPARTMENT.

ADDRESS

Delivered before the Temperance Society of Fairfield, on the 7th of September, 1835.

BY BENJAMIN SCHLICHER.

[Published by request of the Society.]

MR. PRESIDENT,

The cause which we espouse, and for whose advancement, we have assembled, addresses its claims to the consciences and sympathies of all men. An examination of these claims cannot, therefore, be either improper or unprofitable. If they be unjust, we will not be the last to abandon them; if just, we dispread our ensign and unfold our banner with a large & highly respectable audience.

This confidence is not based upon a romantic view of human nature: but upon the constitutional traits, that all men of every character, do, in the abstract agree, that whatever is right should be done. He who originally made us capable of discerning between virtue and vice, has also placed in our constitution, an instinctive disposition to approve the one and disapprove the other. But two things, therefore, can prevent accession to the claims and co-operation in the advancement of a good cause: either a obstinate determination to resist the dictates of conscience, or the want of such investigation of its evidences, as, in the presence of friends, will force conviction upon its disappearance, in the house of God on this occasion, precludes the former idea, and presupposes, that we either favor the Temperance Society, or if not, we wish to know its claims. O! beings constituted, as we are, nothing more honorable can possibly be predicated, than the character of candid, sincere inquirers after truth. It bespeaks the highest wisdom. To err is human, but to persevere in error, without reflection, is brutal. It is perfectly human in the mistaken bigot, from an error in faith, to anathematize thousands of souls, created by the same Almighty hand and redeemed by the same precious blood with his own; but his inhumanity is shown by his unwillingness to hear the voice of truth and reason. It was perfectly human in the mighty monarch of Israel to violate the laws of Him who had caused him to exchange the Shepherd's crook for the regal sceptre; but it would have been unreasonable, in the highest degree, had he persisted in evil, after his condemnation by his own mouth, & the convicting declaration of the Prophet, "Thou art the man!"

Acquainted, then, as we have supposed we all do, in the duty of candid examination, let us proceed to inquire what is our duty in reference to the temperance society.—Such an investigation will be embraced in the questions—*why* should we, and *how* can we effectually promote *temperance?*

Why should we promote it? We answer, because *intemperance* is an evil of such magnitude, that it becomes our duty as patriots and philauthropists to do so. Passing by its heinousness as a sin against the laws of God and nature, it will be necessary, for the support of this position, to notice only some of its pernicious consequences. Among them we may enumerate a pecuniary loss to the virtuous citizens of the country. The expense of ardent spirits to the amount was estimated, some time since, by a very competent person, at $94,428,000. But the drunkard, not the temperate man, you say, sustains this waste of money. What! the drunkard! is he, whose miserable hovel proclaims nought save the pitiable spectacle of a poverty-stricken, destitute, forlorn, and more than widowed mother, surrounded by a famishing offspring, clothed in tatters, and more than orphans as to every blessing of life, be it food or raiment, respectability, education or religion—is he the man who pays this enormous sum? True, his is the original cost; he does business largely for awhile—but by his inevitable bankruptcy, leaves his sober neighbor to discharge his debts. Do you ask who is the drunkard. Go, ask the guardians of the poor, who is the author of all the wretchedness of that weeping mother and those crying children, whom he is about to place upon the public board, at the public expense? You anticipate his answer. Yes, the drunkard's vice is the great source of all this national loss. It is felt in the erection and support of nearly all our penitentiaries, prisons, and alms-houses—felt in the prosecution of 70,000 additional criminals, and the maintenance of 200,000 additional paupers—and felt in the payment of $100,000,000 additional taxation.

Let the patriot and the philanthropist look at this subject. If a certain administration, for the sake of aggrandizement, burdened the country with but the fifteenth part of this taxation, how soon would they not sound the alarm! How ready would they not be to execrate their ease, their peace, yes, their very lives, to save the country from their ruinous policy! And is not the evil equally pernicious, and as justly alarming, whether produced by the monster intemperance or the monster ambition?

But let them look beyond this to the moral loss which their country sustains. Should some inhuman tyrant usurpour government, keep 300,000 of our citizens in a state of absolute subjugation, and, robbing them of the liberties and blessings of civil society—made a stigma upon their friends and country—and annually devote 30,000 to the most ignominious death what patriot who can fail to feel the honor and prosperity of his country—what philanthropist, who can sympathize in human suffering, would not rise, armed with all the energy of a just cause, and impelled by the resistless impulses of a righteous indignation, to dethrone, arrest, condemn, and banish from human sympathy and human society, the hated author of all this mischief? And why should the action be less prompt or powerful against the monster intemperance, whose devastations among our countymen are infinitely greater and more lamentable? Yes, infinitely greater and more lamentable! for the former men could be slaves physically only. He might bind the body in chains; but the immortal spirit, despising the gross contact of material fetters, would soar aloft in its own essential freedom, and think, feel, and act, with its own native dignity and independence! But to the latter the slavery is of the soul. He contracts its operations to a narrower and still narrower circle, and draws the magic cord tighter and tighter, crushes power after power, until the captive is led heedless and helpless to the altar of immolation. The public treasury might again be filled by economical management, or the timely intervention of power might restore the subject of tyrannic oppression to his country, to his friends and to his family; but what sum or what power can regain the drunkard's lost confidence with his fellowmen—with the wife of his bosom, or repair his ruined physical, intellectual, and moral constitution, his blighted reputation, or his blasted hopes for time and eternity?

Yes, let them look at the loss of the drunkard himself. Oh! who can describe the horror of the desolation of that soul, when the storm of human passion, raised by intoxication, and prevalent over conscience, has passed by! Go, look at the once promising youth blinded by appetite, reckless of danger, and regardless of consequences, rush into the mire of drunkenness, render morbid his moral sensibilities, and unfit himself for the enjoyment of happiness, both here and hereafter; and tell, if you can, what sum or what power can repair his demolished intellect, replace reason upon her throne, and restore him the lost dominion over his listless passions. Go, read if you can, in the horrid distortions of the madman's countenance, what, in human loss, is equal to the overthrow of reason! Go, view the last scene of drunkenness upon the murderer's scaffold—consider what there is in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, which he can give, in exchange for his life—in exchange for his soul! Go on into eternity, and behold a being destined to be an inhabitant of the celestial city not made with hands eternal in the heavens—destined there to enter upon the full fruition of that "exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived"—destined, high on the hills of immortality, with unstained land, to strike the harp of eternity, and with unpolluted lips to chant the praises of redeeming love—destined, with capacities enlarging as new scenes and new truths are developed in the revolution of eternal ages, finally to vie with the tallest archangel or the brightest seraph, in the presence of light inaccessible;—behold that being sunk down—to the depths of endless pollution, to the depths of endless woe—and comprehend, if you are able, what is the loss, or what can make the reparation!

But let them proceed one step further, to a scene of still more injurious claims upon their sympathies. Vastly harder still, is the misfortune of those who are inevitably involved in the consequences of the drunkard's misdeeds, through life. Vastly harder, because it is not only irreparable but unavoidable. Other evils may be anticipated and averted. The pecuniary loss of the country can be removed—the moral loss of the country can be supplied—and the youth can resist the temptation to drunkenness: but what human eye can foresee, or human sagacity anticipate the suffering wife, or the hapless children, to avert the bitter curse of a drunken father.

The innocent female, lovely as the mountain rose, and pure as the dew-drop appending to it—ignorant of a deceitful world, having received only delightful among the varied scenes, and culled only the sweet and the beautiful: what suspects she of the lilly-lined bosom, in the fair region of her existence? Her bosom a stranger to grief—her spirit enthusiastic with hope, and her imagination glowing at the prospect of Elysian fields and the anticipation of purer felicity, yet to come—what dreams she of the foul monster's breath to blast all these fancied scenes of bliss! How much less does she ever suspect that the chosen object of her affections, is not only to disappoint her imaginary hopes, but to be the author of her positive and irremediable misery? That he who is now the ardent lover, is to be her tormentor. How can she suspect it, he is kind, he is affectionate, he is virtuous—yes he is virtuous, her pure soul could approve no other. From a virtuous object she would shrink as from the presence of the baleful adder: but he is virtuous and may she not sacrifice the protection of parents, the society of friends, and the tender endearments of home, for his sake? There is no reason. She hopes him all her affections, herself commits them to his protection. Who can now persuade her, as she prepares hand in hand with him to walk the path of life—that the morning sun of her existence which dawned in loveliness and peace—whose sun rose without a cloud, and now shines in meridian splendor, must have an eve of sorrow and that sun set in darkness? Must she be disappointed? Also, the soft and delicate tendrils of her soul are so twined around him—he cannot falter or fall, but she trembles and bleeds. The man she loves disappoved by the deed is done, and she is a drunkard's wife!

Is this a mere picture of fancy without an original in real life? Must we knock at a thousand abodes of wretchedness, to our inquiries, and, rending why the loffest sighs and blessings of civil society—made a stigma upon their friends and country—and annually devote 30,000 to the most ignominious death what patriot who can fail to feel the honor and prosperity of his country—what philanthropist, who can sympathize in human suffering, would not rise, armed with all the energy of a just cause, and impelled by the resistless impulses of a righteous indignation, to dethrone, arrest, condemn, and banish from human sympathy and human society, the hated author of all this mischief? And why should the action be less prompt or powerful against the monster intemperance, whose devastations among our countymen are infinitely greater and more lamentable? Yes, infinitely greater and more lamentable! for the former men could be slaves physically only. He might bind the body in chains; but the immortal spirit, despising the gross contact of material fetters, would soar aloft in its own essential freedom, and think, feel, and act, with its own native dignity and independence! But to the latter the slavery is of the soul. He contracts its operations to a narrower and still narrower circle, and draws the magic cord tighter and tighter, crushes power after power, until the captive is led heedless and helpless to the altar of immolation. The public treasury might again be filled by economical management, or the timely intervention of power might restore the subject of tyrannic oppression to his country, to his friends and to his family; but what sum or what power can regain the drunkard's lost confidence with his fellowmen—with the wife of his bosom, or repair his ruined physical, intellectual, and moral constitution, his blighted reputation, or his blasted hopes for time and eternity?

Yes, let them look at the loss of the drunkard's wife!