

The Press and General Review.

THE WORKING OF THE CURSE.

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The facility afforded by this new law for the recovery of escaped slaves, is not, unhappily, preventive or prospective alone, but penal and retrospective. It turns the owner not only with power to follow a fugitive, subsequent to its enactment, into a free state, and there reclaim him; but permits the pursuit and recapture of fugitives who have been long enough in freedom to lose the sense of fear. It panders to the love of vengeance in the breast of men peculiarly prone to the indulgence of that hellish passion, as it also enables them to act upon their perverted sense of proprietorship. A slave-hunt is therefore a-loot, even in the premier state, New York. A colored man who escaped from the south two years since, was one of the first to be pounced upon, claimed, and haled to worse than bondage. The excitement of revenge and exultant malice on the one side, has produced a fever of alarm on the other. The colored population feel that they are in jeopardy almost to a man—that their skin is presumptive evidence of their criminality, and, in the absence of legal disproof, will ensure a fate too dismal to contemplate. Many of them have married white women, and are the fathers of children over whom they have hitherto rejoiced, as the first of their race that were not born to slavery. Others are toiling to redeem a brother, or a sister—perhaps a wife!—from bonds to which themselves may now be hurried back. No wonder that while some flee in companies over the border that separate the republicans States from a land that owns a monarch, others madden into fierce or sullen resolve, and prepare to die rather than be retaken. Heaven endow them with that patience which man may well forbear to preach, lest he be confounded with the abettors of their cruel wrong! A servile war is the most sanguinary of all wars—a war of extermination to the weaker party.

English abolitionists, we are glad to say, have sent one of themselves to utter their testimony against this new and worst crime, and their message of sympathy to its victims. Mr George Thompson has set sail for the country in which he is already well known for intrepidity and fervor in the cause of slavery-abolition. Whatever he may say in reprobation of the new law, he will not exaggerate the feeling of Englishmen. He will, it seems, associate, himself, as heretofore, with the men who are there reviled and hated as fanatics; but he will not find one more outraged and indignant than the most sober of our countrymen. He will preach peace as well as freedom—soothe exacerated feelings, as well as appeal to conscience and humanity—exhort only to passive resistance to a law, that to obey would be misprison of an offence that smells rank to Heaven, and already infests the world with its ill-odour—and in this, too, he will represent the anxious wishes of Englishmen for while it is impossible to condemn the impulse to armed resistance which is said to thrill through the hearts of the free-colored population and to be shared by thousands of their citizen sympathizers, recourse to that desperate extremity is above all things to be deprecated. The loss of a single white man's life would inevitably precipitate scenes we shudder to imagine. We earnestly hope, therefore, that Mr George Thompson's mission may be at once pacificatory and arousing, and may be crowded with large and hopeful results.

We cannot close without a word on the re-appearance, in a suspicious shape, of British slavery. An ordinance has passed the Court of Policy in British Guiana, and now awaits the sanction of the Home authorities, that will subject the colonists now in the colony and some ten thousand about to be imported, to a system of allotment to planters for five years. A similar ordinance has passed the Legislative Council of Trinidad in reference to the Africans liberated from slave ships. The license Law of the former colony is monstrously oppressive towards the colored population, crushing them down into social servility. The Home office must be visited on this matter. The people of England have emphatically declared that personal slavery shall not exist within their empire; and have paid, in their generous weakness, a magnificent ransom for the enslaved. They must be sleeplessly vigilant, lest the little tyrants who they foolishly permit to disgrace them in the tropics add to their reproaches the undeserved and intolerable one of conniving at a crime they call upon the world to suppress.

PUBLIC-HOUSES IN LIVERPOOL.

From the British Banner.

The following paragraph has been going the round of the papers:—"The number of public-houses in Liverpool is 1,480, and beer shops 700, in all 2,180. Taking the population at 350,000, this is one public-house or beer-shop to every 1000 individuals, men, women, and children. Taking each family to amount to four persons, there is one public-house or beer-shop to every forty adult males."

This statement would seem from its form to be the result of careful examination, and its general accuracy may therefore be relied on. It only needs a very slight reflection to comprehend the appalling view which it affords of the condition of that town. It must be remembered, that the 2,180 establishments in question

are in addition to those more respectable mercantile firms which deal in wines, spirits, and malt liquors, and by whom, for the most part, private families are supplied with these articles for domestic use. The intoxicating liquors sold by these public houses and beer-shops are generally consumed on the premises, either at the counter or in rooms provided for that purpose. The majority of the proprietors of these establishments are clubbed together to defend their own interests, and to resist all attempts which they deem calculated to injure them. Let the reader just think of these facts. Here is a numerous and compact body of men, systematically employed in tempting and corrupting the mass of the population, and with what success the very numbers engaged in the trade may suffice to shew. One publican to every forty adult males! Just think of this. It is ridiculous to imagine that the reasonable wants of the population, even according to the estimate of the most determined opponent of the total abstinence principle, should require such a swarm of publicans. That such numbers contrive to maintain a trade, and that many of them grow rich in it, is a fact which constitutes the most conclusive evidence of the disastrous influence exerted by this class of persons on the community. What may be the numbers of ministers of religion belonging to the different denominations in that town, we cannot take it upon ourselves to affirm; but, making a liberal allowance, let us imagine that there are three hundred. Now, what great probability can there be of any large success attending the benevolent labors of these persons, beset as they are on every side by upwards of 2,000 individuals, whose object it is to neutralize their efforts, and to entice the population to the degrading vices of a besotted sensuality?

Let the reader extend his views a little further. Let him reflect on the gaudy and flaunting decorations of these establishments—the gratuitous amusements found for those who frequent them—the numerous appliances devised to draw customers and seduce the unwary, and does he require to be told what the consequences must inevitably be? It may be calculated with confidence, that the poor-rates will be large—that rags and wretchedness will abound—that juvenile delinquents will be multiplied—that the gaols will be crowded—that the police and the magistrates will find plenty of employment, and that education will be checked, and its influence neutralized by this corrupting agency! And so we find it. Liverpool has acquired an unenviable notoriety for its pauperism—for its miserable habitations—for its crime, both adult and juvenile, and for its disease and mortality!

We fear that there is no great difference between Liverpool and the other great towns in the kingdom in these particulars. In all of them public-houses abound out of all reasonable proportion to the wants of the population; and generally speaking, the more wretched and destitute the neighborhood, the more they thrive and prosper. They literally prey on the poor; they fatten on the vices of their fellowmen, and are a prolific source of disease and misery!

With the magistrates rests the power of granting licenses to these establishments, and that they are greatly to blame for the existing state of things cannot be questioned. It has often been to us matter of extreme perplexity to discover the principle on which they have dealt with many of these applications. We have known the most urgent remonstrances from the majority of the inhabitants in a particular locality utterly disregarded, and one of these vile establishments sanctioned, to the deterioration of the property and the sore annoyance of the respectable families in the vicinity. Such cases naturally awaken the suspicion, that the desire to confer a favor on some friend interested in the speculation has prevailed with those in authority to set every other consideration at defiance. And, indeed the cases are not few in which parties so confidently reckon on obtaining a license as readily to incur a considerable expense in altering their premises long before application is made; and hardly ever have these calculations proved deceptive. If their first application has failed, the second has invariably succeeded. Their very expenditure has proved a reason—and the more reckless, the more cogent it has proved—for granting their request.

Now, this is a highly reprehensible state of things. It is surely, time to pay some attention to this matter. The entire system of licensing must undergo revision. We have a hearty sympathy with the total abstinence societies.—They have done much good already, and we desire for them far more extended success. But they do not quite meet the present case: their influence is far too remote and feeble on this form of public immorality, for it is no better.—The gin-palace is a mighty obstacle in the way of their success. Such establishments, by traps and snares before many whose judgment is gained to the cause of temperance, but whose infirmity of purpose makes them as easy prey to the seductions which meet them on every side. Some movement is needed which shall directly bear on the whole question relating to these public-houses. The propriety and, indeed, necessity of some alteration will be disputed by few. We can only at present throw out a few hints for consideration.

Does it not seem reasonable, that persons engaged in dealing in intoxicating liquors, whether as merchants, or brewers, or publicans,

should be disqualified from acting on the bench when applications for licenses come on for consideration? Is it right that parties interested in this trade should be placed in a situation where they may be under strong temptation to act improperly? As a class, the persons to whom we now refer are marked by great diversity of character. That there are many of them of high respectability—men who would scorn to do anything mean, and are conscientiously interested in the public welfare, we do not doubt. There are others, however, amongst them the roughly selfish—who care for nothing but their own gains, and who would not scruple a moment to sacrifice the morality of the community to their own aggrandisement. Strange statements have at different times, come under our notice on this subject. We have heard of individuals in some of these large towns continually on the look-out for cheap purchases of property, and, having altered them into public-houses, selling them at an exorbitant profit, on the understanding that a license would be secured for them, and of brewers being the owners of dozens and even scores of houses for the sale of their liquors. What truth there may be in these reports we do not know; but, if these practices are possible they doubtless will sometimes occur, and their possible occurrence is a sufficient reason for the exclusion of the whole class from the exercise of a power liable to so serious an abuse.

Further, when the magistrates grant a license against the urgent remonstrance of a large proportion of the inhabitants of a particular locality, it seems reasonable that the remonstrants should have the power of appeal against the decision of the magistrates by some cheap, summary, and effectual process. We are aware that the applicants for a license have the power of appeal in many, if not in all instances of a refusal, but we are not aware that the inhabitants have; at least if they have it must be so troublesome and expensive a process, that it is rarely tried, although most obvious it is that such a power of appeal, by those who are likely to be injured by the licenses being granted, would exert a most salutary check on the proceedings of the magistrates.

Again, there seems no reason why musical and other entertainments, now often gratuitously furnished in these public-houses, should not be strictly prohibited. The sole object of these amusements is to attract custom to the house.—In some instances, several performers are regularly engaged at a stated salary—an evidence that these speculations are successful. Such houses are frequented by persons of most disreputable character. They are to a large extent public pests, destructive to the morals of the community. If the law, as now constructed, was intended to reach such places, it is notorious that it is systematically evaded. These things ought to be speedily abated as intolerable nuisances.

In addition, it deserves consideration, whether it would not be wise to prohibit altogether the sale of glasses of spirits to be drunk at the counter. That this practice is one of the most prolific sources of temptation, will not be denied. Let an individual watch for a single hour, at any part of the day, the company who enter these establishments, and he will be surprised at the mass of misery, rags, and vice, which will pass before him in that short time.—There is hardly anything like it to be met with anywhere else. It is a moving moral infection. To what will not the greed of gain reconcile human beings, when they are found habituating themselves, without disgust, impurity and disease, aye, and profit, by ministering to its accumulation and perpetuity? The prohibition of dram-selling, if practicable would be a great public blessing.

The last suggestion which we have to offer may be deemed somewhat Utopian, and yet it is manifestly reasonable. Why should not these public houses be made responsible for the pauperism which they directly create? How many families are left destitute, and thrown on the support of the public by the drunkenness of the parents! Is it fair that the public should be compelled to pay for the mischief which other parties directly perpetrate for their own selfish profit? Every man is held morally responsible for the effect of his own conduct; nay if a man conduct a trade attended with injury to his neighbor, he may be legally compelled to make good the damage. And shall persons minister to the vices of their fellow-men to the ruin of their families, and not be accountable? It is no difficult thing to ascertain when a family has been thrown on the Poor-rates through the drunken conduct of the parents. In all such cases, when established by evidence—a thing not difficult to do—let the family be provided for, not by the public at large, but by a rate on the public houses.—Let those who have been enriched by the vice be legally bound to sustain those who are the involuntary and helpless victims of it. There is some wisdom in making the vice in this way contribute to its own cure. The reasonableness of this will not be denied, however its practicability may be questioned.

Whatever may be thought of these suggestions, our end will be gained if they contribute to awaken public attention to this subject and lead to the adoption of such measures as may tend to abate in some degree this crying evil.

CASE OF DR. ACHILLI.

From the Puritan Recorder.

The religious public in England is much excited at this time, at an exposure made by Cardinal Wiseman of the life and conduct of Dr. Achilli, while the latter was a Romish priest, professor and friar. It is set forth that, for ten years, he prostituted his sacerdotal influence to the pampering of his licentiousness, and to the ruin of numerous females, some of them within conventual enclosures. During all this period, in which his guilt was fully known to his ecclesiastical superiors, he was removed from post to post, and ever prompted, "always," as Cardinal Wiseman says, "in hope of reclaiming him." Strange hope!

These exposures of a wolf in sheep's clothing, which never have been made, if the wolf had only retained the monkish cowl. It was time for Dr. Achilli to forsake a church which tolerated him in so wolfishly devouring the lambs of the fold, and which held the priestly robes over him to screen his pollutions. Such a sphere was evidently no fit place for repentance and reform. He had need to come out of it, in order that he might leave his abominations behind.

Dr. Achilli, however, denies the truth of the Cardinal's allegations, and it is understood that they are to be tested by a suit of libel.—The prosecution of a Romish dignitary of Dr. Wiseman's rank, in an English Court, and on such an occasion, will constitute one of the most intensely exciting trials on record. And let the result be what it may, it must prove hurtful to his cause. For if, as we hope and believe it will, the innocence of Dr. Achilli shall be made manifest, then the arch-priest who slandered him must be branded for life with indelible opprobrium. But if, on the contrary, Dr. Wiseman shall prove the truth of his charges, he will prove far too much for the credit and safety of his church. In that case, he will prove to a demonstration, under pure popish testimony and his own published declarations, that a priest known to his spiritual governors to be addicted to the vilest profligacy and abuse of his sacred office, may be retained in it for any length of time, and screened from justice, so long as he will not turn protestant and penitent. It will be proved by themselves that they have had one recent instance of the kind at Rome itself, of which they are known by other testimony to have had many. Who shall say that any priest of theirs, even through coming from the headquarters in Italy is pure from such crimes?—How can the possession of that office among them be regarded as any ground for a favorable opinion of the moral character of the possessor? Who can tell what might come to light in regard to Cardinal Wiseman himself, if he too were to forsake the courts of the Romish Harlot, and separate himself from her pollutions?

Ecclesiastical.

Canadian Wesleyan Methodist N. Connexion Church. MISSIONARY SERVICES. TORONTO DISTRICT.

Toronto City: Jan. 7th, 1851, Sermons, 11 a. m., and 6 p. m. Rev. H. O. Crofts. Jan. 8th, 1851, Public Meeting, at 7 p. m.

York Circuit: Yorkville, Jan. 7th, 1851, Sermon, 11 a. m., Rev. W. McClure. Yorkville, " " " " 6 p. m. Rev. J. W. G. Rogers. Blue Bell, " " " " 11 a. m. Rev. J. W. G. Rogers. Blue Bell, " " " " 6 p. m. Rev. W. McClure. 3rd Toll Gate, " " " " 6 p. m. Rev. J. Hales.

Yorkville, Jan. 9th, 1851, Public Meeting, 7 p. m. 3rd Toll Gate, 10th, " " " " 7 p. m. Blue Bell " 11th, " " " " 7 p. m.

Brock Circuit: Missionary Sermons, January 14th, 1851, by the Rev's. D. D. Rolston, and J. W. G. Rogers; and Missionary Meetings from the 15th, to the 18th: arrangements to be made by the Superintendent Preacher.

Whitchurch Circuit: Whitchurch, Jan. 21st, 1851, Sermon, 10½ a. m. Rev. W. McClure. Holland Landing, " " " " 3 p. m. Rev. W. McClure. Queensville, " " " " 6 p. m. Rev. W. McClure. Tecumseth, " " " " 10½ a. m. Rev. J. C. Warren. Brownsville, " " " " 3 p. m. Rev. J. C. Warren. Queensville, 22nd, Public Meeting, Holland Landing, 23rd, " " " " Whitchurch, 24th, " " " " Brownsville, 25th, " " " " Tecumseth, 26th, " " " "

Trafalgar Circuit: Jan. 28th, 1851, Sermons, by the Revs. D. D. Rolston, and C. Curry; Public Meetings, from the 29th to the 31st; arrangements to be made by the Superintendent Preacher. DEPUTATION, Revs. W. McClure, J. Hales, D. D. Rolston, and C. Curry.

Caledon Circuit: Jan. 28th, 1851, Sermons, by the Rev. J. Hales; Missionary Meetings, Feb. 1st and 2nd. DEPUTATION, Revs. W. McClure, J. Hales, D. D. Rolston, and C. Curry.

In two or three cases, the General Committee have deemed it expedient to make arrangements, although destitute of sufficient information to enable them to announce all the details. It is hoped, however, that in order to render our Missionary operations increasingly successful, the Superintendents of Circuits will lose no time in furnishing lists of appointments for Missionary Services on their several Stations, for insertion in the Watchman.

T. T. HOWARD, Sec. Mis. Com. Toronto, Nov. 5th, 1850.