



Temperance Department.

TEMPERANCE COFFEE HOUSES IN LIVERPOOL.

It is seldom, we believe, that a body of business men have bestowed such pains from day to day on a philanthropic scheme as have the directors of this work. They have thrown their hearts into it as if it had been their own private business. They have watched, pondered, resolved, acted, as if they were carrying out a military enterprise. Better still, they have shown a real sense of the sin and evil of drunkenness, and have been moved against it by the overwhelming force of Christian duty and Christian love. We believe many of them have made it an earnest prayer that they might be directed and blessed in this undertaking. The strength that has come to them is more than mortal might; as I heard one of them express it, "The will of God is the strongest thing in the world, and when that is for us, we must conquer."

Quietly but truly, the movement has had a Christian tone. Go through the rooms, look at the prints from the "British Workman" hanging on the walls, and you see the evidence of this remark. Converse with the attendants, you find they are not mere hirelings but earnest in the cause of temperance, and many, too, earnest in the cause of Christ. You become sensible of the immense advantage of attendants who do their work *con amore*. You see what a power they have to attract and attach the people, to turn occasional visitors into *habitues*, to make them feel among friends—at home—breathing an atmosphere of kindness. Of course, they have sometimes a good deal to bear. Men brought in for the first time by their comrades will very likely feel bound to object to everything, and to contrast the fare provided for them with the sulkiness which they find in the rooms. But they are under their chaff, or good-humoured and cheerful. Good-natured parrying of thrusts—giving as good as they get, but with good-humour—goes a great way in conciliating people. "How is it you get on so well?" we once asked a very successful superintendent "I make up my mind to swallow a great deal," was his reply. "We have a great deal of chaffing to bear from some, but I swallow it all and they soon come round."

Very wisely the director resolved that nothing should be wanted that could reasonably contribute to the attractiveness of the rooms. On the ground-floor there is usually a large apartment set with rows of benches and narrow tables, where men, very like their work, and that by no means cleanly work, are accommodated, especially at meal times. How to keep this place clean, especially in wet weather—of which commodity Liverpool is by no means stinted—is the insoluble problem of the concern. Up-stairs there are usually apartments where a slight increase of cost secures a somewhat more select class of customers. Here the floors are covered with floor-cloth, and the tables with marble slabs. Everything looks bright and cheerful. If you get your coffee in a mug down-stairs, here you have the luxury of a cup. Sometimes there are rooms for women—of course very civilised. As to smoking, if it is wished a room is provided for it. In fact, there is accommodation for a considerable variety in the social scale. The letter carrier may refresh himself at his ease when he has got rid of his bundle; the telegraph boy when he has run his message; the clerk or the tradesman in the lull of business; the teacher even, while the school is at play. Our sympathies are liable to forget these, and we are apt to fancy that the working classes have a monopoly of temptation. Often it is far otherwise; and though the cases may not be so numerous, there are, no doubt, not a few intermediates, as we may call them, to whom the coffee-shops are a great boon.

It is indispensable that the coffee-houses be early of opening and late of closing. Even "early to bed and early to rise" does not go far enough for them. Every door must be opened by five in the morning. Not only must the door be opened, but the viands must be ready. This involves getting up about four a hard enough condition on winter mornings. But it would never do to miss the chance of the working man as he passes cold and empty to his work. He really needs his "morning," and in no shape is it so useful as in that of cocoa or coffee. Then it is found that the demand continues till ten at night or even later. By relays of servants, or by arrangements among themselves, provision is made for both early and late customers. It is evi-

dent, in this point of view, that it is a great benefit to have a dwelling-house on the premises: this is well worthy of being kept in view in places where it is contemplated to begin the work.

And now for the important question of meat and drink. The Liverpool Company do not deal in cooked meats, but only in cocoa, tea, and coffee, and in bread and butter, though meat pies, bread and cheese may be had. In the common room you may have a pint of cocoa or coffee, or a gill of tea for a penny, and half a pint of cocoa or coffee for a half penny. The materials are all of the best quality and are purchased in large quantities, making the profit larger. At first, we believe, cocoa was the favourite article; but now coffee is treading hard upon its heels. It used to be thought that cocoa was more nutritious, and therefore a better substitute for stimulants, and for that reason more popular; but now it looks as if coffee would carry the day.

In all the Liverpool houses facilities are afforded on the spot for customers signing the abstinence pledge. This is often of great importance in connection with some of them, there is a social gathering and entertainment on Saturday evenings, designed to furnish the people with combined recreation and moral influence. There are no religious services in direct connection with the rooms.

So much for general arrangements and general results. But may we not go a little more narrowly into the movement, and ascertain some of its results in individual cases?—How is it viewed by what we may call "the drinking classes," and what has its effect been on any of them? Some of our friends have furnished us with a few illustrations of its working in the case of individuals, which we are sure will be read with much interest.

We begin with the case of a woman, a Scotchwoman, too, who told her story thus to Mr. Garrett. "The cocoa-room has been the means of a new life to me. Before it was opened I had no clothes, and only a hole in which to live. My one thought was whiskey. All my life and comfort and joy was in the spirit-vaults. One morning I had but a half-penny; I was cold and miserable, and as I could do nothing with the halfpenny to get spirits, I came in and got a half-pint of cocoa. It was so warm and nourishing that it took away all my longing for drink. I went to had a pint more. Since then everything has gone well with me. I have never touched the whiskey; but I have bought some warm clothes, and have got out of the cellar where I used to live, and have taken a nice little room, where I can live like a Christian."

One remembers the apology of Maggie Mucklebackit, for her love of a dram, why the laird denounced it: "Aye, aye, it's easy for your honor, and the like o' you gentle folks to say sae, that hae stouth and roth, and fire and fending, and meat and claith, and sit dry and canny by the fireside; but an' ye wanted fire, and meat, and dry claith, and were deen' o' cauld, and had a sair heart,—whilk is warst ava'—wi' just tippence in your pouch,—wadna' ye be glad to buy a dram wi't, to be eilding and claes, and a supper and heart's ease into the bargain, till the morn's morning?" If our Liverpool friend is to be relied on, much less than "tippence" can be exchanged for much better than a dram, and happy is the toiling, struggling, exposed man or woman that has the chance.

Here is the testimony of a working man. "The cocoa-room has nearly made me into a teetotaler. For twenty years I had always begun the day with three-pennorth of rum, and I had a few drinks during the day. When however, this cocoa-room was opened, I determined to try it. I got a pint of cocoa as I came to my work. It only cost me a penny and I felt better than I did with my three-pennorth of rum. I said to myself this will pay; so I came at breakfast time, and I have constantly come ever since: that's more than three months ago, and I have never tasted nor wanted a drop of drink since."

The remarkable thing in both these cases is, the discovery that cocoa did more good than spirits, at less than half the cost. After all, it is pretty nearly the discovery of those who have given up the use of alcohol, and find themselves stronger, younger, and fresher without it.

It is interesting to see, in many cases, how anxious people are to be emancipated from a wicked and degrading habit, or from what tends thereto, if only they knew the way. It is one of the things that inspire hope in the battle with drunkenness; the bondage is so loathsome and so horrible that surely the victims would fain escape, if it were not that to escape is more difficult than to endure.

Here is an interesting anonymous letter to Mr. Garrett.

"DEAR SIR.—Excuse me for taking up your time with a letter, but I want to thank you for starting the cocoa-rooms. I have for many years been a drunkard. I have tried again and again to be sober, but if I was sober for a week I was soon down again and

lower than ever. I have heard you and John Gough, and all the best temperance speakers but it all fell off me like water from a duck's back. I thought there was no hope for me. But the cocoa-room was opened, and as soon as I saw it, I said this is just what I want. I went in and have continued to do so ever since. That is now two months, and everything seems changed for the better. I go home at night now, and help my little girl to learn her lessons, and my missus looks so happy, and the child seems so puzzled, that I feel almost ready to tell them how it is, but I won't yet, for fear I don't hold out. However, that's another reason why I am writing to you. I don't know how it is, but from the first day I went into the cocoa-room I always feel as if you were standing by my side. And I want you to pray that God may help me. I shall know by my feelings whether you do or no. If God helps me I shall conquer after all, and that will be a good thing for me and mine. I will write again after a time, and tell you how I get on, but please do not forget what I have said. Yours gratefully,

"A WORKING MAN."

The evening meetings in connection with some of the cocoa-rooms have not been without effect. A short time ago, the excellent manager, Mr. Peskett, referring to a visit which I had lately paid to one of them, announced that I was anxious to learn whether they were exercising a useful influence. A number of letters, received in answer to this appeal, throw light on this question. Here is one, in excellent handwriting, from one who says—and his letter bears evidence of it—that but for the intoxicating cup, he might have been in a high position in the social scale. He had heard a few judicious words spoken in the hall of the cocoa-room by an abstainer, who had once been a victim of intemperance, that induced him to try once more the temperance pledge. "Since then I have been a regular attendant at your meetings, and have not only been entertained but felt myself strengthened in my determination that by the help of God I will never more taste intoxicating drink. . . . I consider your cocoa-rooms, apart from their connection with the temperance question, a great boon, not only to the working classes but to clerks and others with limited means; but in conjunction with your efforts to spread the cause of total abstinence, and from my hearty wish you will be glorious."

Another writes—"I can safely say that the cocoa-rooms have done me all the good in the world, for I used to drink heavy, and was thoughtless of home and family, and now, thank God, I can say that I feel very happy. . . . I have seen a great deal of good done in the cocoa-rooms, and in the eight months that I have been a total abstainer I have got a great many to sign the pledge and join the Good Templars; and the best of it is, as yet, none of them has broken their pledge: and it is my advice to all who drink, to give it up at once, for it only robs the pocket, takes away the senses, and drives a man to an untimely grave. And my advice to all is to give it up at once, for since I gave it up I feel a better man than ever I felt. And I thank the cocoa-rooms for it, for they are the best thing that ever was brought in Liverpool."

One very important and blessed result of successful cocoa refreshment rooms will be to make the reduction of licensed public-houses a much easier task than it is at present. The wearisome argument that public-houses "are needed" in a district will fall to the ground if working people make it apparent that the cocoa-shop fulfils all real necessities far better than the licensed tavern. Publicans will not be so able to prove themselves martyrs when they are relegated to a non-alcoholic employment. The cry for compensation, should many licenses be withdrawn, will wax fainter and feebler. The great drink confederacy, which threatens so many disasters to the country, will be greatly lessened.—*Dr. Blaikie in Sunday Magazine.*

I REMEMBER Mr. Wells saying that it was utterly vain to speak of the importance of abstaining to such persons when you were not abstainers yourselves. I remember being told of Miss Weston, who works among the sailors at Plymouth, that on one occasion a man came forward to take the pledge from her. He had the pen in his hand, and before putting down his name, he said to her, "be you an abstainer?" She was obliged to say that she was not. He thereupon laid down the pen, and no amount of persuasion could make him take the pledge. He could not see that a lady should teach abstinence when she was not an abstainer herself. She soon saw that she was in an awkward position, and became as she now is an abstainer. It was the same with Miss Cotton in her "Coffee-room," and Miss Robinson among the soldiers at Portsmouth. Mrs. Wightman of Shrewsbury, who began her important work nineteen years ago, was prejudiced against abstinence at first, her only aim being to bring the Gospel to bear upon the minds, and its grace upon the hearts of the

people. But she found she was shut up to take the question of abstinence into consideration, and become an abstainer. All these ladies were Christian abstainers, and all who are to work like them will shortly be abstainers also.—*Dr. Joseph Brown*

THE SUDDEN DISUSE OF STIMULANTS.—The Rev. T. H. Choze writes to us from Hartland Vicarage, North Devon:—It is frequently affirmed that any sudden abstinence from alcoholic beverages in a person—much more an aged person—who has used them through life is prejudicial to health. An instance has lately come under my observation of the beneficial results arising from the sudden disuse of alcoholic stimulants by a widow of 82 summers. Her usual drink through life has been gin which she changed for beer previously to reaching her 80th year. She suffered from occasional attacks of gout in her left hand and also a running footsore. Upon her reaching the age of 80—that is, two years ago—she suddenly adopted the total abstaining principle, much to the surprise and consternation of her friends who all prophesied a speedy and sudden termination of her life for the want of her accustomed potations. Nothing of the kind. The toe healed, the gout vanished, and for two years she has been free from these harassing complaints and is a living monument of the good effected by the sudden adoption of a non-alcoholic regime. She is in her 83rd year, and frequently walks out into her son's garden or farmyard without any covering on her head. Her memory is excellent; she can repeat long prayers, and she bids fair to become a centenarian."

THE BISHOP of Manchester does not believe in the attention paid to the drink question being limited to men and to the lower classes; he finds a state of affairs existing in "society" and among women which, in his opinion, calls for attention. At a Church of England temperance conference in Liverpool on Friday, he said that fifteen or twenty years ago he should have decidedly said that what were called the upper classes were, as a rule, temperate; but at a public meeting recently held Lady Jane Ellis expressed her conviction that drinking habits were somehow or other gaining ground among those classes. And it was beginning to be said louder and louder—and he had heard it from medical men—that in numbers of houses where the mischief was not so much as suspected, there were drunken wives, and even drunken daughters. And if that was so, they had need of a dominant public opinion to put down this state of things. He was told that at balls and entertainments young ladies made no scruple whatever of taking glass after glass of iced champagne. The Bishop further declared that intemperance, directly or indirectly, was incontrovertibly one of the chief causes of insanity in Lancashire.—*Alliance News.*

THE NEW LORD provost, or mayor, of Glasgow, Mr. Collins, is a teetotaler of the sort described by a correspondent this week. The members of the Glasgow Royal Exchange have been in the habit of giving a dinner on Christmas Day to the poor, at which beer was served and at which the lord provost presided. But on the last occasion Mr. Collins refused to be present, because, he said, strong drink caused the poor most of their misery and he would not in any way countenance it. He was much abused for his scrupulosity; but, to show that he was not stingy about it, he gave a New Year's dinner at his own expense to the poor, at which nothing stronger than tea was served, with good things enough to eat, and at the end a quarter of a pound of tea was given to each poor person by another anonymous teetotaler.

It is suggestive to note how, when other drugs are consumed, some of them first cousins of alcohol, there is a keen perception of the evil involved in permitting their common sale, and of making a revenue out of their circulation. Dr. Wren, writing to a medical friend concerning the "Legalised Sale of Poisons," announces with pleasure the issue of an Order in Council forbidding the indiscriminate sale of hydrate of chloral and its compounds. He complains, however, of the still unrestricted sale of chlorodyne, "a drug equal in potency to laudanum" (or alcohol?) He has discovered, to his disgust, that the plea set up is that the Government are profited by the stamp duty received. This he calls "a lame apology for trifling with the health of thousands." How lame, then, must be the apology of a similar kind when the lives of tens of thousands are annually sacrificed to the Exchequer?

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

DEUT. 33: 27.