
Charles Lamb on Drinking.

Charles Lamb had the misfortune to know by experience the awful effect of alcohol on mind and body. He cries out, in despair, at the end of his life, to the youth who would begin to drink:

The waters have gone over me, but out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would cry to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth (to whom I speak) to whom the flavor of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life.....look into my desolation and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will; to see his destruction and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not to be able to forget a time when it was otherwise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self-ruin; could he see my fevered eye--feverish with last night's drinking, and feverish-looking for this last night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of death out of which I cry hourly with feebleness and feebleness outcry to be delivered, --it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation, and to clasp his teeth against it.....

Oh, if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from the next clear spring could slake my thirst...how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children and child-like, holy hermit!

But is there no middle way between total abstinence and the excess which kills you? For your sake, reader, and that you may never attain to my experience, with pain I must utter the dreadful truth, that there is none--none that I can find. In the stage which I have reached, to stop short of that measure which is sufficient to draw on torpor and sleep, the benumbing apoplectic sleep of the drunkard, is to have taken none at all. The pain of the self-denial is all one.

And what that is, I had rather the reader should believe on my credit than know from his own trial. He will come to know it whenever he shall arrive in that state in which, paradoxical as it may appear, reason shall only visit him through intoxication; for it is a fearful truth, that the intellectual faculties by repeated acts of intemperance may be driven from their orderly sphere of action, their clear daylight ministries, until they shall be brought at last to depend, for the faint manifestation of their departing energies, upon the returning periods of the fatal madness to which they owe their devastation. The drinking man is never less himself than during his sober intervals. Evil is so far his good.

Charles Lamb didn't start out to be a confirmed drunkard. He, too, once thought that an "occasional" drink wouldn't hurt.

But those occasions became too frequent, as they do with many college men. The consequences of drinking here at Notre Dame--and everywhere for that matter--are too grave to gamble with.

Pledge cards are to be had at the Dillon and Sorin Pamphlet Racks. Sign one--to keep yourself out of trouble, to discipline your will, to do penance for your sins.
PRAYERS: (deceased) Rev. Daniel J. Morning, Sterling Col.; friend of a student. Ill, grandmother of Dennis Emanuel; sister of student. 3 special intentions.