

How is it that England, while clothing all the world, cannot clothe her own children? Certainly not from want of means; for while the working-men of our country can spend fifty millions per annum on strong drink, and their Sunday drink bill amounts to fifteen millions, nobody will attempt to say that it is out of their power to purchase clothes for their children. Indeed, as a rule, we shall not find this destitution except where wages are high! The agricultural labourers, with ten shillings per week, clothe their children, and send them to school. It is the artisan, earning from twenty to fifty shillings per week, whose children are unclad! and the reason in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases, out of every thousand, is that the money which should have been spent on clothes for the children, is spent on the Saturday night, and Sunday, in the drink-shop. If evidence of this is wanting, I can supply it to any extent.

I know a school at which a boy attended, so poorly clad, that the teacher, when the winter came, made a collection among his friends, and bought him a warm suit; in a few Sundays he was absent, and on the teacher visiting the lad, he told him, with tears, that his mother waited for him to come from his employers on a Saturday night, that she might take his wages to the public-house, and that she had pawned the suit which had been given him, and had spent the money in drink. The teacher, pitying the boy, obtained another suit, and he went every Sunday morning to his teacher's house to put on his good clothes, and then on the Sunday night, he returned, and took them off at the same place, and resumed his week-day dress, and was thus protected against his own mother!

I could also take you to-day to a room in our own city, where five little children are huddled together, without a particle of clothing on them, and yet the father is in regular work, and receiving thirty-five shillings per week.