

KITTREDGE (J.)

INTEMPERANCE

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Lynn, N. H.

1827.





## Intemperance.

*Extracts from an Address upon the Effects of Ardent Spirits, delivered in the Town Hall of Lime, N. H. By Jonathan Kittredge, Esq.*

“ WHEN we look abroad and examine into the state of society, we find the number of those, who are in the constant and habitual practice of an excessive use of ardent spirits, to be alarming. We see the effects, that they produce among our friends and our neighbors, but the evil is so common, and it is so fashionable to drink, and I had almost said, to drink to excess, that the sight of it has lost half its terror, and we look upon an intemperate man without those feelings of disgust and abhorrence, which his real situation and character are calculated to produce. This is the natural result of things. The mind becomes familiar with the contemplation, the eye accustomed to the sight, we pay but little attention to the object, he passes on, we laugh at the exhibition, and grow callous and indifferent to the guilt. Our pity is not excited, our hearts do not ache at the scenes of intoxication, that are almost daily exhibited around us. But, if for a moment we seriously reflect upon the real situation of the habitually intemperate, if we cast our eyes to the future, and realize, what in a few years they will be, if we go further, and examine into the state of their families, of their wives and children, we shall discover a scene of misery and wretchedness, that will not long suffer us to remain cold and indifferent, and unfeeling.

This examination we can all make for ourselves. We can call to mind the case of some individual, whom we

[Lyme 1827.]

have known for years, perhaps from his infancy, who is now a poor, miserable drunkard. In early life, his hopes and prospects were as fair as ours. His family was respectable, and he received all the advantages, which were necessary, and which were calculated to make him an useful and respectable member of society. Perhaps he was our school fellow, and our boyhood may have been passed in his company. We witnessed the first buildings of his mental powers, and know that he possessed an active, enterprising mind. He grew up into life with every prospect of usefulness. He entered into business, and for a while he did well. His parents looked to him for support in old age, and he was capable of affording it. He accumulated property, and in a few years, with ordinary prudence and industry, would have been independent. He married, and became the head of a family, and the father of children, and all was prosperous and happy around him. Had he continued as he began, he would have been a comfort to his friends, and an honor to the community. But the scene quickly changed. He grew fond of ardent spirits. He was seen at the store and at the tavern. By degrees he became intemperate. He neglected his business, and his affairs went to a gradual decay. He is now a drunkard. His property is wasted, his parents have died with broken hearts, his wife is pale and emaciated, his children ragged, and squalid, and ignorant. He is the tenant of some little cabin, that poverty has erected to house him from the storm and the tempest. He is useless, and worse than useless, he is a pest to all around him. All the feelings of his nature are blunted; he has lost all shame; he procures his accustomed supply of the poison that consumes him; he staggers through mud and through filth to his hut; he meets a weeping wife, and starving children, he abuses them, he tumbles into his straw, and he rolls and foams like a mad brute, till he is able to go again. He calls for more rum, he repeats the scene from time to time, and from day to day, till his nature faints, and he becomes sober in death.

This is no picture of the imagination. It is a common and sober reality. It is what we see almost every day of our lives, and we live in the midst of such scenes, and events.

Shops as nurseries are established in every town, and neighborhood, and drunkards are raised up by the score. They are made, they are formed, for no man was ever born a drunkard, and, I may say, no man was ever born with a taste for ardent spirits. They are not the food which nature has provided. The infant may cry for its mother's milk, and for nourishing food, but no one was ever heard to cry for ardent spirits. The taste is created, and in some instances created so young, that, perhaps, many cannot remember the time when they were not fond of them.

I will begin with the infant, and, I may say, that he is born unto rum. At his birth, according to custom, a quantity of ardent spirits are provided, they are thought to be as necessary as any thing else. They are considered as indispensable, as if the child could not be born without them. The father treats his friends, and his household, and the mother partakes with the rest. The infant is fed with them, as if he could not know the good things he is heir to, without a taste of ardent spirits. They are kept on hand, and often given to him, as medicine, especially where the parents are fond of them themselves. By this practice, even in the cradle, his disrelish for ardent spirits are gone away. He grows up, and during the first months or years of his existence, his taste and his appetite are formed. As he runs about, and begins to take notice of passing events, he sees his father and his friends drink. He partakes and grows fond of them. In most families, ardent spirits are introduced and used on every extraordinary occasion. Without mentioning many, that the knowledge and experience of man can supply, I will instance only the case of visitors. A gentleman's friends and acquaintances call upon him. He is glad to see them, and fashion and custom make it necessary for him to invite them to the sideboard. This is all in his best style, in his most easy and affable manner. The best set of drinking vessels are brought forward, and make quite a display. The children of the family notice this, they are delighted with the sight, and the exhibition; they are pleased with the manners, and gratified with the conversation of the visitors on the occasion. As soon as they go abroad, they associate the idea of drinking together with all that is manly and gen-

teel. They fall into the custom, and imitate the example that is set them.

But have not ardent spirits one good quality, one redeeming virtue? None. I say none. There is nothing, not even the shadow of a virtue, to rescue them from universal, and everlasting execration. But they are good as a medicine? No, not as a medicine. There is no physician that does not love them, that requires them in his practice. There is no disease, that they cure, or relieve, that cannot be cured or relieved without them. They add to no man's health, they save no man's life. It is impossible to name a single good thing that they do. Give them to the Divine. Do they add to his piety, to his zeal, to his faithfulness, to his love of God, or man? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the Physician. Do they increase his skill, his power to discriminate amid the symptoms of disease, his judgment to apply the appropriate remedies, his kind and affectionate solicitude? Nay, verily, they destroy them all. Give them to the legal advocate. Do they increase his knowledge, his perceptions to discover the points of his case, his readiness to apply the evidence, his ability to persuade a court and jury? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the mechanic. Do they assist his ingenuity, his judgment, or his taste? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the labourer. Do they add to his strength? Do they enable him to bear fatigue, to endure heat and cold? Can he do more work, or do it better? No, they are the ruin of the whole. They reduce his strength, weaken his frame, make him more susceptible to the heat, and cold, and disorganize the whole system of his labour.

But there are some men, you say, who use ardent spirits, and who get along very well. Admitted. They endure it. So there are some men who get along very well, with poor health, and feeble constitutions. Are poor health, and feeble constitutions, therefore, no evils? Is the prosperity of such to be attributed to them? As much, as is that of the former to the use of ardent spirits. Was ever a man made rich by the use of ardent spirits? Never, but millions have been made beggars by it.

But some say, they feel better by drinking ardent spirits. Let us examine this excuse. It is nothing but an excuse, and he, who loves rum, and is ashamed to own it,

says, he feels better to drink it. Let us inquire how. Are they conducive to health? On this subject, let the Physician decide. One, as great as the country has produced, Dr. Rush, says, that the habitual use of ardent spirits, usually produces the following diseases: A loss of appetite; sickness at the stomach; obstructions of the liver; jaundice, and dropsy; hoarseness, and a husky cough; which often ends in consumption; diabetis; redness, and eruptions of the skin; a fetid breath; frequent and disgusting belchings; epilepsy; gout, and madness. This is the train of diseases, produced by the use of ardent spirits, and they are the usual, natural, and legitimate consequences of their use. And now I ask, can that, which, of its own nature, produces these diseases, make a man feel better? Reason might answer; and were she on her throne, uninfluenced, and unbiassed by the love of ardent spirits, she would unequivocally, answer no. And we find, that those who say they feel better to drink ardent spirits, are those who are in perfect health, but love rum, and it gratifies their appetite, and this is what they mean by feeling better.

I will examine, for a moment, the effect, the immediate effect, of ardent spirits upon the man. I will take a man in health, and give him a glass of ardent spirits. The effect is to produce derangement, and false notions, and conceptions. But one glass will not have much effect. I will give him another, and, if he loves rum, he feels better; another, and he feels better; another, better yet. By this time, he has got to feel pretty well, quite happy. He has no fear or shame. He can curse, and swear, and break things. "He is fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils." He fears no consequences, and can accomplish impossibilities. If he is a cripple, he fancies he can dance like a Satyr; if he is slow and unwieldy, he can run like a hart; if he is weak, and feeble in strength, he can lift like Samson, and fight like Hercules; if he is poor, and penniless, he is rich as Cræsus on his throne, and has money to let. This is all a correct representation. It is what happens universally with the drunkard. I know one man, who is intemperate, who is poor, and never known to have five dollars at a time, who, when he is intoxicated, has often, and does usually offer to lend me a thousand dollars. Poor, miserable, and de-

luded man. But he feels well, he is one of those, who feel better to drink. He is deranged, his imagination is disordered. He fancies bliss, and felicity, and plenty, and abundance, which do not exist, and he awakes to misery, and poverty, and shame, and contempt. Yet this is the exact feeling of all those who feel better to drink spirits. He who drinks but a glass, has not the same degree, but precisely the same kind of feeling, with the one I have described.

And this is all—this is all, that rum does, to make a man feel better. If his wife and children are starving, he feels it not. He feels better. If his affairs are going to ruin, or are already plunged into ruin, he is not sensible to his condition. If his house is on fire, he sings the maniac's song, and regards it not. He feels better.

Let him, who likes this better feeling, enjoy it. Enjoy it, did I say? No; reclaim him, if possible. Convince him, that he labours under a delusion. Restore him to truth, and to reason; banish the cup from his mouth, and change the brute into the man.

If, then, ardent spirits are not necessary in sickness; if they do not prevent the effects of heat and cold; if they do not add to our strength, and enable us to perform more labour: when are they necessary? Why, people in health say, they want to drink them now and then; they do them good. What good? If they are well, why do they need them? For nothing, but to gratify the taste, and to produce a feeling of intoxication, and derangement, slight in its degree, when moderately used, as they are by such people, but the character of the feeling is no less certain. It is the same feeling, that induces the drunkard to drink. One man takes a glass to do him good, to make him feel better; another wants two; another three; another six; and by this time he is intoxicated, and he never feels well till he is so. He has the same feeling with the man, who drinks but one glass, but more of it; and that man, who, in health, drinks one glass to make him feel better, is just so much of a drunkard; one sixth, if it takes six glasses to intoxicate him. He has one sixth of the materials of a drunkard in his constitution.

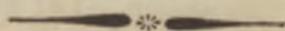
But it is this moderate use of ardent spirits, that produces all the excess. It is this, which paves the way to

downright and brutal intoxication. Abolish the ordinary, and temperate use of ardent spirits, and there would not be a drunkard in the country. He, who advises men not to drink to excess, may lop off the branches; he who advises them to drink only on certain occasions, may fell the trunk; but he who tells them not to drink at all, strikes and digs deep for the root of the hideous vice of intemperance. And this is the only course to pursue. It is this temperate use of ardent spirits, that must be discontinued. They must be no longer necessary when friends call, when we go to a store or to a tavern to transact business, when we travel on the road, on public days,—in fact, they must cease to be fashionable, and customary drinks. Do away the fashion and custom, that attend their use, and change the tone of public feeling, so that it will be thought disgraceful to use them, as they are now used by the most temperate and respectable men; and an end is forever put to the beastly disease of intoxication. Let those, who cannot be reclaimed from intemperance, go to ruin, and the quicker the better. I speak of the public good; but save the rest of our population; save yourselves; save your children. Raise not up an army of drunkards to supply their places. Purify your houses. They contain the plague of death; the poison that in a few years will render some of your little ones, what the miserable wretches that you see staggering the streets, are now. And who, I ask, would not do it? What father, who knew that one of his sons, that he loves, was in a few years to be what hundreds, you can name, are now, would hesitate to save him, to banish rum from his premises forever?

And, if ardent spirits are the parent of all the poverty, and disease, and crime, and madness, that I have named, and, if they produce no good, what rational man will use them? If he loves himself, he will not; if he loves his children, he will not; and as Hamilcar brought Hannibal to the altar at eight years of age, and made him swear eternal hatred to the Romans; so every parent should bring his children to the altar, and make them swear eternal hatred to ardent spirits. He should teach them by precept and example. He should instil into his children a hatred of ardent spirits, as much as he does

of falsehood and of theft. He should no more suffer his children to drink a little, than he does to lie a little, and to steal a little.

Then cease. No longer use that, which is the source of infinite mischief, without one redeeming benefit; which has entailed upon you, upon your children, and upon society, woes unnumbered and unutterable. Banish it from your houses. It can be done. You have only to will, and it is effected. Use it not at home. Let it never be found to pollute your dwelling. Give it not to your friends, or to your workmen. Touch it not yourselves, and suffer not your children to touch it, and let it be a part of your morning and evening prayer, that you, and your children, may be saved from intemperance, as much as from famine, from sickness, and from death."



## APPALLING FACTS.

30 millions of Dollars are annually expended for Ardent Spirits in the United States.

10 millions of Dollars are expended yearly for the support of Paupers, caused by intemperance.

It is ascertained that there are 100,000 Drunkards in the United States.

10,000 Drunkards die annually—and let it be remembered, that no Drunkard shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

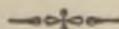
Would you be happy in the bosom of your family?—

Banish ardent spirits from your cupboard, for intemperance is the cause of about all the domestic strife and misery which exists.

Would you live to a good old age? Banish the Rum Bottle from your house, for the Drunkard does not live out half his days.

Would you live in peace, free from the perplexities and gripings of the Law?—Banish ardent spirits from your house—for most of the civil, and about all of the criminal prosecutions in our Courts, have their origin in Intemperance.

Would you escape the miseries of poverty, and the disgrace of the Almshouse?—Banish ardent spirits from your premises.



VICE AND THE ALMSHOUSE. The subjoined document is brief but interesting.

“*Seven hundred and thirty-nine* persons were received into the almshouse at Baltimore, within the year ending April 30, 1826. Of these *five hundred and fifty-four* owed their misery to the following causes.

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Debility from intemperance,   | 235    |
| Mania from drunkenness,   | 54     |
| Venereal, every individual of these being addicted to intemperance,   | 85     |
| Ulcers, the effect of drunkenness,  | 34     |
| Fractures and wounds, which in every case were received whilst the parties were in a state of intoxication, | 28     |
| Various diseases, all traced to drunkenness, Crippled whilst the parties were in a state of intoxication,   | 104    |
| Old age, all habitual drunkards,  | 7      |
|   | 7      |
|   | —554.” |

The history of the inmates of any other Almshouse would give the same melancholy result.

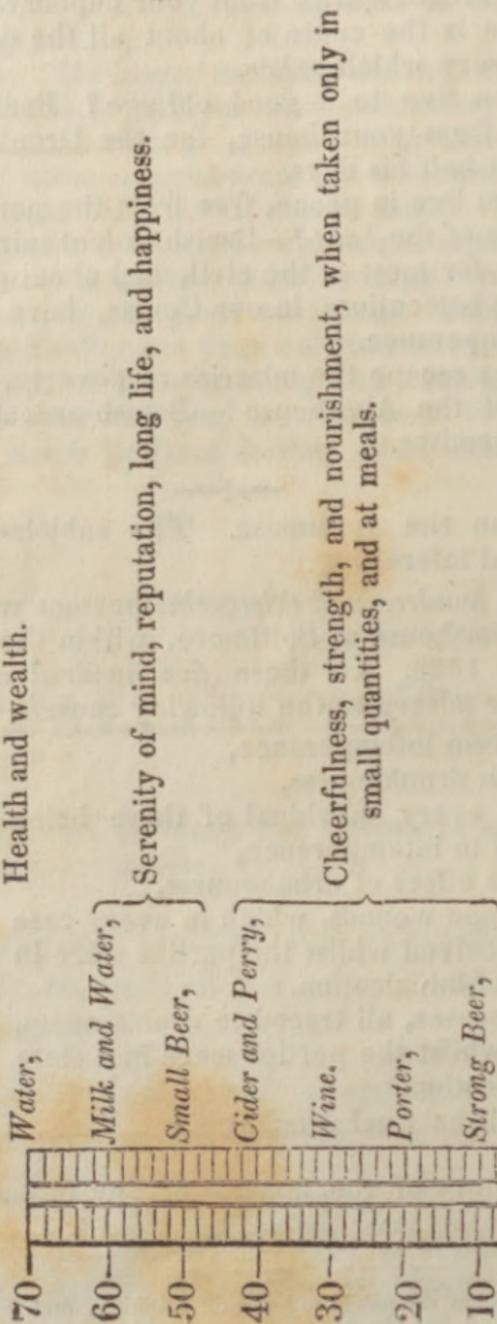
Some old toppers are afraid to leave off drinking, and “taste not, touch not, handle not,” lest the consequences should be immediately fatal. It is all a deception; for you cannot find many instances where a person quits the use of ardent spirits altogether, but his health is immediately convalescent—To such I say be not afraid—dash the cup.

## A MORAL AND PHYSICAL THERMOMETER.

*A scale of the progress of Temperance and Intemperance.—Liquors with effects in their usual order.*

### TEMPERANCE.

Health and wealth.



# INTEMPERANCE.

|    | VICES.  | DISEASES.   | PUNISH-<br>MENTS.           |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 0  | Punch,  | Sickness.   | Debt.                       |
| 10 | Toddy and Egg Rum,                                | Tremors of the hands<br>in the morning, puking,<br>bloatedness. | Jail.                       |
| 20 | Grog—Brandy and Water,                            | Inflamed eyes, red nose<br>and face.                            | Black eyes,<br>and rags.    |
| 30 | Flip and Shrub,                                   | Sore and swelled legs,<br>jaundice.                             | Hospital, or<br>Poor House. |
| 40 | Bitters infused in Spirits and<br>Cordials.       | Pains in the hands, burn-<br>ing in the hands and feet.         | Bridewell.                  |
| 50 | Drams of Gin, Brandy, and<br>Rum, in the morning, | Dropsy, Epilepsy.   | State prison.               |
| 60 | The same morning and evening,                     | Melancholy, palsy, ap-<br>oplexy.                               | do. for life.               |
| 70 | The same during day and night,                    | Madness, despair.   | GALLOWS.                    |

## SCENE BETWEEN A SELECTMAN AND A POSTED TIPLER.

*Selectman.* Well, you see that you have compelled us to the performance of this unpleasant duty.—I trust we have acted from motives of compassion to your family, and to yourself too.

*Tipler.* Ah, sir, I feel that I am now destroyed. Before this *posting*, a gleam of hope would sometimes visit me, and encourage me that I should be lifted out of the mire; that I should break the fetters that bind me, and crawl into life again; but you have sealed my destruction; your compassion comes too late. Had you, and your predecessors, done your duty faithfully, I had been a sober man—a comfort to my parents, a support to my family, a useful citizen, perhaps an humble christian:—but the Trader came into our village, and the Selectmen, whose duty it was to protect the morals of their young townsmen, gave him a license to retail:—he invited me to his counter—he tempted me and I did drink; and encouraged by the occasional example of the Fathers of the town, and even of professors of religion, I have continued to drink, till health, reputation, property, all are gone, and now gone forever.—But I forgive you; yes, I forgive you, for you did it ignorantly—but remember that you cannot be ignorant any longer, I am lost, eternally lost—leave me, then, and hasten to those who need the interposition of your power to PRESERVE them from the same ruin in which I am involved:—do away this retailing, and no longer suffer our Stores to be nurseries of Drunkards.

When I see a boy at the counter, drinking a glass of Rum, because the vessel will not hold it, I could weep for him:—there is much danger of his becoming a Drunkard. Let him spill it on the ground, and take a glass of pure water.

For one hundred years after the settlement of this country, ardent spirits were not used; and yet the world never saw a race of beings more robust, healthy, and *lion-hearted* than our ancestors were. If ardent spirits were ever necessary, for the preservation and sustenance of man, they were particularly so for the Pilgrims. They could, with great sincerity, adopt the language of St. Paul—“In perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea;—in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”—Yet they surmounted every obstacle, and performed feats of valour, which to their degenerate *New-England-Rum-drinking* descendants, appear super-human.— — — Away with the Rum Bottle.

If you are going to work in very cold water—rafting for instance—use hot broth, soup, chocolate, milk porridge, and you will be supported against the cold most astonishingly.—Don't touch any spirits.

Reader, are you a disciple of Him who went about doing good? Do you earnestly desire the prosperity of the Redeemer's Kingdom? Do you wish that your children should grow up in the fear of the Lord and become “lively stones,”—“temples of the Holy Ghost”?—Let me intreat you to refrain entirely from the use of ardent spirits.—“Put away the unclean thing,” and show to the world around you that you will no longer, by your example, encourage and strengthen the votaries of intemperance. Assist, by your whole influence, those persons who are making a stand against the sweeping desolations of this fell destroyer.

