

AN ADDRESS ON TEMPERANCE

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An Address on Temperance by William E. Channing

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WILLIAM E. CHANNING

**AN ADDRESS ON
TEMPERANCE**

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ADDRESS

ON TEMPERANCE,

BY

Edited
WILLIAM E. CHANNING. 1780 - 1842.

Delivered by request of the Council of the Massachusetts Temperance Society,
at the Odeon, Boston, February 28, 1837, the day appointed for the Simul-
taneous Meeting of the Friends of Temperance throughout the world.

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ADDRESS.

The author was obliged to omit several passages in delivering the following address. In some of these, perhaps, opinions may be found in which all the friends of temperance do not concur. The Society at whose request the address is published, is, of course, not responsible for what it did not hear. The author wishes to be understood as speaking in his own name alone.

ADDRESS.

I SEE before me the representatives of various societies for the promotion of temperance. It is a good and great cause, and I shall be grateful to God, if, by the service now allotted me, I can in any degree encourage them in their work, or throw new light on their path. The present occasion may well animate a Christian minister. What a noble testimony does this meeting bear to the spirit and influences of the Christian faith. Why is this multitude brought together? Not for selfish gratification, not for any worldly end, but for the purpose of arresting a great moral and social evil, of promoting the virtue, dignity, well being of men. And whence comes this sympathy with the fallen, the

guilty, the miserable? Have we derived it from the schools of ancient philosophy, or from the temples of Greece and Rome. No. We inherit it from Jesus Christ. We have caught it from his lips, his life, his cross. This meeting, were we to trace its origin, would carry us back to Bethlehem and Calvary. The impulse which Christ gave to the human soul, having endured for ages, is now manifesting itself more and more, in new and increasing efforts of philanthropy for the redemption of the world from every form of evil. Within these walls the authority of Christ has sometimes been questioned, his character traduced. To the blasphemer of that holy name, what a reply is furnished by the crowd which these walls now contain! A religion, which thus brings and knits men together, for the help, comfort, salvation of their erring, lost fellow creatures, bears on its front a broad, bright, unambiguous stamp of Divinity. Let us be grateful that we were born under its light, and more grateful still if we have been, in any measure, baptized into its disinterested and divine love.

I cannot hope, in the present stage of the temperance effort, to render any important aid to your cause by novelty of suggestion. Its friends have thoroughly explored the ground, over which I am to travel. Still every man, who is accustomed to think for himself, is naturally attracted to particular views or points in the most familiar subject ; and, by concentrating his thoughts on these, he sometimes succeeds in giving them a new prominence, in vindicating their just rank, and in securing to them an attention, which they may not have received, but which is their due.

On the subject of intemperance, I have sometimes thought, perhaps without foundation, that its chief, essential evil was not brought out as thoroughly and frequently as its secondary evils, and that there was not a sufficient conviction of the depth of its causes and of the remedies which it demands. With these impressions, I invite your attention to the following topics—the great essential evil of intemperance—the extent of its tempta-