

a draught is sent the contrary way. The draught produced by the fire in the flue would cause a constant flow of air out of the upper part of the room (where most vitiated): and the valve would be an effectual protection against back-smoke, should there be the least tendency to it. This plan was adopted in Buckenham Palace. It could be applied to any existing house at a mere trifle of expense. A more effectual plan, and one which operates when there is no fire in the room, is to establish a tin tube, of two or three inches diameter, out of each apartment to be ventilated, causing them all to meet in one general tube, the extremity of which passes into some active flue—for example, that of the kitchen, which is rarely cold. Thus there might be a constant passing of fresh air into and through every room of a large house, so that it would be at all times as healthy in this respect as the open fields. At the same time the supply might, by means of graduated valves, be regulated to any degree which might be deemed agreeable.

"IT'S ONLY A DROP!"

"AN IRISH STORY."

(Continued from page 111.)

The victory Lawrence achieved at Birr uplifted him sadly. He had hitherto kept a wakeful guard over himself; and whenever inclination put in its plea for another "drop," resolution said "No," and fidelity whispered "Ellen;" but Birr "birred" in his ears. "Think of me there," thought Lawrence; "just look at me, when every boy in the fair was 'blind' or 'reeling,' able to walk a chalked line from this to Bantry; up before the lark, and working alone at my trade in the morning." Perhaps Lawrence had never read, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" or if he had, he had forgotten! It was within a week of his "statute of limitation"—one single week! Saturday came as usual, and Lawrence went to receive his wages at the public-house. Some of his old friends were there, steady-headed men, who could drink "a deal" without showing it, and made a boast that they could do so—a strange boast, is it not?—and often made by men whose families, if not absolutely clothed and foodless, are without the comforts of life: yet their husbands and fathers, those who are bound by every law human and divine to protect them, can make a boast—of drinking; that is, of absolutely swallowing the pence, shillings, and pounds which would feed, clothe, and educate them respectably; a strange boast! Such a man might just as well say, "My wife has no shoes, my baby no clothes, the fire on my hearth burns low, there is little food for ourselves, and if our neighbour wants, there is none to give him; yet I am a good workman, I earn good wages, I could give my wife good shoes, and my baby clothes; they might warm themselves at a cheerful fire, that would join them in giving me a welcome those dreary nights; there would be abundant food for ourselves, and something to spare for a poor neighbour or a houseless wanderer, so that the blessings they return might be trea-

sured up in heaven, a dowry for me and my children hereafter! But if I did this, I should not be able to show that I could drink ten or twelve tumblers with a steady eye and a steady hand. Yet, let me think! my hand is not steady; and though my eyes are steady enough, I can't see much out of them; but then I can drink the ten tumblers without a reeling head; though it may be bothered, it doesn't reel. Hurra!—isn't that a glorious thing? I can swallow wife's shoes, baby's clothes, blazing fire, plenty of unblest food, and my own credit, in ten strong tumblers of punch. Hurra!—there's a head!—isn't that a fine thing?"

Lawrence met one or two of these very tremendous ten and twelve tumbler men, and other poor weak-headed fellows, who reeled and staggered, and made fools of themselves upon the value of a single shoe, or a new apron, while the mighty drinkers sipped and laughed at them. And then Lawrence was induced to boast that his head was as hard and as strong as ere a head there. His companions did not at all doubt its hardness, but they doubted its strength: they were sure a wine-glassful beyond his quantity—his stint—would "knock him over;" and to prove it would not, Lawrence took another wine-glassful; and those who were anxious he should be overthrown like themselves, pushed the jug of punch close to him; and talking and singing, the increased stimulant of the glass, led him to pour out another unconsciously; then, as his spirit mounted, accompanied by the other spirit he had imbibed, he declared that he could drink as much as any of them without being touched or "staggered."

There are always, unfortunately, a number of persons who take a mischievous pleasure in setting, not wrong right, but right wrong; and such were delighted at making Lawrence—"steady Lawrence, sober Lawrence"—the same as themselves. His was precisely a case where it was easier to abstain than to refrain; he could do the one, but not the other; he lacked that greatest of all commands—SELF-COMMAND. If roused, like all his countrymen he was equal to anything—brave, earnest, self-denying, silent, strong-hearted; but when once the watch and ward slumbered, he sunk. Once thrown off his guard, Lawrence plunged still more deeply into the pit. Drop by drop he went on until his head turned—and amid the uproarious mirth, little remained of his real nature. He was angry with himself; the hour was past when he had promised to meet Ellen; and when, having stood up to ascertain, with a species of drunken stupidity, if he could walk, he was hailed with a shout of triumphant laughter, he turned upon his tempters like a baited lion, fierce and desperate, and a violent conflict ensued. Larry, from the circumstance of being from a distant part of the country, had no "faction" to take his part, and so stood a chance of being murdered; but Michael Murphy, who, astonished at his intended brother-in-law's loitering, had come to the public-house to inquire why he tarried, hearing the riot within, rushed forward, and, but for his raising the well-known cry, "A Murphy, a Murphy, hirroo! here's for a Murphy!" there is little doubt that Lawrence would have been sent, unprepared and unrepentant, out of the world, whose peace and harmony is destroyed by the vices and intemperance of those whom the Almighty created for far different purposes.

"I could," said Ellen on the following morning—"I could have followed him with a less heart-broken