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THE IMMORALITY
OF THE
TRAFFIC, MANUFACTURE, AND USE,
OF
ARDENT SPIRITS AS A DRINK;
AND THE
DUTY OF CHRISTIANS,
WITH REFERENCE TO
THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE:

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE,
DELIVERED IN THE
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN THE CITY OF BALTIMORE,
ON THE 8TH OF JUNE, 1834.

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AND NOW PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF MANY MEMBERS THEREOF.

Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith, by my works.
JAMES, ii. 18.

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DISCOURSE.

“ He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.”—*Luke* xvi. 10.

“ Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”—*James* ii. 10.

THE principle involved in the first of these statements seems to be, that if we be faithful at all, we shall be so, absolutely and universally. Our conduct on the most trifling subject, in which christian principle is involved, is a perfect criterion by which to judge, what our behaviour would be, under the most trying and important circumstances; and the utmost propriety and even devotedness in difficult affairs, is no more than an exhibition of the spirit which should govern us at all times.

The truth which is stated in the second text, sheds back a divine light upon the converse of the sentiment already exhibited. And in it the completeness of the consecration required of ourselves to God, is shown to be such, that the least wilful departure from thorough faithfulness not only really exhibits the want of the true christian character, and surely brings down the condemnation of the law of God, but demonstrates also a moral state adverse to the whole of that law, and ready under adequate temptation to perpetrate the violation of every part of it.

It is the present purpose to apply these rules, so as to enable us to decide what faithfulness, such as is indicated above, requires of us, with reference to the Temperance cause. And the design is to show, that it is immoral, and of course incompatible with christian duty, to manufacture, to use, or to traffic in ardent spirits, as a drink. What is said is designed to be especially addressed to professors

of religion. A general discussion of the whole question will not therefore be attempted. But assuming as true, and as generally known, the great facts of the case, long ago fully established; the present attempt is, to compare the case, as made out, with plain and acknowledged rules of christian duty, and so apply to these results, the truths laid down in the beginning of the discourse.

I. We begin with Christian dealers in ardent spirits.

1. No one who pretends to be a christian, will deny the superintending providence of God over us, extending throughout our being, and embracing every thing that relates to us, or can affect us. Our calling in life, is of course embraced in this all-pervading scheme of God's will towards us. Now although it may be difficult at times, to determine with perfect certainty whether we are obeying God in our present pursuits; yet in the general we may arrive at assurance on this point.—No one will say, that God approves of a calling which, upon the whole, necessarily results in injury to mankind at large, to the community of which we form a part, or even to a considerable portion of our fellow-beings. Still less can he desire us to gain food and raiment, by means which are unfavourable to high spiritual advancement, and peace of conscience, in ourselves. Again, that calling which we cannot ask our Father to bless, and that both for our sakes, and also as being good, or at least harmless, as it regards all others: that employment, for whose enlargement, diffusion and stability we find ourselves unable to go to our closets, with grateful and hearty acknowledgments for the goodness, which has so prospered us in all comforts, and all means of usefulness;—must obviously and decidedly, within the knowledge of our own hearts, be contrary to God's will. Else why any backwardness to acknowledge, to thank, to praise, and to ask continuance of mercies? Now can any professor of religion who is engaged in the spirit trade, say that it is not upon the whole necessarily hurtful to the world;—that it is ever beneficial to the soul of any one; that it favours, nay that it does not rather hinder his growth in grace; that it promotes, nay that it does not disturb his peace of mind? Can any child of God, look out upon the ruin which this traffic spreads over the earth,—can he behold the wreck of all the hopes of so many hearts by its influence,—can he treasure up the tears wrung from

the eyes of so many victims,—can he dwell upon the utter desolation that has settled with a blackness that no light can pierce, upon such multitudes of beings created in the image of God ; oh ! can he turn from such contemplations, directly to the sacred privacy where he meets his Saviour, as a man meets his familiar friend, and there unbosom his full heart, and thank him for being called to partake in this general butchery, and bless him for awarding to him so large a portion of this price of blood, and implore him to continue the mercy which has filled his cup with blessings distilled from such unutterable woe !—Is there no terror that the widow's God will seal her curse ? Is there no fear that he who with a glorious plenitude of mercy, has proclaimed himself the friend of all the friendless, and the helper of all who have none else to help them, will hear their imprecations ? Is there no scalding anguish in the tears of those little ones, so dear to God ? Are our hearts stone, that that maniac's shriek does not pierce us through and through ?—Dear brethren, God's yoke is easy ; he never called you to so hard a service. His sceptre is a righteous sceptre ; he never made you panders to sin and ruin !

2. What puts this point of the subject in the clearest possible light, is the command of God, so plainly laid upon all christians, to be the same in word, in mind, in pursuit, in affection, in prayer. Supposing then, against all belief, that some may be able to go, in a proper manner to a throne of grace, making supplication that the Lord would bless the traffic in spirits, and bless and prosper them, thereby ; yet a far larger number, make daily applications to the same throne, that the same Lord, would bring to an immediate end this very traffic, as the source of innumerable crimes and miseries, and not one single possible advantage. Here then are opposing, and irreconcilable petitions, from the same body to its common head ; from brethren to their common parent ; from stewards of the same heritage to the one Lord of all ! Brethren this may not be. There is utterly a fault amongst us. We who advocate this cause are mistaken, uncharitable, and over-zealous fanaticks ; or you who oppose it, are resisting the will of God and opposing the cause of Christ. Let no worm of the dust, hereafter dare to treat as unwor-

thy of his care or notice, a matter which the church of Jesus Christ, purchased with his blood, is litigating daily at his bar!

3. The ruinous effects of intemperance upon the well-being of states as such, in their aggregate capacity, has made so large a figure in all the discussions of the subject, and has been so clearly made out, that it deserves separate notice. Of the general duty of Christians not only to obey the laws, but to promote all attempts to have the laws themselves just and wise; of our constant obligation to regard the peace, order, comfort, improvement and security of the state, in a point of view merely temporal, there cannot be the least question. But no proof can be more conclusive, than that by which it has been established, that the sale of ardent spirits as a drink, impoverishes, weakens and degrades every community in which it prevails; that it is the cause of many incurable diseases; that it so aggravates many diseases otherwise not fatal, as to make them fatal; that it disables multitudes from being of the least advantage to the state, and makes multitudes of others, a great burden on it; that it lowers the standard of general knowledge, and effort, corrupts the public sentiment, pollutes the fountains of laws and justice, reduces the general respectability, and impairs the general security of the body politic: that it increases greatly the public burdens of the people, and in an equal degree diminishes the means of meeting them, and that it is every way a public nuisance. If but a very small part of this statement were true, it is not easy to see how a christian would justify himself in that course of conduct which must ruin the state, at the moment that he recognizes the perfect obligation to be a good citizen. But besides this general injury to society at large, there is a view of this subject which presents the christian spirit-seller, in a light quite derogatory to his character as a private person.—If it be true that spirits are simply of no possible advantage to those who purchase them as a drink, it is not easy to see upon what principle the commonest honesty allows a man to demand and to receive pay for them; any more, as has been well illustrated, than an honest man could demand and receive the whole living of any he might find absurd enough to give it, for a basket of shavings. If the spirits instead of being merely useless, turn out to be hurtful, (and who doubts that they are so?)—then he who sells

them, cannot easily escape the charge of fraud and imposition upon society ; or at least of huckstering to the vilest lusts of the most degraded of mankind.—So again when we consider how very small the compensation required by the laws, for the license to set up man-killer is, in comparison with the evil that must arise from the exercise of this privilege, to society, and the gains which accrue to the seller ; the trade seems hardly consistent with fair dealing, even if the bulk of mankind continue silly enough to drive it with us. Indeed the merest integrity would appear to require of dealers and manufacturers of spirits, to bear all the burdens incident to a trade carried on for their exclusive advantage, and detrimental to every interest of every creature besides.

4. One of the most clear, distinctive, and oft-repeated inculcations of Christianity is, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. And the whole of the divine oracles scarcely contain a more striking and noble exhibition of truth, than that beautiful parable in which our Saviour teaches us to consider and treat as our neighbour, every creature that bears the image of God. Dear Christian brethren give full play to the better emotions of your hearts, and answer at its bar, as you will answer at the burning throne on high,—is there one possible aspect of this trade, which the ingenuity of Satan could so gloss over, as to make it bear the light of that glorious truth ? Do you love money so much, that for the hope of gaining it, you will pursue and justify on christian principles, a line of conduct, which you are sure, will one day pierce you through with sorrows ? Yet you pursue towards your neighbour the conduct, which you are sure, will, unless God interpose to save him from you, ruin him, soul and body !—Do you care so little for the partner of your bosom, the sharer of all your hopes and joys, the mother of your little ones, the tried, the devoted friend, who clings but the closer to you, as all things else loosen around you—oh ! do you value her at so low a rate, that you will barter away her peace, her hopes, her highest joys for paltry gain ? And yet, what but the hand of God, can save your neighbour's wife from the complicated sorrows which the successful prosecution of your business, must bring down upon her head !—Oh ! man ; hast thou a heart, and canst thou look upon the bright face, and the lovely form of the little boy that sports

around your hearth, and then calmly brutalize thine own issue for vile dust? Thou can'st not; thou darest not; omnipotent nature forbids the horrid deed! And yet thou wilt entice to ruin thy friend's boy, and break thy friend's heart, with the clear sanction of thy Saviour's word, and under the broad protection of thy Saviour's name! Corruption, thy name is man!

5. The whole spirit of the gospel is, deny thyself: the whole law is fulfilled in love to Christ, and to those Christ loves. There can be no greater love in man, than that which prompts him to die for his friends. But Christ died for his enemies. Where are they then to whose destiny we may be indifferent, if we truly love Christ? Who are they whom we are at liberty to injure? This is the essence of the worst doctrines, of the darkest age, and the most corrupt church, the earth ever saw. The spirit that was in our Redeemer was such as impelled him, while rich in all the fullness of the God-head, to become so poor as to be sold at the value of the meanest servant; and all for us. The spirit of rum-dealing, is such as to impel us, though already comfortable in worldly blessings, to hoard wealth, at the expense of the blackest poverty of those whom Christ commands us to love, as he loves us! Who shall say these spirits are one?—The love which the word of life inculcates *works no ill*—it produces no ill; it permits no ill; it allows of nothing which must end in ill; it follows not causes which are indifferent about ill.—It is not long since the whole christian public was shocked to learn that infidel publications had been extensively circulated in the farthest east, amongst benighted men, who, just waking up from the slumber of centuries, and casting their dumb idols to the moles and bats, were groping in the twilight of thought for new opinions. A thrill of horror passed through the bosom of christendom, at this startling exhibition of a spirit so utterly diabolical. And with one accord the work was pronounced to be capable of performance only by those who having no God; sought to drag down the human race into the same horrible abyss. What if a company of christian men, had calmly avowed themselves the perpetrators of that outrage; and declaring their disbelief in all the falsehoods and sophistries of these infidel books, and their strong desire that no one should be contaminated by them, should say they had

only sold them in the due course of trade, and to the east only because a better market offered; and then should proceed to excuse themselves by saying that the laws permitted the trade, that others would have engaged in it, and furnished the books, and reaped the profits if they had not; that they set an example in their own persons hostile to the inculcations of these books, and rebuked those who had been weak enough to embrace their vile teachings; with a thousand equally common and solid arguments, of the like import. Would not one burst of holy indignation, from one end of the earth to the other have overwhelmed such men?—Now, in what respect is his condition better, who is made a brute by drink, than his who has become a fiend through unbelief? And yet, men professing christianity, both in this country and abroad, have, by their instrumentality in pushing the trade in alcohol, into Asia and Africa, and the islands of the sea, and among our own pealed and sifted aborigines, raised as effectual a barrier to the progress of the gospel, as all the printed blasphemies and refuges of lies, ever uttered among men, could have produced, if poured in one constant stream upon the heathen soul. I would not witness the anguish of that man of God, weeping over the ruin of his hopes, and labors, and prayers; the blasted fruits of long, anxious years of separation, from all that the heart clings to most tenderly on earth; fruits, to produce which, he has wasted the vigor of his life, in strange and insalubrious climes, amid the children of another race, and the worshippers of strange gods:—I would not behold the second death of that poor savage, with light enough from heaven to reveal to him the blackness of the darkness to which he is doomed, almost past hope; a light that might have led him in triumph up the way to Paradise:—I would not contemplate one case like these, and know I had produced it, for all the wealth that all the wicked have heaped up, by all their evil deeds!—But who will say that a broader or stronger tie unites us to the heathen, than the christian man? If it be incompatible with that law of love, which works no ill, to do that which degrades the savage man, is it not equally at war with the same law, to degrade the civilized man? They are both alike embraced in the wide circle of that law of love, which spreads its ample protection over their heads;—and he who names the name of him who sealed that

statute with his blood, may not, without impiety, do aught that works their ill.

6. Even if it should be admitted that this trade is not in itself immoral, it is very strange that those who have the least particle of kindly feeling in their hearts, should consider it a privilege to aid in promoting the countless evils, which, some how or other, are closely related to it, and uniformly attend its progress. There are obvious duties sometimes forced on, whose performance we would escape if we could, by reason of the pain which that performance produces in others. I suppose it was no way grateful to the tribe of Levi, to be called of God to slay every man his brother in the matter of the golden calf: though, being called to it, they acquitted themselves like men, and God blessed them for it. All men esteem it a mercy to be allowed to walk in paths that are full of peace, and that lead through regions smiling under the goodness of God. But here are christians contending for the right of pursuing ways full of sorrows, and conducting through regions blasted with everlasting desolation. All men seek earnestly to be relieved from the harsh lot of executing even just and necessary severity;—but here are followers of Him, whose business, during a life of sorrows, was to go about and to do the kindest and the tenderest things; who resist light and importunity, and the ceaseless pressure of public sentiment, that they may vindicate the privilege of pursuing a calling, which, supposing it innocent, is marked, at every step, by the deepest injuries and woes to which flesh is heir:—and all this under the guidance of councils which teach us to be gentle, kindly affected, easy to be entreated, and full of mercy; and under the influence of commands which require us to be transformed into the image of Him who would not break even the bruised reed.

7. It is an undeniable principle of christian morality, that many things which may be in themselves innocent, cease to be so when they become occasions of sin. Eating meat offered to idols, and eating in the temples of idols, are cases noted in the scriptures; and it is perhaps in the same way that we pronounce it wrong to partake of very many of the engagements and amusements of life, which are forbidden by all serious people. That the continuance of this traffic by persons of respectability in society, is one of the

greatest obstacles to the breaking up of the trade, cannot be denied; and it is therefore with good reason that men are incredulous when they hear those who carry it on, assert that they wish the use of ardent spirits were entirely discontinued. So it cannot be doubted, that open hostility to temperance societies, manifested by many persons, making otherwise a fair profession of religion, is an effectual stumbling-block in the way of weak christians, and a great hindrance to the advance of the cause among people of the world.— There is surely no temptation to the use of liquor, presented by the sight of a miserable wretch wallowing in open degradation, in the filth of the streets and highways; nor even in visiting his comfortless, squalid, desolate mansion, and weeping over the degradation and want of his heart-broken family. The man of fair character, of much influence, of sober habits, respected, looked to for guidance, relied on for discretion and prudence in worldly affairs, and strange as it sounds, a spiritual head among the people;—these are the men, whose use of spirits makes it reputable to use them; whose defence of their use stops the mouths of those who begin to have doubts about the lawfulness of their use; whose contemptuous sneers at temperance societies, and open opposition to temperance efforts, prevent the weak and unsettled from joining them, and harden the bold opposer in his foolish self-confidence; whose traffic in the article, tempts thousands to use it, who otherwise would not; and whose whole influence, in relation to this subject, is precisely the influence which creates and perpetuates the far greater part of all the evils of drunkenness. Will such professors of religion let us know how they are able to reconcile such conduct with the principle which governed the apostle, who declared his readiness to give up even the use of meat, rather than cause his brother to offend: or how they interpret that solemn declaration, that they who so sin against their brethren, and wound their weak consciences, do in fact sin against Christ?

8. Besides the performance of those duties of religion, which are, so to speak, strictly personal in their nature and their results, and those also which are to be performed to our brethren, and to the persons around us, individually considered; there are other large classes of duties, to the church itself, in its associated character, and

to the world of sinners around us. We owe duties to the State, as members of it; and we owe other duties to the human race, as being men ourselves;—we owe duties to every christian, as such, and other duties to the church of our Redeemer; and so we owe duties to God, that concern merely our personal state in his sight, and others that relate to his dealings with others through us. Turn which way we may, we are met by the most imperious obligations to act in a manner, which I am entirely unable to reconcile with the practice of the trade in spirits. To specify a few cases, as a sample of cases, which are numberless. We are under the highest possible obligations to be workers together with God, for the conversion of the world. But the use of the very article which it is our business to scatter over the earth, may, often does, and perhaps necessarily tends to kill the souls of men. How can the duty and the conduct stand together? The world is to be converted through the instrumentality of the church, and for this reason, as well as for many others, the church must be kept pure, that it may be efficient; and the duty of keeping it pure, of edifying it, devolves in some degree on every christian. But here the very mode of living is a stumbling-block; and the means of life to you are the certain means of weakening and corrupting the church, by the propagation of the sin of drunkenness, under which the church has suffered more perhaps than from any other single sin. And yet men can say that these things do agree.

9. It is one object of our being in this world, to be witnesses for God—to be the living monuments of the reality of religion, and of its purity and power, to which appeal may be had to illustrate and confirm the truth, to establish the faithfulness of our master, to confirm the faith of those who doubt, and to shut the mouths of scoffers. There is a way of being faithful in our testimony as to the reality and the nature of religion, at the same time that we reject and betray religion itself. Judas Iscariot, while he betrayed Christ, told the truth about him; and although he sold him, his true attestation was, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood.” So there is a way in which we may degrade religion, and bear false witness against the Lord of light, while we profess to revere his name, and to walk in his statutes. Paul thought he did God ser-

vice, when breathing out threatening and slaughter, he persecuted from city to city those who were dearer to him than the apple of his eye.—So those christians who are engaged in this trade, ought to ponder well, whether it may not be, that while they verily think within themselves that God allows them to pursue this business, they are in fact bringing religion into disrepute by their testimony, that a man may be really and vitally imbued with the spirit of Christ, and yet knowingly, and with purpose aforethought, help to pour upon the world the complicated miseries which are produced by his daily business. They ought seriously to consider whether they do not betray the trust reposed in them by their creator, when under the sanction of his name they pursue a line of conduct of which a portion of the world itself is ashamed; and practice upon the authority of Jesus Christ, a business which hundreds of persons who do not pretend to know Christ savingly, would shudder at the thought of allowing these very christians to follow under the sanction of their names. In short, if our lives, or conduct be inconsistent with religion, the worst service we can do religion, is to make men believe we regulate ourselves by it. It is better to betray religion at once, and acknowledging that we have done so, take the blame on ourselves, than to do sinful, suspicious or doubtful things, and then lay upon religion the responsibility of allowing them.—This view of duty is exhibited in a light singularly clear when we call to mind the fact, that we are not only required to be pure, but to avoid even the appearance of evil. The garment on which the flesh hath left one spot, so far from being fit for those who hope to stand clothed in white before the throne of God, is to be detested by us as polluted, even here. And this duty is inculcated in direct connexion with the exercise of such compassion as will enable us to save others, and that from the fire itself. It was Cain who said he was not his brother's keeper! And until we have Cain's spirit, and commit Cain's deed, it ill becomes us to use Cain's language, or to govern ourselves by the scope of his views of duty. But can there be a self-delusion so complete and incredible, as to allow any follower of the Lamb to be thoroughly convinced, that the whiskey trade is totally exempt from all appearance of evil? If not, what right has he to follow it?

10. So far, however, is this calling from being able to escape such a charge, that the fact is, no christian could take a more certain method of bringing his christian character under suspicion, wherever the cause of temperance has been fairly laid before society, than by persisting in it. So thorough is the conviction wrought upon the public mind, that the habitual use of spirits is improper, and that it is criminal for us to promote its use, that on the one hand a sort of concealment is often practiced in obtaining the article, and its use accompanied with some slight excuse; and on the other hand, they who still persist in its use, not unfrequently shun, of purpose, the christian rum-seller. They who do not practice, see in others the necessity of consistency; they who hate religion, sometimes dislike to see her put to shame; they who know that their conduct is amiss, often hate the constraint of giving to evil a decent name, the unnatural stiffness and prudery of buying and using alcohol, in the name of virtue and piety! Now it is certain that a man has no more right to use his influence for a wrong purpose, than he has to use his money; nor half as much right to hurt his reputation as to waste his estate. Our christian character is God's as really as our body or our spirits;—and while it is most absurd fastidiousness, if not arrant cowardice and treachery to hold back and temporise on every difficult occasion, lest use might hurt an influence which has no value but for use; yet it is also criminal to waste in personal and selfish, even if innocent; and oh! how much more clearly in unworthy and improper pursuits, that just estimation among men, which is the source of so much satisfaction, and might be the means of so much usefulness to our fellow beings, and glory to him who bestowed it on us.

11. There is no point of christian conduct better settled, than the duty of submitting ourselves with meekness and alacrity to the admonitions, the exhortations, the guidance, and where authority exists, the rule, of our brethren, especially, those who are over us in the Lord. A solemn public declaration to this effect is required from every congregation, on the installation of every minister; and the same is exacted from the minister himself under all the solemnities of an official oath. It is with reference to the assumed existence of this duty, and the unquestioned reason for it existing in the

certainty, that the whole body is more likely to know the will of God than any of its parts, that our entire system of church order is constructed. Undoubtedly the right of private judgment remains; but it remains subject to the limitations already stated. Undoubtedly liberty of conscience is still to be sacred; but so preposterous a statement will, it is presumed, never be ventured among men, as that brandy is sold as a drink by the command of God, and that you cannot keep an honest conscience unless you continue to sell it. Unless this monstrous ground be taken, it is difficult to perceive how christians can refuse to comply with the known wishes of the christian public in relation to this subject. In the Presbyterian denomination, especially, where it is certain that so very large a majority of its members, Ruling Elders and Bishops, have pronounced the temperance reformation to be the cause of Christ, where so many of its Congregations, Church Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods, and the General Assembly of the whole denomination, have distinctly declared the traffic in spirits to be morally wrong; it is impossible to comprehend, how its members can continue the trade, and at the same time duly regard the exhortations of their brethren, and submit themselves with becoming deference to those authorities established by God for the edification of his church.

Upon the whole, it seems, that the clearest and most rigid demonstration is incapable of conducting to any result, with more indisputable certainty, than any candid comparison of christian duty, with the traffic in Alcohol, must establish that they are utterly irreconcilable. Nor is it to be supposed that the particular rules of christian conduct, which have been selected in this discussion, are the only ones, or even in all cases the most obvious ones, that show the discrepancy between the laws of God, and this dreadful trade. So completely is the entire spirit of the gospel, the absolute reverse, of the entire spirit which maintains and justifies this trade: that instead of its requiring an induction harsh, and strained, to bring the rum-seller within the compass of the second of the two passages of scripture, placed at the head of this discourse; it is impossible to evade the sweeping conclusion, educed out of the first of those scriptures, namely, that the existence of any thorough faithfulness, upon the least point of christian duty, is incompatible with the temper and

state, which, with full light, obstinately persists in this murderous trade.

II. We pass to Christian Manufacturers of Ardent Spirits.

1. In placing the venders, in the front of the argument, it was not designed to intimate that they are more particularly criminal than the other classes who promote in other ways the use of spirits. But as their case presents the subject in its most naked and disembarassed form ; it was thought best to begin with them. It is true indeed that the nature of their business brings such as are retailers, more directly in contact with the evidences of the ruin they are producing ; and leaves them with less excuse, for the perpetration of evil, with knowledge and deliberation not only ; but under circumstances, in which every heart that can feel at all, must be often penetrated with disgust, and wrung with pity. But the office of the executioner, though less respectable, is not more criminal, than that of the tyrant who dooms the victim.—So he who sells poison by the hogshead, must be strongly liable to self-delusion, if he supposes the evil is the less because he does not open his eyes to see its effects ; or that his case is morally better, than his who sells the same poison by the drop, and stands by to see its terrible fruits.—Now manufacturers of spirits, of all kind, are, it is supposed, without exception, venders of the article. And whether the quantities in which they vend it, be large or small, is immaterial in an estimate, of the moral character of the act itself. As dealers in the article, therefore, every manufacturer of it, is completely exposed to the force of all that has been already said.

2. There is however a sense peculiar to themselves in which manufacturers are chargeable with all the evils resulting from the traffic in spirits. The pious manufacturer in his quiet and wealthy retirement will perhaps be startled when he is told, that he is an accessory before the fact, that is a joint perpetrator, with the vilest keeper of the basest dram-shop for bloated ruffians, that exists in the filthiest purlieus of our cities. What ! the respectable, the temperate, the circumspect manufacturer, an accomplice with the wretch who in a den reeking with abominations, barter whiskey to slaves for stolen goods, to creatures who think themselves human for the rags that ought to cover their children's nakedness, to mendicants

for their daily pittance of broken victuals, and sends them all away infuriated with his poison, to beg, to plunder, and to act the brute afresh! Accomplice to such as these! And why not? Does he not know that the article he manufactures, makes men madmen, and thieves, and brutal, and hardened, and infamous? Does he not know that it will be obtained, under the knawings of an appetite as insatiate as the grave, and that when obtained, all that is noble, and wise, and virtuous, yea and human in man, dies before its blasting progress? Does he not make it expressly to be sold for gain, that it may be drank; knowing that these effects must follow, if more than a certain quantity is drank—and does he take any trouble to prevent the possibility of too much being drank?—What more need we say against the vender? or how could he vend at all if it were not for the manufacturer? To look upon the ravages of sin, and simply approve of them as good, without doing or even intending to do the same things, is to show a heart in love with sin. But to procure the recurrence of such sins, in whatever way, and for whatever purpose, is to make ourselves personally responsible for the very sins that shall be perpetrated. To do this for gain, believing ourselves innocent, is to be blinded by the god of this world, and to sell the truth. To do it for gain, when we are sure the thing is wrong, is the grossest form of that covetousness which is idolatry. The gospel of God commands us not to be partakers of the sins of other men; and the manner of giving the precept shows that we are to be discreet and circumspect, in approving even that which is apparently good, lest we give to evil, the most remote and constructive sanction. How will the christian manufacturer excuse his open connivance at all the guilt, springing out of a trade, which he, for the sake of gain not only tolerates but promotes?—The word of life tells us that to wish success to a sinner, in his iniquity, or to desire God to bless him, is to make ourselves partakers of his evil deeds. But here is a traffic shown to be hateful to God, to which the religious manufacturer, not only wishes success, but upon the success of which his own success depends, and for the success of which he furnishes the indispensable means! And yet he will despise the poor miserable dram-seller, and with self-complacent slick-

ness deplore the evils of intemperance! If our gospel be hid, is the terrible declaration of God, it is hid to them that are lost!—

3. To this class may be most appropriately referred the cases of those who, although they do not manufacture ardent spirits, furnish the material from which it is distilled, or in a great variety of ways, afford facilities for its production. If it is immoral to sell, or to distil spirits as a drink, it is too obvious to need remark, that it is also immoral, knowingly to provide means for doing either. If I sell to the manufacturer the materials of which whiskey is made, knowing the use to which he will probably apply them, and knowing the consequences which will probably result from the use of the liquor to be made from them; it is very obvious, that I sell, for the price of the material, not only my connivance, but my aid in producing all the sin and misery that is to follow. This is so plain, that no man pretends to question the principle, in the case of a shop-keeper, for example, who sells a knife to a murderer knowing that he intends to butcher every one he meets; or of an apothecary who sells arsenic to one who, he knows, intends to poison his neighbours with it. It may be alleged that we cannot know how the spirits will be used. We may not perhaps arrive at absolute certainty as to how they will be used; but we can as to how they will not be used. We are certain, they can do no good, which makes the innocence of aiding in their production very questionable. And the probabilities are as ninety-nine to one, at the least, that they will do harm; which establishes the guilt of furnishing the means of distilling them as a drink.—So again no supposition can be more incorrect, than the excuse used to justify the conduct here called in question, that we are not bound to know what becomes of our property after we have parted with it. I suppose the commonest prudence would require us to be satisfied, it was not to be used to destroy ourselves: but God commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and of course to guard all his interests so far as our conduct affects them, as strictly as our own. In the common course of business it might be taken for granted, that things lawful, would be lawfully used; with things unlawful no christian has any business to meddle. But if we should have just reason to suspect that indifferent things, were to be converted to sinful purposes, we are bound not to aid, nor con-

nive at such perversion. If, as is the case here, we are sure this is to be so, and abet the doing of the act,—so far from being innocent, we become knowingly partakers of the evil deed, and wilfully responsible for all the consequences. On a point so full of scripture testimony, and so level to the simplest common sense, it is strange that any honest inquirer after truth should ever doubt.

III. The remaining class embraces all professors of christianity, who being neither manufacturers nor venders of distilled spirits, yet are not members of temperance societies,—and who oppose or refuse to aid, the temperance cause.

1. If it be in any way, or upon any principle, improper for christians to traffic in spirits, to distil them, or to furnish facilities for either; surely they who oppose such conduct, although they do not practice it,—they who by their support and countenance, give sanction to such employments, they who offer the most direct temptation to continue the business by purchasing the article, and the most weighty argument for its use by drinking it themselves; all such, are, upon the plainest principles of the gospel, as clearly guilty as the venders and makers themselves. If no one purchased the article it would very soon cease to be made; if it be immoral then to sell, how is it otherwise to buy? If it be the use of the article as a drink, which is the cause of all the miseries, arising from the traffic, most certainly he cannot be innocent who continues its use. And this is the more obvious, when we consider, that it is the better class of consumers, temperate drinkers, who afford the only real patronage that keeps up the trade. The abandoned and ruined drunkard, has little with which to purchase rum; and even if he had the christian rum-dealer has commonly too much regard for appearances, to permit even his own victims, to be exhibited in his own shop. Their substance has been extracted, and they are handed down to the next class of operators, and so downwards to the last brutal operation, that turns over the half-naked, stultified, and putrifying wretch, to the tender mercies of the house of correction, or to the dissecting knife of young beginners upon the human frame. If one single principle amongst all those heretofore laid down be true, they who actively encourage the use of spirits as a drink, and

they who actively oppose the temperance cause, cannot possibly be innocent.

2. But it is not necessary that this opposition should be active, in order to make us criminal. Men are worthy of condemnation for not doing all the good they can. And such, it becomes christians to remember, is the principle on which the final sentence of the wicked will rest. I was a stranger and ye took me not in, sick and in prison, and ye visited me not; depart from me ye accursed! Oh! how touching is that forbearance of God, which even in the act of eternal separation, passes over our actual transgressions, and condemns us only for what we failed to do. And how hateful to our heavenly father, must be the sin of omitted duty, when for it alone, he is ready to cut us off from all inheritance with the just!—So also, we are justly held responsible, for all the evil it was in our power to have prevented. If I see my brother drowning, and might by throwing him a plank save his life, and failing to do so, let him perish,—am I not consenting to his death? If I see my friend's house on fire, and might even by great exertions, save his little ones from the flames; and calmly fold my arms and behold the ruin, who would defend me from the double charge of being at once a murderer and a brute? And how shall we acquit ourselves to each other or to God, if we stand idly by, and while heaven and earth are moving, to save men from the multiplied woes, and curse of drunkenness, look with cold and averted eye, upon the glorious struggle? Who could behold the standard of his country borne down by the tide of battle, and not rush with noble enthusiasm to rescue its beloved stars and stripes, or die beneath its ample folds? And shall the soldiers of the cross bear back in such an hour as this, when along the embattled host, the cry goes out, come to the help of the Lord, against the mighty? Oh! brethren, treasure in your hearts the knowledge given to us, from on high, that it was not those who passed by on the other side, but it was he that did him good, and rescued him from suffering, that was neighbour to him who fell among thieves.

3. To say therefore that we have no interest in this subject, personal or otherwise, and therefore see no occasion to take part in it, exhibits no solid excuse; but rather the existence of a state of opi-

nion and feeling, that is shown to be inconsistent with the spirit of Christ. He who commits crime for the sake of gain, may be said to love money more than virtue, and is thoroughly and utterly devoted to his own supposed advantage. He who commits or connives at crime, for the gratification of his lusts, is in love with sin for its own sake, and is necessarily the enemy of all that requires righteousness for its support. But he who without admitting that he loves sin, yet commits it, in the mere recklessness of a heart loosened from all restraint, and encourages or disregards crime and suffering, out of a total indifference to the interests, the wants, or the happiness of mankind, deserves to have applied to him the description which defines the greatest criminal amongst men—he is an enemy to the human race. In the view of such truths as these, it is most strange that any, professing to be guided by moral principle, not to say by christian purity, should consider themselves at liberty to promote the ruin of mankind, or to look with indifference upon such a catastrophe, or even to decline pressing forward with alacrity and zeal to the aid of those who would avert it.

In conclusion of the whole matter then, it seems most certain that the faithfulness which God requires of his people, imperiously urges them to discontinue at once the traffic, the manufacture and the use of ardent spirits, and to employ all lawful means to procure their banishment from among men; and that the doing of this is to be considered as one evidence of christian character, and as the strongest indication how they would act in any other affairs of the greatest importance. So also, the refusal to do this thing, thus manifestly required by faithfulness to God, to the world, and to ourselves, is a clear offence, not only against one point of the law, but against the very spirit of the gospel itself; and therefore while it exhibits a state of heart, that would, under suitable temptation, transgress the whole law, draws down upon those so refusing its entire condemnation.

The truth is, there are only two reasons having the least show of sense in them, why people should refuse to unite in promoting the temperance reformation. The first is, that they love liquor; the second, that they expect to be, some-how, gainers by it. Into

one of these, every pretext that is not false or absurd, finally resolves itself. He who is governed by the first of these reasons, is already in danger of the drunkard's fate; and he who guides himself by the second, is totally indifferent to that fate.

The practical inferences from this view of the subject are so clear as to require only to be stated, to commend themselves to all who admit the truth of what has been said.

1. Every professor of religion is bound either to join a temperance society immediately, and co-operate with us in this manner, in the suppression of intemperance, or to point out to us a better way of achieving the same results, and unite with others in that.

2. Persons calling themselves christians, who obstinately persist in refusing to do one of those two things, have just grounds to fear that they are greatly declined from the life of God in their souls, if not the strongest reasons to question the soundness of their faith, and the reality of their christian hopes.

3. All real followers of Jesus Christ ought to redouble their efforts to spread the light of truth on this vital subject throughout the world; and especially, first and chiefly, ought they to use their might to reform and purify the church in this behalf.

This discussion has confined itself exclusively to the moral aspect of the subject, and that with an eye to christians. With reference to those who do not profess to love the Lord Jesus Christ, it has been thought best at this time, not to consider with regard to them this question of morality, upon the bases which have been given to moral systems, by the figments and conjectures of weak and erring man; but to go at once to the law and to the testimony of God. Relying rather upon this, that if christians were bound to act in a particular way, all men were bound to act so too; for all men are bound to be christians. Christians have no doubt higher obligations to love and serve God than other men;—but all men are under infinite obligations to do both,—and therefore to do all that has been attempted to be enforced in this discourse. Indeed many of the most ardent friends of temperance come precisely under this description; and whatever other duties they neglect, see and practice this. Such are entitled to the thanks of every friend

of man. They give us reason to hope that they are not far from the kingdom of heaven. One thing at least is sure, that while those who name the name of Jesus, may for transgression, be at last denied by him; they who obey the precepts of his word and manifest the spirit of his Son, must for every such act receive the peaceful testimony of an honest conscience, and the approving smile of God.

