

Temperance Pledge (1834)

At the heart of the temperance movement was a document called a pledge that people signed to stop drinking alcohol. In some cases, particularly in the early nineteenth century, people pledged to stop drinking hard or distilled spirits, such as whiskey and gin, only. In the very early days of the temperance movement a distinction was made between the different types of alcohol with wine and beer viewed as healthy and beneficial while whiskey and gin were considered toxic to both body and soul. Later, it became more popular to give up alcohol totally or to become a "teetotaler."

Usually the pledge was signed in a public meeting and witnessed by all the people present. This was an important component of the temperance movement. Making a public declaration reinforced its importance and made it more difficult to reverse. Those who witnessed your actions were often available later to give you strength in keeping your word.

Temperance pledges came in all sizes and shapes. They could be as simple as a blank notebook or a ledger with a handwritten or printed pledge at the top of each page. Such ledgers would hold hundreds of signatures. In other cases the pledge was an elaborately printed document like this one from Amherst College. A pledge such as this might well have been framed and displayed as a further testament to the individual's belief in the temperance cause and as a physical manifestation of the signer's honesty and integrity.



This certifies that Rufus P. Stebbings is a member of the
 Antivenenean Society of Amherst College

July 29, 1834

Signed by H. Humphrey, President and Edward Hitchcock, Secretary

This is a voluntary association for the preservation of health and the correction of public opinion, each member having signed the following Preamble & Resolution.

Whereas the undersigned, Officers and Students in Amherst College are Convinced that it is best for us to dispense with Ardent Spirit, Wine, Opium and Tobacco, as articles of luxury and diet _____ therefore,

Resolved: that relying on Divine aid we hereby pledge to one another our mutual Promise, that while connected with this Institution, we will abstain entirely from These articles, except as medicine, and the use of wine at the Lord's Supper. _____

* Venenate: to poison; to infect with poison. An anti-venenean society would be against poisoning, in this case poisoning the body with ardent spirit, wine, opium, etc. (Definition of venenate from the 1835 edition of *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, by Noah Webster, published in New York, by N. and J. White.)

Temperance Children Literature (Pick One)

<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-ten.htm>

<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-preface.htm>

<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-excerpts.htm>

Temperance Advice Literature (Pick One)

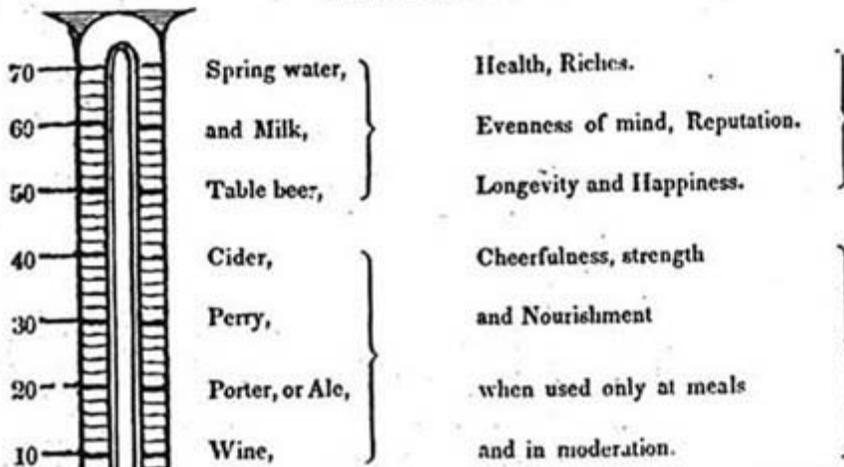
<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-marry.htm>

<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-almanac.htm>

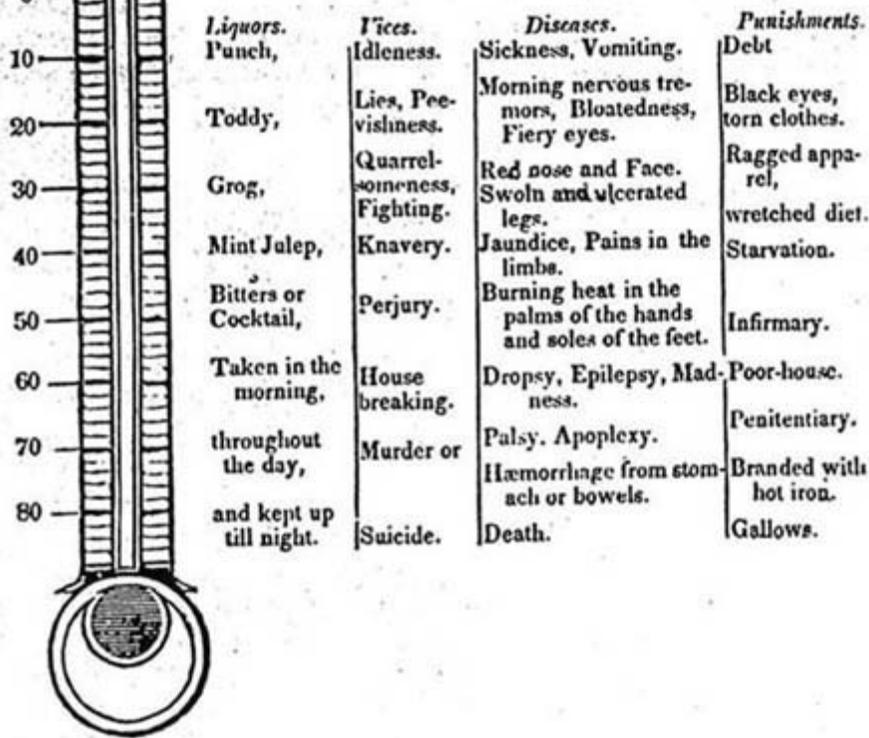
<http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/t-massspy.htm>

SCALE OF TEMPERANCE, AND EXCESS IN DRINKING LIQUORS; AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES.

TEMPERANCE.



EXCESS.



Death on the Striped Pig (1839)



Death on the Striped Pig; or an illustration of the present attitude of that noted animal as he appears in New England.

Respectfully dedicated to the real friends of the Temperance reform by their obedient serv't and fellow labourer—Chas Jewell

Published by WHIPPLE & HAMRELL, N° 9 Cornhill, Boston.

Go it, Stripes. You are the best servant I ever sent into the field.

I must do something to support my family, but these fanatics would rob me of my right. I keep a respectable house of refreshment & such houses "are indispensable to the welfare of the community." As to making free with my customers pockets, why if I did not do it, somebody else would, so there's not harm in that.

I tho't this would have bro't him up but he snaps it like a reed.

Moral suasion
Prohibitory Law

Hurra! He goes over the courts in spite of all opposition!

What a ferocious monster. Who'd have thought he could have broken so strong a barrier as this?

I like this "Critter" better than my pale horse.

"What a curse!" cannot something be done to stop him?

It is sad slow work, to be sure, but then we must take care of our party.

Temperance Tracts

Beechers Sermon

American Temperance

I fear the progress of this monster will not easily be checked.

Give yourself no uneasiness. He'll fetch up at the wall.

JUST LAWS

Truth | Female Influence | Love
Public Opinion | General Education
Reason | Common Sense
Reality | Faithful Pulpits
Independent Preachers
Parental affection
Heightened Patriotism | Self respect
Sabbath Schools | Correct example
Religion | Spirit of the Age

Union

Sargents
Tales

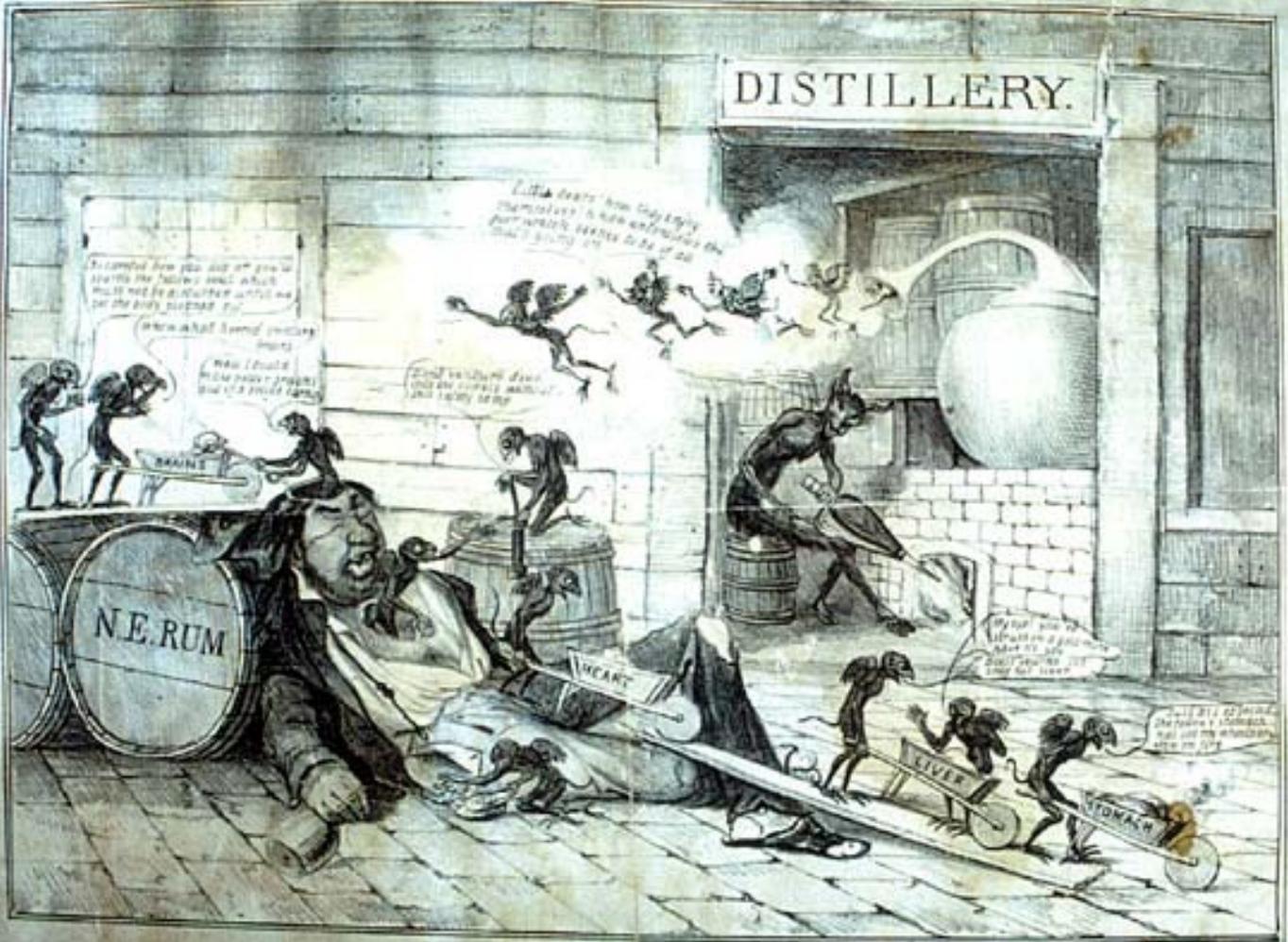
Thos. Moore's Lithography Boston

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1839 by Charles Jewett in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Rhode Island.

Death on the Striped Pig, or an illustration of the present attitude of that noted animal as he appears in New England.

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Published by Whipple & Damerll, No. 9 Cornhill, Boston



The victim of ardent Spirits

Pub^d by Whipple & Damrell, N^o 1 Cornhill, Boston.

Be careful how you dig or you'll startle the fellow's soul which must not be disturbed until we get the body cleaned out.

Whew, what horrid smelling brains.

Well I could make better brains out of a boiled turnip.

Little dears, how they enjoy themselves & how unconscious the poor wretch seems to be of all that's going on.

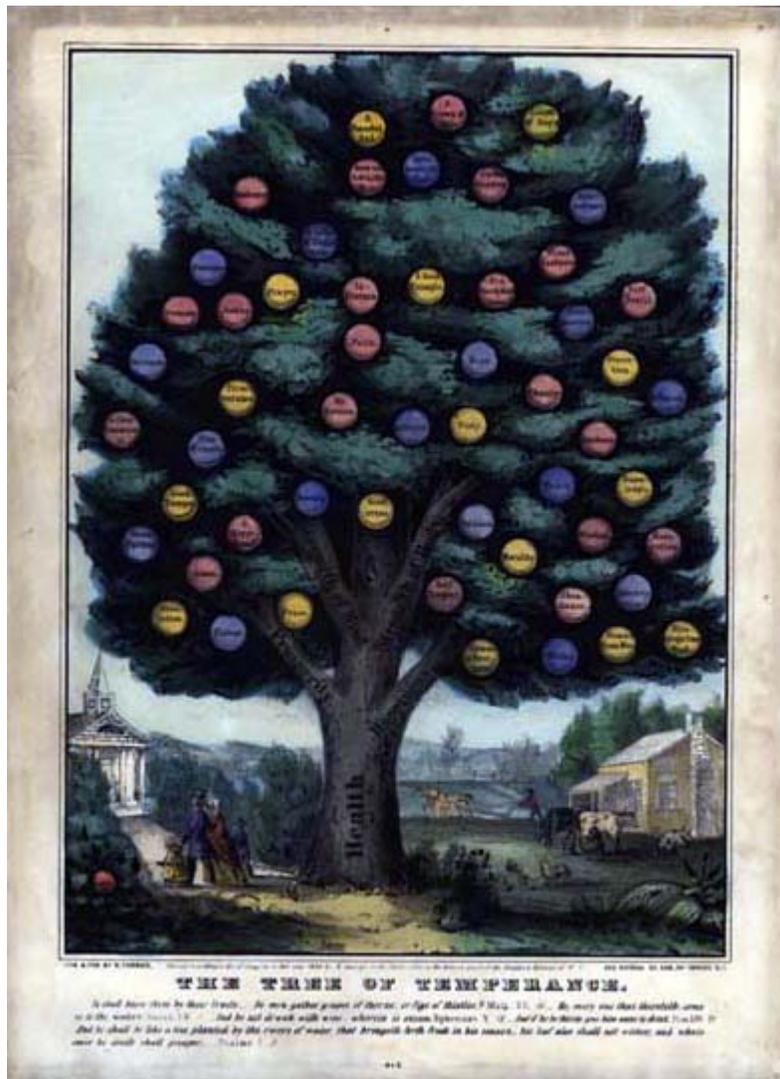
Don't venture down into the bowels without this safety lamp.

My eye! You've struck on a gold mine, haven't you?

Bless you!
No. It's only his liver.

Just as I
expected,
the fellow's
stomach has
set my
wheelbarrow
on fire.

The Tree of Temperance (1849)



A Peaceful End / A Crown of Life / Length of Days

Gentleness / Good will towards Men / Love towards God / Understanding

Benevolence

A Life of Usefulness

Courage / Steadfastness

Firmness / Justice / Prayer / Influence / A Good Example / Brotherly Kindness / Self Denial

Compassion

Fortitude / Faith / Hope / Discretion

Charity / Religion

Perseverance / Endurance / Activity / Piety / Goodness

A Clear Conscience / True Friends / Truth / Knowledge

Good Temper / Honesty / Good sense / Patience / Wisdom / Moderation

Good Children / A Happy Home / Morality

Love / Self Respect / Abundance / Industry

Resolution / Virtue / Peace / Success in Business / Riches / Honors from Men/ Blessings from God

Strength of Mind / Strength of Body

Prosperity / Happiness

Health



All sources and text are available from <http://www.teachushistory.org/Temperance/>.