

His never ceasing labors brought on another attack of apoplexy, which was slowly but surely tightening its deadly grasp upon him who once boasted that he was "the strongest man in Ireland." He might be seen at almost every hour of the day tottering down the steps, eager to meet some poor drunken wretch who wished to take the pledge.

But alas! Death could no longer be deprived of its victim and on December 8th., 1856, Father Mathew breathed forth his pure spirit, and passed to the judgment seat of his Creator. Thus died the Apostle and proto-martyr of Total Abstinence, amid the bitter tears and lamentations of the whole civilized world.

Though the voice of Father Mathew is hushed in death, and no longer thrills the hearts of his five millions of converts to temperance, his spirit still lives in their descendants and in the innumerable societies that bear his venerable name.

His was a great and noble work. Single-handed he fought the demon of intemperance, and convinced his fellow-men, that intoxicating drinks are not only unnecessary, but are positively injurious to the human system; he taught his generation to consider drunkenness a most disgusting vice, and not a slight fault easily excused; he showed them that intemperance was fast filling their jails, and supplying victims to the scaffold, and guillotine; he established the fundamental principles of Total Abstinence: that he

who abstains entirely is much safer than he who is moderate in the use of liquor which is so fraught with danger, and that there is no salvation for those who go to excess, except in Total Abstinence.

The spirit of Father Mathew still survives him in our Catholic Bishops, for we have our Mannings, Keanes and Irelands, plainly and candidly telling our people that it is a shame and a disgrace that Catholics should control almost the whole liquor traffic. God alone knows how great a barrier is erected against the progress of Catholicity by Catholic rum-sellers. Of course, some will say that this is gross exaggeration. Let such persons ponder over the question put to Bishop Keane by a poor negro: "If your religion is the true religion what makes your people sell us whisky to get drunk?"

Others still object to Father Mathew's method, and claim that many break the pledge. No one denies this; it only proves that human nature is very frail and that vice is very strong. In the same way, men go to Confession and after Confession fall into sin. Is this a proof that the Confessional is useless? Let Catholics be up and doing. Let Catholics pledge themselves in the pious words of Father Mathew "Here goes in the name of God" and they may rest assured that the future of America will be indissolubly linked with the future of the Catholic Church.

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