

fatuation to preach a crusade against these pest-houses, which proclaim every one of our cities to be a city of the plague; or is it not rather by some infatuation that we have tolerated them so long?" "But," again says our Methodist contemporary, "the proposition is not so stringent as such objections would imply. Private dwellings were not the subject of legislation in the Maine Law. Houses of refreshment would still be found open by the traveller, and by the homeless city clerk. It is only proposed to make their comforts universally accessible on other terms than the expenditure of money in alcohol and beer. Ardent spirits would still be procurable by those who really needed them, (a number much smaller than is commonly thought,) but not from persons who had a direct interest in their adulteration and their immoderate use. It must be admitted that there would be less malting and distillation: which is as much as to say, that a less quantity of food would be turned into poison, that the cultivation of other cereals and crops would partially displace that of barley, and that we should be less dependent on foreign countries for corn, which would be cheapened in some proportion to the saving of what is now expended in distillation. In short, the price to be paid for the object advocated, is not enormous, or itself entirely without any set-off or compensation. Then there remains all the moral and social compensation. Within the same year in which the Maine Law was carried, the prisons of that State were nearly emptied, the burden of poor-rates and police-rates was lightened, the people who had themselves carried the law became at once sober and orderly, no tumult, no single exhibition of drunkenness appeared in the street, and very soon the traffickers in alcohol found other employment both for their capital and their labour."

After stating that the question of prohibition is one not of morality but of revenue, the *Nonconformist* thus concludes:—"Practically speaking, the proposal of the Alliance is to put a stop to the alarming evil of drunkenness by rendering access to intoxicating drinks impossible to the bulk of our population, sober and drunken alike—and to do this by the compulsory agency of law. The evil to be met and overcome is confessedly a prodigious one—whether the contemplated remedy will, in the long run, prove to be the wisest that could have been hit upon, remains to be seen."

"For our part we should be glad to find that a better plan can be hit upon. We contend that in principle a wiser and better plan cannot be found. However, as the *Watchman* observes, "The contest is now commencing in earnest," and then thus concludes:—"That it will eventually be triumphant here, as elsewhere, there is more reason for hope than doubt. But that there will be formidable difficulties, that it may be long before Government can be persuaded to deal with so gigantic an evil, which pays, as vice is ever ready to pay, so immense a bribe for impunity, must be admitted. So long as every twentieth house in our streets is a gin-shop or a tavern, so long will government never want an inducement to protect the system on the one side, nor the men who have resolved to destroy it, an argument on the other. We need not say that we trust the latter will carry on their proposed reformation with wisdom as well as with energy. The object is to abate a proved and public nuisance, to put down that which is itself a national crime, and the source of innumerable other crimes, miseries, and calamities. Their prin-

ciple is indisputable—*salus populi summa lex*. The chief difficulties are, that those who are now preying upon the vitals of the social system must be induced to get their living by more honest means; and that Government must cease to give them protection upon the terms of receiving a share in the plunder. In former movements, professedly leading to the same ultimate object, there have been extravagances, and we think even errors of principle, which have kept many good men aloof. But only by some extraordinary mismanagement can the same difficulties be imported into the present question. The principle is perfectly clear, and there need be no infringement of private liberty or dictation to private conscience in its advocacy."

We give this comparison of arguments, found in the columns of two very respectable papers, for the purpose of allowing our readers an opportunity of calmly reflecting on the respective merits of the writers. We fear not the result. The long silence of the *Watchman* is broken, and we rejoice to find that paper substantially sound. The *Nonconformist* will come round before long, and every religious paper on both sides of the Atlantic will soon harmonize, inasmuch as it is impossible, successfully to resist the principle—*salus populi summa lex*—the safety of the people is the supreme law.

### Books and Periodicals.

The Temperance reform is now calling into existence a higher order of appropriate literature. "Mapleton" is one of those sound and useful books required by the times. The edition we prepared for Canada is not yet all sold. What a pity it is that 20,000 are not scattered all over the country. We have before us another good book, entitled "The Mysterious Parchment; or, Satanic License," dedicated to Maine Law progress. It is written by the Rev. Joel Wakeman, and contains 323 pages, 12mo. We have read every word of it, and can conscientiously recommend it. It is published by John P. Jewett & Co., of Boston. It is hardly to be considered a book of fiction. In his preface, the author says, "Indeed, some of the most horrible and shocking which are mentioned are true, with little or no variation, such as the death of Howland, by falling from the bridge, Philip Hopkiss, who froze to death, Philip Saxburg, who fell in the fire and burned to death, Davisor's son, who was killed by drinking too much whiskey, Mrs. Sturdevant, who was knocked down, her flesh and limbs hacked with a sharp knife by her husband, which resulted in her death, Jenks taking the half bushel of corn meal from Rigden for rum, and pushing away his wife, telling her he had a license, and many others mentioned in this work are true, and are given without embellishments or color." We can well believe that statement, and are persuaded that the wide circulation of this book will aid the glorious work of reform, assist in getting the Maine Law, "which," as the author says, "is the only sure remedy in the wide range of human instrumentality."

Of Magazines the only one for January, 1854, which has reached us at the present time of writing, is the Magazine devoted to Literature, Art, and Religion. Abel Stevens, Editor. Publishers: Carlton & Phillips, New York. This interesting monthly begins a new volume with uncommon energy, and a pleasing variety of valuable literature, adapted to benefit and gratify all classes. It is to all intents and purposes a family magazine, and may safely be placed on the parlor table, and in the hands of young people. The engravings are rich and chaste, and in this one number there are no less than twenty-six illustrations. The Edi-