

I am aware that objections are raised. It is an easy matter to raise objections, and however groundless they be, when sustained by inclination, appetite, or interest, or when prompted by moral cowardice, they may be suffered to exert all the influence of well-grounded principles. It is indeed quite practicable to satisfy, or rather silence conscience in this way.

But would it not be wise, especially for those who call on the Father who is no respecter of persons, and by whom actions are weighed, and motives scanned, to inquire into which scale they are throwing their influence. And let it be considered that in such a cause cold indifference is hardly less criminal than active opposition. No Christian can for a moment endure the thought of contributing to such an evil, and thus become accessory to the numberless crimes and appalling miseries following in its train. And yet all that is necessary to render us guilty of all this, is to cherish the selfishness and indifference so significantly expressed in the inquiry, "Am I my brother's keeper?" while at the same time, like the individual who first proposed it, we may have been, if not equally guilty of our "brother's blood," yet sufficiently so to have abundant cause to dread the scrutiny of Him who will, sooner or later, bring to light the most hidden motives by which our conduct and influence have been determined. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain,—if thou sayest, behold we knew it not, doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it: and he that keepeth thy soul, doth He not know it, and shall not He render to every man according to his works?"

That a cause so good should languish for lack of Christian support is truly deplorable. And that your unwearied exertions may yet be crowned with success corresponding with the importance of the subject, is the prayer of—

A FRIEND OF TEMPERANCE.

June 15, 1847.

#### NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. Jones' address is in type, and will appear shortly.

### Education.

#### EFFORTS AT SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

(Concluded from our last.)

Of the value of, and necessity for, mechanics' institutions, as respects general elementary instruction, we have a striking testimony in the report just published of the Mechanics' Institution of Huddersfield. This useful establishment is attended by 778 students, pretty nearly all of whom are operatives, or lads belonging to factories. The great business of the institution seems to be the conducting of classes; but there are, besides, a library, to which 500 members resort, a reading-room, weekly lectures, and an annual soirée; the members generally enjoy likewise an annual cheap trip by railway, on which occasion there are some festivities. The main thing, however, as we have said, are the classes, which are held in the evening; nor, from the account before us, are these means of improvement unnecessary. What a revelation of illiterate condition of a busy manufacturing town in England, is afforded in the following candid statement:—

"The education of the working-class in the town and neighbourhood has always been kept steadily in view by the committee, as the first and most important subject of their high trust; and the large extent to which their exertions and appeals in this direction have been responded to by the working classes, is regarded as an augury of much practical good, and of true success for the future. Whilst the committee, however, are rejoiced at the regular and frequent attendance of a large portion of the members, they cannot but regret that so many uneducated young men who enter the classes are deterred from continuing in them on account

of the difficulties which beset them at the commencement, and who leave them in utter despair of achieving the mastery of the commonest rudiments of learning. There are the names of a large number of such men on the books, who, after paying for the first fortnight in advance, never appear again in the financial columns. These persons, in passing through the probationary class, where they are examined by the secretary, are for the most part totally deficient even in elementary knowledge, and many of them are unable either to read or write. Their average ages from eighteen to twenty-five. The committee, fully alive to the necessities of this class, have long ago provided separate teachers in the reading department to meet the emergency, and apportioned a separate room for their exclusive use during the hours of their meeting; and there are other elementary classes, from simple addition to the compound rules in arithmetic, and like elementary classes for writing. Notwithstanding all this, however, there are some men who, conscious of their deficiency, and of the insurmountable hindrance which ignorance presents to all the advancement and noble immunities of life, cannot be persuaded to devote themselves to a necessary culture. And whilst the committee would sympathise with their unhappy condition, and regret the hard circumstances which may have operated against their education in early life, yet still they feel that they should scarcely be discharging their duty, if they did not offer them a word of friendly and faithful admonition. They would say—You have never given a fair trial of your own strength against the armed power of knowledge. You have given up the contest the moment you entered the list, without so much as meeting your antagonist, and defying him to the hazard of a battle. This is neither brave nor manly. Who gave knowledge the immense power she possesses, and armed her with those words of flaming fire which testify you so much to? It was the mind and industry of man. And are not you also a man—having the same average faculties of all other men? What one man can do, another man—and, generally speaking, all men—can accomplish. It is the will, and not the capacity, which is so frequently wanting in the fight for learning; and the experience of the committee in connexion with the working-classes will justify them in saying that few amongst them who have the will lack the power to learn, and that numbers of them, even in our own institution, are capable of advancing to the region of the higher culture. Let no man, therefore, be abashed by difficulties. If he once stir himself under them, they will, as they have ever done, vanish away, and leave him free to advance onward. "Who art thou that saith there is a lion in the way? Rise, sluggard, and slay the lion! The lion has to be travelled."

The classes for arithmetic, writing, grammar, and logic, design, ornamental and mechanical drawing, elocution, music, French, German, geography, and history, are reported to be all doing useful service. An institution performing so much good has our best wishes.

An attempt to another species of improvement in the condition of operative bodies is now making in different parts of England. This consists in clubbing means to purchase articles at wholesale prices, with a view to distribution among members. Thus a feeble proposal to establish a co-operative corn mill, a co-operative baking establishment, the co-operative purchase of groceries, &c. &c. No one can find any fault with these arrangements. To higher classes club for various purposes, why should not mechanics? Considering the immense sum in the aggregate paid as wages to the operative classes—as, for example, the large sum which is distributed weekly in Glasgow or Manchester—it has scarcely appeared to us a remarkable thing that there was so little clubbing of means for economic objects. We fear that a too common cause of the phenomenon is the want of a general knowledge of business among the working-classes, also a want of settled purpose or steadiness, and perhaps a want of confidence in each other. Having often experienced the deceitfulness of persons who pushed themselves forward to act as managers and treasurers they may well dread a recurrence of financial disaster.

In "The Herald of Cooperation," a paper which appears to be the organ of co-operative principles, allusion is made to a plan bettering the condition of the working-classes, described by us year or two ago in connexion with the proceedings of a Paint-house-painter. This plan consists in workmen having a pecuniary interest in the establishment to which they are attached. Instead of depending altogether on wages, they receive a share of the profits, much on the principle pursued in the past