

House of Commons no less than 4284 petitions, signed by 553,539 persons, praying for restriction in the traffic, or for its entire extinction. The whole number of adverse signatures was 108,168, not quite one fifth as many against as for the removal of the crying evil. A Bill was introduced by Mr J. A. Smith, it was read a second time, 18th March 1868, without a division, and referred to a select Committee. The evidence was most important. The Secretaries of the Lord's Day Observance Society were present at many of the meetings of the Committee. A majority voted against the Bill. The minority recommended that a Bill should be introduced with a view to legislation, restricting the sale of alcoholic liquors on Sunday. From increased restrictions they expected sensible public benefits—a diminution of drunkenness and crime, and an improved condition of the homes of the people, without corresponding drawbacks, or serious inconvenience, as public sentiment favored the movement. Another Bill has been prepared which will be presented to the House next session of Parliament. "It is framed for the purpose of entirely closing drinking shops on the Lord's Day."

The Right Hon. J. Bright, in a speech delivered at Birmingham, January 1870, referred to the drinking usages of the people of Great Britain, in the following soul-stirring language, and was responded to with loud cheers: "If we could subtract from the ignorance, the poverty, the suffering, the sickness, and the crime, which are caused by one single but most prevalent bad habit or vice, the drinking needlessly of that which destroys body, and mind, and home, and family:—Do we not all feel that this country would be so changed for the better, that it would be about impossible for us to know it again? Let me then in conclusion say what is upon my heart, to say; what I know to be true, what I have felt every hour of my life, when I have been discussing great questions affecting the condition of the working classes. Let me say this to all the people, that it is by the combination of a wise government, and a virtuous people, and not otherwise, that we may hope to make some steps towards that blessed time, when there shall be no longer complaining in our streets, when our garners shall be full, affording all manner of stores."

#### CRYSTAL PALACE.

There is great cause for hearty thanksgiving to the Lord of the Sabbath, that the Sunday League has been defeated in its unwearied efforts to make the Crystal Palace a public resort on the Lord's Day. By vast majorities of the directors and proprietors the resolutions to exclude non-shareholders has been carried on two occasions, viz., in December 1867, and June 1868, and now there is no Free Sunday. Besides, with the sanction of Vice-Chancellor Stuart, a compromise has taken place between the residuary legatees and the directors in the case of Mr Etches, who bequeathed £30,000, in order to have the palace opened to the public on the Lord's Day. This was contrary to a clause of the charter enjoining that "no person shall be admitted to said building or grounds on the Lord's Day." The directors have consented to receive one half the sum to be applied to lawful objects for the benefit of the institution. Did space allow, your Committee would have pleasure in making brief reference to other interesting items of intelligence contained in the excellent Annual report, for which and for occasional papers of the Society they beg to offer their sincere thanks.

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