

LET US ALONE AND MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

In reply to this exhortation of liquor dealers, Dr. Burns, of England, says :

I cannot let the traffic alone. I have never sold, bought, given, tasted or recommended, or sanctioned it in one form or another. And yet, sir, this traffic won't let me alone. It attacks my pocket. Who pays the increased taxation on drunkenness? The sober and the virtuous. And it is a shame that the whole community should be taxed for one class. I know some persons have said, "why don't you let our traffic alone? We don't interfere with you; you may go on with your teetotal speeches, only don't come out in this prohibitory-law manner." I might say in reply, "If you had let me alone, I might be tempted to let you alone; but unfortunately you won't." And where is the man in the country who has his eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart to feel, and bowels to yearn and sympathise with moral wretchedness, that must not be disturbed beyond utterance every day at the calamities produced by the strong drink traffic? It moves me in every power of my mind. It distresses every emotion of my soul. Am I a man, and can I see the manhood of my fellow-creatures annihilated out of them? Am I a Christian, and can I see the mouth of hell gorged with drunken victims? Is not every man in the community my brother? Is not the drunkard my brother? (Loud cheers.) That degraded wife of his is my sister; those orphans have a claim upon my sympathies; and I do not deserve the name of a man—I should be put down as a monster—if I were not shocked, and distressed, and grieved, and pained, and martyred by this traffic. Therefore, though I am a teetotaler, and have no connection with the drinking habits of the country, I suffer in body, pocket, mind, and conscience, and all the powers of my soul, by this evil and destructive thing.

THE RUINED LAWYER.

A reverend gentleman who stands in the foreground of our movement, received a letter from a distant part of the country, from the relatives of an individual living in our city. The object of this communication was a desire on the part of these relatives to ascertain what measure of truth was contained in the letter of the person in question. At the instance of the president of the society, I was instructed to render what assistance I could. After considerable inquiry (having an imperfect direction), I succeeded. Grouping my way up one of the most delapidated stairs in ———, I found myself within the door of a wretched lodging-house, the inmates of which, for the most part, were common beggars; on inquiring if Mr ——— lived there, I was answered in the affirmative; but that such was the wretchedness of his condition, he could not be brought to me. I accordingly followed the keeper of the wretched dwelling to a miserable hole, at the extreme end of the house, and was there introduced to the object of my search; but, alas! what a spectacle; the apartment was a kind of an off-shoot from the rest of the tenement—without fire-place or window; a streak of light struggled for admittance through a small crevice, and by its faint glimmer, I beheld the individual; and even in this dimly dark place, such was his wretched appearance, that had it not been the extremity of the case, decency would almost

have forbade my entrance. He was almost in a state of nudity; and in addition to this external wretchedness, he was in a state of starvation. Not being at liberty to inform him at whose instance I had called, I entered into conversation with him, calculated as little as possible to lead him to suspect that he was an object of inquiry to his relatives, whose many kind offices he had again and again abused.

But who, and what was this individual, thus naked and starving, immured in a hovel without fire, light or bedding? Ah, at one time he was a distinguished lawyer in this same city of ——— for many years at the head of one of its principal law-houses, and through his connexion with this house, and the relative position he occupied, the companion at the dinner table, of the highest aristocracy of the neighbourhood and city. In addition to this he had been an office-bearer in one of the largest congregations in the city, and had taken a leading part in all its affairs. I have talked with parties who knew him in his prosperity. Conceive to yourself an individual some six feet in height, with a well built frame, pleasing and agreeable features, dressed in the most superb habiliments, and you have what was once the external picture of this poor sunken one; and now a pair of tattered moleskin trousers, which in all likelihood were given him by some of the children of poverty among whom he had doomed himself to herd—(and often has he been indebted to these, his fellow lodgers, who eked out existence by begging from door to door, for a crust to save him from starvation)—an old coat, once the property of one of the Charity Work-houses, also tattered to the last degree, and scarcely half the size for an individual of his proportions,—constituted his entire raiment. Literally, he had neither shirt, shoes, stockings, nor hat.—Frequently when the shades of evening had gathered over our highly polished city, and the passers to and fro on our busy thoroughfares had taken themselves to their various abodes, has he gone out, to escape death from starvation, to the fields in the neighbourhood, and appeased, so far, the gnawings of hunger, by pulling up a turnip and there devouring it. Miserable as was his condition in this wretched domicile, he would have been ejected from it, only that now and again he got possession of a few shillings, through a representation of his case being sent by himself to former associates. When necessitated, as was the case frequently, to send these messages by others, he received, I fear, but a small share of the charity—the bearer keeping the greater portion; this I had opportunities afterwards of discovering. I found him, notwithstanding a certain degree of reserve, as may be anticipated, a most intelligent person. At the time of my calling he was suffering keenly the pangs of hunger; and having immediately lent my assistance in this direction, I took my leave.

Having been instructed to acquaint the relatives of matters just as I found them, I at once informed them of his circumstances.—Their patience and commiseration had long been abused; nevertheless, a very short time intervened between my acquainting them with the state of the case, and their putting me in possession of sufficient means to extricate him from his miserable condition.

hour, though our way lay through the poorest locality of the city, yet the passers by stood still in astonishment at the appearance my companion presented. Attired in a complete new suit of fashionable and gentlemanly clothing,—had the same passers by witnessed us some two hours after, they would not have credited their own eyes, so thoroughly and complete was the transformation. He accompanied me to my dwelling, and whilst in the act of taking breakfast a death-like palor came over his features, which created a momentary fear within me, that his earthly course was about to be wound up; some slight restoratives, however, brought round animation, and gradually he became able to resume the task of further partaking of the repast. Poor man, the transition, both in circumstances and diet, had been too much for him. We spent the remainder of the day together, and as we walked leisurely along the quiet retreats outside the city, he felt as if awoke from a trance. I have not the slightest doubt that that day, he felt deep contrition for the past. We spent the time agreeably in painting the future, and though neither he nor I could entertain the idea that he could gain to the summit, in a worldly point of view, from which he had fallen, still, we both cherished the hope that circumstances and a kind Providence, would so favour our designs, that at least an opening might arise through which a moderate competency might be obtained.

Through the kindness of a feeling hearted gentleman, I was enabled to acquaint him of a situation where by ordinary exertions he might be enabled to gain a subsistence. He had not been long engaged in this till, it was evident that he was incapable of the task. In his prosperous days, he had known little, if any thing, of active exertion, and now, his mental and physical capabilities seemed as if paralysed. A short time after, I was successful through the kindness of another friend, in being able to submit the case to a Writer to the *Signal*. This gentleman kindly listened to my narration of the sufferings he had undergone, and I found that he was familiar with his once honorable position; and being in immediate want of assistance, I was instructed to send my diffident and retiring friend, who proceeded thither, and was immediately set to work.

A day or two after this I was wending my way through one of the thoroughfares, when I observed him lounging leisurely along. On inquiry, I found that he had left; he did not very well know why, but supposed they had no particular press of business to retain him. I at once feared he had been indulging in his former vice, there was not the slightest apparent symptom for my cherishing any such fear, still, I had some misgivings, and I made my way to the chambers of the gentleman who had employed him, who assured me that his appearance and behaviour was unexceptionable, but that he had been under the necessity of giving him some money, and further gave him to understand that their push was over. He felt, he said to wound his feelings; he was aware that in his day he held a distinguished place amongst his professional brethren, when he was, comparatively speaking, a boy, but all that ability had fled, and now he was a very wreck; so much so that the work he was engaged at had to be committed to the flames.

For several months after this, we were frequently in each other's society, during which time, it is my conviction, that he rigidly adhered to the abstinence pledge. Various at-