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GREAT TEMPERANCE LECTURE

By Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage

JOSEPH'S brethren dipped their brother's coat in goat's blood, and then brought the dabbled garment to their father, cheating him with the idea that a ferocious animal had slain him, and thus hiding their infamous behavior.

But there is no deception about that which we hold up to your observation tonight. A monster such as never ranged African thicket or Hindostan jungle hath tracked this land and with bloody maw hath strewn the continent with the mangled carcasses of whole generations; and there are tens of thousands of fathers and mothers who could hold up the garment of their slain boy, truthfully exclaiming: "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him."

There has, in all ages and climes, been a tendency to the improper use of stimulants. Noah, as if disgusted with the prevalence of water in his time (laughter), took to strong drink. By this vice, Alexander the Conqueror was conquered. The Romans at their feasts fell off their seats with intoxication. Four hundred million of our race are opium eaters. India, Turkey and China have groaned with the desolation; and by 't have been quenched such lights as Halley and DeQuincey. One hundred millions are the victims of the betel-nut, which have specially blasted the East Indies. Three hundred millions chew hashish, and Persia, Brazil and Africa suffer the delirium. The Tartars employ murrowa; the Mexicans, the agave; the people of Guarapo, an intoxicating quality taken from sugar-cane; while a great multitude that no man can number, are disciples of alcohol. To it they bow. Under it they are trampled. In its trenches they fall. On its ghastly holocaust they burn.

Could the muster-roll of this great army be called, and they could come up from the dead, what eye could endure the reeking, festering putrefaction and beastliness? What heart could endure the groan of agony?

Drunkenness: Does it not jingle the burglar's key? Does it not whet the assassin's knife? Does it not cock the highwayman's pistol? Does it not set the incendiary's torch? Has it not set the physician reeling into the sick-room; and the minister with his tongue thick into the pulpit? Did not an exquisite poet, from the very top of his fame, fall a gibbering sot, into the gutter, on his way to be married to one of the fairest daughters of New England, and at the very hour the bride was decking herself for the altar; and did he not die of delirium tremens, almost unattended, in a hospital?

Tamerlane asked for one hundred and sixty thousand skulls with which to build a pyramid to his own honor. He got the skulls, and built the pyramid. But if bones of all those who have fallen as a prey to dissipation could be piled up, it would make a vaster pyramid.

Who will gird himself for the journey, and try with me to scale this mountain of the dead—going up miles high on human carcasses, to find still other peaks far above, mountain above mountain, white with the bleached bones of drunkards?

We have too much law. The Sabbath has been sacrificed to the rum traffic. To many of our people, the best day of the week is the worst. Bakers must keep their shops closed on the Sabbath. It is dangerous to have loaves of bread going out on Sunday. The shoe store is closed; severe penalty will attack the man who sells boots on the Sabbath. But down with the window-shutters of the grog-shops! Our laws shall confer particular honor upon the rum-traffickers. All other trades must stand aside for these. Let our citizens who have disgraced themselves by trading

in clothing and hosiery and hardware and lumber and coal, take off their hats to the rum-seller, elected to particular honor. It is unsafe for any other class of men to be allowed license for Sunday work. But swing out your signs, on ye traffickers in the peace of families, and in the souls of immortal men! Let the corks fly and the beer foam and the rum go tearing down the half-consumed throat of the inebriate. God does not see! Does he? Judgment will never come! Will it? (Voices "Yes! yes!")

People say, "Let us have more law to correct this evil." We have more law now than we can execute. In what city is there a mayoralty that dare do it? The fact is, that there is no advantage in having the law higher than public opinion. What would be the use of the Maine law in New York? Neal Dow, the mayor of Portland, came out with a posse and threw the rum of the city into the street. But I do not believe that there are three mayors in the United States with his courage or nobility of spirit.

I do not know but that God is determined to let drunkenness triumph, and the husbands and sons of thousands of our best families be destroyed by this vice, in order that our people, amazed and indignant, may rise up and demand the extermination of this municipal crime. There is a way of driving down the hoops of a barrel so tight that they break.

We can't regulate intemperance. We are in this country, at this time, trying to regulate this evil by a tax on whiskey. You might as well try to regulate the Asiatic cholera, or the smallpox, by taxation. The men who distill liquors are, for the most part, unscrupulous; and the higher the tax the more inducement to illicit distillation. New York produces forty thousand gallons of whiskey every twenty-four hours; and the most of it escapes the tax. The most vigilant officials fail to discover the cellars and the vaults and sheds where this work is done.

Oh, the folly of trying to restrain an evil by government tariffs! If every gallon of whiskey made, if every flask of wine produced, should be taxed a thousand dollars, it would not be enough to pay for the tears it has wrung out of the eyes of widows and orphans, nor for the blood it has dashed on the altars of the Christian church, nor for the catastrophe of the millions it has destroyed forever.

Oh! we are a Christian people! From Boston a ship sailed for Africa, with three missionaries and twenty-two thousand gallons of New England rum on board. Which will have the most effect; the missionaries or the rum?

Shall we try the power of the pledge? There are thousands of men who have been saved by putting their names to such a document. I know it is laughed at; but there are men who, having once promised a thing, do it. "Some have broken the pledge." Yes; they were liars. But all men are not liars. I do not say that it is the duty of all persons to make such signature; but I do say that it will be the salvation of many of you.

The glorious work of Theobald Matthew can never be estimated. At his hand four millions of people took the pledge, including eight prelates and seven hundred of the Roman Catholic clergy. A multitude of them were faithful.

Dr. Justin Edwards said that ten thousand drunkards had been permanently reformed in five years.

Through the great Washingtonian movement in Ohio, sixty thousand took the pledge; in Pennsylvania, twenty-nine thousand; in Kentucky, thirty thousand, and multitudes in all

parts of the land. Many of these had been habitual drunkards. One hundred and fifty thousand of them, it is estimated, were permanently reclaimed. Two of these men became foreign ministers, one a governor of a State; several were sent to Congress. Hartford reported six hundred reformed drunkards; Norwich, seventy-two; Fairfield, fifty; Sheffield, seventy-five. All over the land reformed men were received back into the churches that they had before disgraced; and households were reestablished. All up and down the land there were gratulations and praise to God.

The pledge signed, to thousands has been the proclamation of emancipation. (Applause.)

There is no cure but prohibition.

I think that we are coming at last to treat inebriation as it ought to be treated, namely, as an awful disease, self-inflicted, to be sure, but nevertheless a disease. Once fastened upon a man, sermons will not cure him; temperance lectures will not eradicate the taste; religious tracts will not arrest it; the gospel of Christ will not arrest it. Once under the power of this awful thirst, the man is bound to go on; and if the foaming glass were on the other side of perdition, he would wade through the fires of hell to get it. A young man in prison had such a strong thirst for intoxicating liquors, that he cut off his hand at the wrist, called for a bowl of brandy in order to stop the bleeding, thrust his wrist into the bowl and then drank the contents.

Stand not, when the thirst is on him, between a man and his cups! Clear the track for him! Away with the children; he would tread their life out! Away with the wife; he would dash her to death! Away with the Cross; he would run it down! Away with the Bible; he would tear it up for the winds! Away with heaven; he considers it worthless as a straw! "Give me the drink! Give it to me; Though hands of blood pass up the bowl, and the soul trembles over the pit,—the drink! Give it to me! Though it be pale with tears; though the froth of everlasting anguish float in the foam; give it to me! I drink to my wife's woe; to my children's rags; to my eternal banishment from God and hope and heaven! Give it to me! the drink!"

The rum fiend is coming into your homes.

Oh, how this rum fiend would like to go and hang up a skeleton in your beautiful house, so that when you opened the front door to go in you would see it in the hall; and when you sit at your table you would see it hanging from the wall; and when you open your bedroom you would find it stretched upon your pillow; and waking at night you would feel its cold hand passing over your face and pinching at your heart!

There is no home so beautiful but it may be devastated by the awful curse. It throws its jargon into the sweetest harmony. What was it that silenced Sheridan's voice and shattered the golden scepter with which he swayed parliaments and courts? What foul spirit turned the sweet rhythm of Robert Burns into a tuneless ballad? What brought down the majestic form of one who awed the American senate with his eloquence and after a while carried him home dead drunk from the office of the secretary of state? What was it that crippled the noble spirit of one of the heroes of the late war, until the other night, in a drunken fit, he reeled from the deck of a Western steamer and was drowned! There was one whose voice we all loved to hear. He was one of the most classic orators of the century. People wondered why a man of so pure a heart and so excellent a life should have such a sad countenance always.

They knew not that his wife was a sot.

"Woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink!" If this curse was proclaimed about the comparatively harmless drinks of olden times, what condemnation must rest upon those who tempt their neighbors when intoxicating liquor means coppers, nux vomica, logwood, opium, sulphuric acid, vitriol, turpentine and strychnine! "Pure liquors," pure destruction! Nearly all the genuine champagne made is taken by the courts of Europe. What we get is horrible swill!

Women! we call upon you to help us.

I call upon woman for her influence in the matter. Many a man who had reformed and resolved on a life of sobriety, has been pitched off into the old habits by the delicate hand of her whom he was anxious to please.

Bishop Potter says that a young man, who had been reformed, sat at a table, and when the wine was passed to him refused to take it. A lady sitting at his side said, "Certainly you will not refuse to take a glass with me!" Again he refused. But when she had derided him for a lack of manliness, he took the glass and drank it. He took another, and another; and putting his fist hard down on the table, said, "Now, I drink until I die." In a few months his ruin was consummated.

I call upon those who are guilty of these indulgences to quit the path of death. Oh, what a change it would make in your home! Do you see how everything there is being desolated! Would you not like to bring back joy to your wife's heart, and have your children come out to meet you with as much confidence as once they showed? Would you not like to rekindle the home lights that long ago were extinguished? It is not too late to change. It may not entirely obliterate from your soul the memory of wasted years and a ruined reputation, nor smooth out from anxious brows the wrinkles which trouble has plowed. It may not call back unkind words uttered or rough deeds done—for, perhaps, in those awful moments you struck her! It may not take from your memory the bitter thoughts connected with some little grave; but it is not too late to save yourself and secure for God and your family the remainder of your fast-going life.

But perhaps you have not utterly gone astray. I may address one who may not have quite made up his mind. Let your better nature speak out. You take one side or the other in the war against drunkenness. Have you not the courage to put your foot down right, and say to your companions and friends: "I will never drink intoxicating liquor in all my life, nor will I countenance the habit in others." Have nothing to do with strong drink. It has turned the earth into a place of skulls, and has stood opening the gate to a lost world to let in its victims, until now the door swings no more upon its hinges, but day and night stands wide open to let in the agonized procession of doomed men.

Do I address one whose regular work in life is to administer to this appetite? I beg you get out of the business. If a woe be pronounced upon the man who gives his neighbor drink, how many woes must be hanging over the man who does this every day, and every hour of the day?

A philanthropist going up to the counter of a grog-shop, as the proprietor was mixing a drink for a toper standing at the counter, said to the proprietor, "Can you tell me what your business is good for?" The proprietor, with an infernal laugh, said, "It fattens graveyards!"

God knows better than you do your-

self the number of drinks you have poured out. You keep a list; but a more accurate list has been kept than yours. You may call it Burgundy, Bourbon, Cognac, Heidseck, Hock; God calls it strong drink. Whether you sell it in low oyster cellar or behind the polished counter of a first-class hotel, the divine curse is upon you. I tell you plainly that you will meet your customers one day when there will be no counter between you.

When your work is done on earth, and you enter the reward of your business, all souls of the men whom you have destroyed will crowd around you and pour their bitterness into your cup. They will show you their wounds and say, "You made them;" and point to their unquenchable thirst, and say, "You kindled it;" and rattle their chain, and say, "You forged it." Then their united groans will smite your ears, and with the hands, out of which you once picked the sixpences and the dimes, they will push you off the verge of great precipices; while, rolling up from beneath, and breaking among the crags of death, will thunder: "Woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink!"—From "Kings of the Platform and Pulpit," published by The Saalfeld Pub. Co., Akron, O.

Some years ago Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage spent a day at the Keeley Institute located at Dwight, Ill. The following extracts from his remarks while there and on his way returning voice his high appreciation of the value of the Keeley Institutes and the good they are performing.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage in his address to the patients at Dwight spoke as follows:

"This world has so many troubles, so many struggles, it wants all the help it can get, human and Divine. We want the grace of God, and we want medicine, and we want science, and we want surgery, and we want the Keeley cure!

"Now there is no man who owes more to the grace of God than I do, and while I live on earth and throughout all the ages of heaven, I propose to celebrate it; but there are certain things that the grace of God does not propose to do. There are certain things which surgery will never do, that medical science has never done, and they will never do it.

"Never let the time come in my history when I cease to extol the grace of God, but there are other men who need something besides that. Doctor Keeley struck the key when he said: 'This evil is a disease.'" (Applause.)

In speaking of a bright young man who had broken his father's and mother's heart, some time afterwards he inquired what the young man was doing and the reply was:

"He is trying the Keeley cure, and to make a long story short, he is redeemed and as fine a man in business as there is in New York. The Keeley cure saved him and nothing else under Heaven would. So I extol the grace of God and at the same time extol the common-sensical, scientific, earnest aid, experiment, effort, discovery. But there is no resisting it—we cannot read it down, we cannot talk it down—it will become triumphant and be recognized in all the land, and all the lands of earth. It has on it the mark of approval of the Lord God Almighty. That is my opinion, and I wish you all to be of good cheer."

On the train returning from the Keeley Institute at Dwight, Ill., in speaking to the representatives of the leading Chicago newspapers, Dr. Talmage made this important statement:

"Dr. Keeley's method of cure or system, or whatever you may call it, is a fact, it is no theory, no experiment, it is a God blessed fact, and now becomes simply a matter of testimony."—Adv.