No. 200.

On Dissipation.
Ecclesiastes II, 1. “Pleased to my heart, go to more
enjoy pleasure; I will prove thee with mirth, but
behold, this also is vanity.”

The first part of these words of King Solomon
have all probably, at one time or another, occurred
to our own hearts, we have all tried, enjoy pleasure.
shall prove thee with mirth”—but have made
rise of fortune enough to add with the wise
teacher, “this also is vanity.” Perhaps not, we
have not yet discovered that all this is
vanity; or, if we have discovered, we are continually
forgetting it. I should therefore take occasion
from these words of Solomon to speak briefly
these habits of dissipation, in the same extent
by to point out, as being nothing better than van-
ity.

I mean by dissipation all these ways of squa-
during time, or are connected with idleness since
the intemperate pursuit of pleasure, the thought-
less, restless disposition, no sooner
home to seek enjoyment in company or
wealth, makes them hate to be turned upon the
reason for amusement, or employment, I no the
simple, quiet, domestic engagements of the poor,
which embraces the losses of the rich & the loss,
needless folly as well as damage
rich & the poor;—needless folly as well as damage
forfegy. Dissipation is generally considered as
the way of the rich;—but it is by no means con-
the way of the rich;—but it is by no means con-
ya savage state surrounded by enemies or in
the loss to daily exertion. Abundance raise are the
in greatest of human blessings;—but as society as
the misery of human seem
names in refinement, the misery of human seem
able by tranquility of expense, as feel that they
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to eat their bread by the sweat of their brows. It is easy to observe that the employment of time is, with that part of the human species who are exempted from labor, generally more difficult concurrence among the number whose troublesome avocation is hunting. The hazardous business of chemists, with those whom they shall do with their time, the artless who have the happiness to chase wild.

The common expedient is pleasure, by all its means, in the language of the world, and of company, amusements, of diversions; no excessive pursuit of pleasure has received the name of dissipation; and it is a very important, though a tried, subject. Moderate indulgence though not incompatible with innocence, that it is by no means an easy task to point out the boundary lines between them. Some due to this, however, no may gain by an attentive observation of our own feelings of delight. In some, we perceive that the common
time of quiet repose becomes languid stimulums when domestic society grows tiresome is goods when we—then we find ourselves perpetually escaping from the present, hour, looking eagerly forward to moments of vanity, our, or weary, in the worst of evils. A brother, indeed, good

many gips of scenes of intemperance are the usual reasoning objects of our thoughts. Dissipation idle frivolity, then is the natural being fast hardening to decay, these is it time to remember that these things also are but vanity.

Among other objections to dissipation, it only be found to increase from mistaken notions of love. God has so formed us that all pleasures—
rived from the senses is short in proportion to its
violation. The most civilized men are the first to complain of the dulness, somberness
of the pleasures they pursue, the first to say that
enjoyment is gone: they cannot espouse, they do not love; they are wearied, but have
no ambition; wisdom or virtue are not to be reached.

At pleasure, there is no retreat; there is no denied to be irrecoverable. Fugitives, to trifle
in the brink of the grave, though experience
shakes at every step, this is not pleasure; it
was not for this that man was made after
the image of God. How changeable, frequently
is our estimate of all worldly things, the other
experience awakens us from the dreams of youth.

We begin with expecting to find in the common
circle of gay and lively pleasures, in company, in
scenes of festivity, all and destructive means
to every thing that can charm or make life
happy. What is it we do meet? Too often a

wearness of life, too often the escape from
a man's own heart, too often that melancholy
dejection which says, I have no pleasure in this,
but I have no courage to do better than this.

How different from this species of society is the
wise, necessary, hearty, but occasional intercourse
with our fellow creatures, wh. is founded upon
mutual regard, wh. is a contrast from previous
attitude, or a relaxation from previous toil, wh. there is some real interchange of understanding
some real gratification of regard or good feeling,
where melancholy is dispelled, cheerfulness pro-
moted, friendship confirmed, prejudice refuted,
reason sanctioned in her decisions, where people
meet together not to observe each other's dress
or manners, not to see but to see, but to have
the happy intercourse of rational minds, of good
dispersed hearts, without those artifices of cer-
mony, wh. are only another name for insinceri-
ty, hypocrisy. Yet how little of such joys
admire for their fine clothes. That the most important business of life is to shine off, to
learn how to make of others visits to well... Their
application is constant by feed with such centers of
the ridiculous objects... But what wonder, if they
fall into the notion of frivolous or vainish dis-
positions. And yet no one imagine that it was
easy thing to lay aside the habits of dissipation
at will. An industrious manhood is rarely gra-
ted in a youth of folly... the brain heated and
finds the notoriety of pleasure in the midst of the
gratifications of frivolous amusements. If he who
should have lived and died cherished the belief in
the form of this family, will carry his grey hairs,
hunger, weakness into the midst of sciences
debasing, I will exhibit the melancholy spec-
tage of deluge unequaled of misery without any
uniformity without reason. He will groan
without opening once, is nothing anything from the
lapse of years but the outward marks of decay,
and decrepitude.
One of the most striking consequences of diminution is the destruction of all the mental powers. To preserve the mind as a duty, it is an essential part of righteousness, the power of doing good increases immensely with the increase of these intellectual powers. But from this huge important duty, diminution almost unawares eats its way off. The intellect is wasted in mental pursuits; it is drowned in a sea of pleasure if you were there and find one who stands against these destructive effects of diminution, you will find that even he is not so distinguished as he might have been, the light of his mind is dimmed, though not extinguished by the pollution of objects, among which he has lived. It is very seldom that a frivolous, trifling, diminished man is respected for judgment or for sense...

But diminution is more injurious to the qualities of the heart, than to the powers of the mind. The diminished become impatient...
In the midst of these pleasures, in the full current of thoughtless, giddy joy, is your heart paused for a moment? It is not too much to give to salvation, to virtue, to success. For one moment pause, it think on the misery, the destitute of man; not far from the scenes of your joy are clustered together. Perhaps the children of labor, of sorrow, of affliction, seek it. Do you not too, again, seek that cure for dissipation? Did the near aspect of approach of the misery of man never affect your heart, to beat down your gout to the dust? Pause, think, you have a soul that may be saved or lost. Perhaps while you are in the midst of guilty dissipation, God may say unto you, 'therefore, this might shall they could be required of thee.' This second dream of fully will soon be over. In the sleep of death from the scene of dissipation, from the forever void of immediate pleasure, to the scene, hence where all the living must go. Are you the poor...
out bringing us any acquisition of virtue or knowledge, that our resolutions, frameless, are never proof against temptation, that our life is passing in wanton activity, to others or dignity to ourselves, this is the bitterness of owls at midnight, the blue hour, when the heart is covered with flowers of the same mirth as the cup, this is the hand writing on the wall, at the sight of the spirit of a man faint hearted within him, as the spirit of Belshazzar, the king, when the feasted with his thousand lords.

Is it possible, I would ask by way of conclusion, speaking of dissipation, is it possible that we are to be daily enlightened by the example of a perfect example of men, can we believe that the whole order of nature was prepared for the stupendous bivouy of man, and in the midst of the city, when the cloth is there, is it possible that a sot has stirred among us any of his existence in the futility of dissipation.

who is so far from the lands of his fathers, by consuming and death? What is our evidence to bring it to three score years of good works, or the sense of repentance, or the sense of God? By what privilege are you to be excepted from the curse of Adam? Has God given to me the power of the text, to another the smell of the blossom, the shadow of the leaf, the taste of the fruit? No, the destiny of man is to labour in one way or another, this life is to every description of condition of man, a life of labour, a life of exertion, a life of hardship, a body, a mind, and so far from perceiving this as a curse, as should regard it as a blessing, for we are so constituted that in any way or order we are must be busy, we must be doing something or one must be unhappy. Let me then trust, exhort you to shun dissipation as the sin which in all all that is good and noble, and so lost. I mean not merely that course, profigate dissipation, oh consists in money,
demoralising festivity... not that mere folly connected with intemperance, indecency, with heads to extravagance, profusion, parade churlish... but that less offensive form of dissipate gloss consists in idling away time in silly, unstable employments... in foolish or base... foolish talk... in the intercourse of trifling and those around us... in occupations at neither manner better nor worse in truth happier... It is astonishing how much of life is wasted away time and... done, without advancing us a step towards the great object for which we dream'd, live... without any more useful, more wise, or more virtuous. There are surely good employments of pure pleasure enough to fill all life with, without resorting to silly arts of guilty indulgences to build to quench the soul... In these employments then let us apply our strength of industry, of the more we may be happy without fear of without sorrow. God will look down upon us with contemplation on us thus offering his immortality, if for heaven... At home, July 13, 1823, afternoon. July 1823.
Ours, who art in He. — we thank thee for all the instructions of thine holy word, by which we are made acquainted with the condition of our being here, with these hopes and glories of the prospect of the future. Teach us, O, to remember the frailty and uncertainty of life, that our days on earth are as a shadow. Thou art eternal, but we are passing away; thou art the same yesterday, today, and ever, but we are hastening to the grave. Suit us not, Lord, to neglect the ends and purposes of living; as our time of probation is short, may we employ it in high and strenuous exertion, that when time shall be no longer, our account may be joyful. — May we ever look to our holy religion for support, direction, consolation. May our best feelings of warmest affections be engaged in the service of our Lord and Master. May we put on the whole armour of God, thus be prepared to go through the conflicts, the trials, and the troubles of life, with confidence in thee, and with the hope everlasting happiness. We are of the all-sa...
At Watertown, Feb. 3rd, 1819—forenoon.
At home, first of it, Oct. 30, 1819—forenoon.
At home, May 18th, 1823—forenoon.