

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

THE CRUSADE AGAINST TEMPERANCE.

TO obtain ever so small a sum by an untruth is a crime known to and severely punishable by law, as "obtaining money under false pretences." The guilt essence of this crime is not the deceit, but the depriving the owner of an article of its possession without his full knowledge of the circumstances by which he is led to part with his property. In whatever form our tangible property consists, the law stands ready to punish whoever attacks it, whether by subtlety or force. If the law could be extended on the same line to protect our intangible possessions, what a terror the law would be to many private and professional agitators! His sympathy, his convictions, his conscience, are to every true man treasures beyond material estimate. It is one of the most puzzling phenomena which our race presents, and man is a bundle of contradictions, that while the mass of civilized mankind honestly affect to cherish the highest principles of honour in the value they put upon these spiritual possessions, they yet expose them to the attack of all manner of charlatans and tricksters who are trying to secure the sympathy, to appropriate the convictions and to control the consciences of their fellow men by false pretences.

There is exhibited an illustration of this in the agitation conducted by the prohibitionists. They, we doubt not, regard as priceless the conscientious feelings and judgments of others as they do their own. But in their zeal to secure converts they habitually use arts of rhetoric which are worthy to be styled "false pretences." These artifices they use to cozen and craftily deprive the unwatchful out of the control of their convictions, their sympathies and their consciences, so that they, the agitators, may assume over them the rights of absolute possession. There is hardly a speech now ever made on the subject of Temperance which is not a blow at the very existence of Temperance. The listeners to the customary addresses made by prohibitionist orators, exhibit a simplicity honorable to their hearts indeed, but otherwise to their hearts and powers of self control. They hear the storm of rhetorical fury rage against the awful perils and dangers and disasters of Intemperance. Straightway they are seduced by the crafty speaker into the conclusion that they must, because of the evils of drunkenness, put a violent stop to Temperance in the use of what they have been shown is only dangerous when abused! This agitation is indeed nothing more or less than a crusade against TEMPERANCE, under the disguise of being what we must all approve of, a war against intemperance. The most rabid agitator of this class must admit that if the use of certain beverages were universally temperate, if drunkenness were unknown, then his occupation would be gone, not another meeting would be held, the whole excitement would collapse. To seek the enforcement of a Scott Act in a county where no intemperate drinking takes place, would simply raise a gener-

laugh as a practical joke. But the vast majority of those who use the beverages are temperate. Drunkards are in every sense a most insignificant minority. On what ground of reason, or common sense, or justice then, should the temperate, the innocent users of an article of refreshment, of enjoyment, to some of food, who are the vast majority, be placed under the ban and terrors of the law for doing an act which of itself is absolutely without offence? Clearly all that is wanted is simply to suppress the social dangers of drunkenness. It is not the function of the law to prevent a man drinking a beverage solely on the ground that it may hurt his digestion. Were such a law in force, some of us would demand the prohibition of tea, coffee, and exciting speeches of a sensational class which sadly upset the stomach of many sober minded persons. The Scott Act would not be tolerated one moment, had not our people committed their consciences, like the illiterate Papists, into the keeping of a class of spiritual advisers who are as crafty with fanaticism, and made as contemptuous of reason, as disdainful of the rights of freemen, with the sense of their power as was ever the victim of strong drink. Were not so many under this scandalous mental despotism, a despotism which insults decency by boasting of its inquisitorial powers, there would be no more chance of imposing restrictions upon the sober which are only needed by the drunkard, than there would be of establishing the gibbet and the stake to suppress heresy. One of these furious Inquisitors, said lately, "No member of this Church dare say that he ever tastes alcoholic beverages,"—a demonstration clear as Holy Writ that He who made wine at Cana and Who was "a wine bibber," has no connection with that Church! "Dare say"—what a state of unmanly humiliation have some Christians fallen into when a minister of religion "dare say" such insolent words to those who are told by the Almighty, "Let no man judge you in meat or drink." But in those two words is the secret of the Scott Act victories. The people have been "bull-dozed" by threats of ecclesiastical censure, and are now taking their revenge by wholesale breaches of the Act, both openly and on the sly wherever the "dare say" whip is cracked over their miserable backs. This tyranny and this humiliation are the penalties a free people pay as a consequence of an illiterate ministry, such as even Churchmen are anxious to impose upon us.

We ask careful study of the following noble passage from one of Erskines' speeches. "Engage the people by their affections, convince their reason, and they will be loyal from the only principle that can make loyalty sincere, vigorous, or rational—a conviction that it is their truest interest and that their government is for their good. CONSTRAINT IS THE NATURAL PARENT OF RESISTANCE, and a pregnant proof that reason is not on the side of those who use it. There is a story that Jupiter failing to convince one with whom he conversed, turned hastily and threatened him with his thunder. A ð! Ah!" said the countryman, "now Jupiter, know you are wrong; you always are wrong

when you appeal to your thunder." So we "dare say" to those engaged in the crusade against Temperance. Your violence, your threats, your appeal to Scott Act thunder, demonstrate that you have no faith in reason, that you know you are wrong, and your greatest wrong is this, that you raise the passion of your audiences against intemperance, and then use this excitement, not to suppress intemperance, but to stamp out the virtue of Temperance, which like all other virtues can only exist in the breasts of, and be exercised by, freemen.

Against drunkenness, we demand far more effectual legislation than any yet passed. We set up God's antidote to this curse which is Temperance, while prohibition is a form of constraint which is the natural parent of resistance. That resistance is now creating worse evils than the one sought to be suppressed it has developed new vices, such as one journal speaks of as "legitimate perjury," another firms to be "honorable lying," and a third describes as "a new citizen duty—the duty of breaking the law." Because of the detestation we have of drunkenness we condemn the crusade against Temperance, against which there is no law of God.

THE NECESSITY OF HEARTY CO-OPERATION OF THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND REGARDING THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG.

BY F. W. S.
No. 2.

I HAVE heard it remarked of the Roman Separate Schools, that the education obtained is of the poorest kind. That the teachers themselves have very little claim to any, even fair degree of information. This appears to me to be a thoughtless way of looking upon their mode of training. Granted that their standard is inferior to the Public School system in their prescribed work and in the manner of administering it, yet who will say that their teaching has not had the effect of keeping them close to their Mother Church, of becoming champions for their Faith, and what has appeared to me to be a proof of wisdom, no desire to bandy words or to argue with their Protestant brethren upon those points in which we as a body have so often figured so conspicuously, and ridiculously so as to become undignified, at least in the estimation of our separated brethren, who used at one time to look upon us as, at any rate, the exponents of respectability. And yet we talk of gentlemanliness—it is very possible that some day we may have this sobriquet all to ourselves. My impression of, perhaps, the first characteristic which a gentleman possesses, and one which gives proof of early good breeding, is a quiet non-assertion upon a contended point, when once it has been seen that the attack comes from another quarter, and not from the heart. To imitate our Blessed Lord's humility, Who, knowing all things Himself, could endure the contradiction of sinners,