

correspondents, a restriction of individual liberty ; but if you forcibly shut up the store, destroy all the breadstuff found therein, and make the future sale of bread penal, you leave all the inhabitants in the full enjoyment of their personal rights. The teetotalers have tried moral suasion, and, according to their own account, succeed but too slowly. They now resort to law to do their work more quickly. What does this mean ? That what they could not effectually do by addressing men's wills, they wish to do by invalidating men's wills—and yet we are to understand that they deprecate all personal coercion."

This parallel between bread and grog is very plausibly drawn, but it will strike every thoughtful person as very unfair and unsound. Bread is a necessity of life ; beer and gin are not, but are an unmitigated evil. To place things so essentially different in themselves and in their effects in the same catalogue, is an intolerable begging of the question. The *Nonconformist* says the teetotalers have "tried moral suasion" and "succeed but too slowly." Granted ; but we now quote the *Watchman*, who touches both that and the bread question. He says :—"When public opinion has addressed itself for a certain length of time to private cupidity in vain, when charity has pleaded long and received a final repulse, then, in some mysterious way, there comes a revelation or Providential enlightenment, which shows to the conviction of society at large that some particular nuisance, moral or physical, must be put down. For a time private interest may oppose, and form a successful league ; but its arguments, character, and working become more and more odious as the contest proceeds : all good men were against it from the beginning, and all who are not lost to a sense of shame desert it in the end. Then the system falls prostrate and ruined for ever.

Such a contest is commencing now in this country. The same battle has been fought and won by the people themselves, in many of the United States, and in one of our own American Colonies. The nuisance to be abated is the sale of intoxicating drinks—the temptation presented by every twentieth house, in some of our streets, to the labouring man to spend his money for *that which is not bread*. These are the places which create a famine in a million families after the most plenteous season, and swallow up the reward of labour ; which are not less relentless in their exactions during times when food is dear and employment hard to be obtained ; which point the fang of hunger with poison, and set vice opposite the misery beside the extinguished hearth. These places are the council-chambers and normal-schools of crime, where old and young, the hardened and the weak, the tempter and the victim, unite in the fellowship of sin. They are the feeders of our gaols, workhouses, and lunatic asylums ; they people whole streets with felons and prostitutes, and whole colonies with convicts. By them the mother-country has been brought to the brink of separation from her dependencies. They have raised one of the most difficult questions of the present time—What are we to do with our convicts ? How strange that the answer has so seldom occurred,—Lessen their number, by cutting off the ordinary incentive to crime. Another pressing question is not less involved,—that of education ; for what great topos can be entertained, so long as for every school there are a score of taverns."

The *Watchman* therefore touches the real difficulty in regard to suppression. It, in effect, affirms that the remedy of the evil is next to an impossibility, while taverns remain so numerous. The *Nonconformist* dreads the idea of teetotalism by compulsion, and says :—"But no use of words can wholly conceal this palpable fact, that the aim of the Alliance is to make total abstinents by compulsion. Then, again, they tell us that society has a right to protect itself. No doubt it has—but can the process they are anxious to employ be regarded as a fair application of that right ? The case stands thus—a deplorably large class, by the indulgence of a depraved habit, entail not only an enormous expense, but also a pestilential moral danger, upon the rest of the community. What does the Alliance propose ? To abridge the liberties of that class ? No, but to reach drunkards by a prohibition which will equally affect the liberties of every other class. A few brawlers are in the village, and they would enact a Curfew law. Unhappy women infest the streets, and they would make it penal for any woman to appear out of doors after dark. Where crowds assemble for pleasure depraved natures take advantage of the occasion, and they would forbid all such crowds. At least, these are but fair practical expressions of their principle. Now, this is but a lazy and despotic mode of warning against this world's evils. It is not society protecting itself—but a portion of society cutting short all annoyance by the indiscriminate punishment of the innocent with the guilty. "I shall whip you all round," says the schoolmaster, "and then I shall be sure of punishing the rogues." We shall make you all abstainers, say our friends, and then we shall be sure to extirpate tippling. It is beside the mark to urge that a Maine Liquor Law cannot be enacted in this country but by a majority—and that a majority have a right to put an end to the evil of drunkenness in any way that may seem good to them. We deny the assumed fact, and we deny the doctrine attached to it. Laws in this country have been, and may yet be, passed by minorities—and, where there are majorities, they have no right to impose on minorities laws which are not called for by justice or necessity. Moreover, as it appears to us, the remedy suggested is not the one called for by the evil to be eradicated. The evil is tippling—and tippling is induced and ministered to by the sale of intoxicating drinks at certain licensed places only, and in small quantities. If law be resorted to at all, with a view to stop the mischief, it would seem most feasible, and least arbitrary, to urge a change which would include in its scope no more than the mischief. If the Alliance had proposed to render the sale of alcoholic beverages in certain retail quantities illegal, and to prohibit, in every case, the drinking of them on the premises of the vendor, they would have had a stronger case, and would probably have enlisted a larger amount of public sympathy than now. Even this would have been a very galling interference with private rights. But the remedy proposed by the Alliance is a blow really aimed at the practice of taking intoxicating drinks, not at the habit of drunkenness, and would strike indifferently the sot who frequents the public houses, and the sober man who has been accustomed to drink, and be thankful for his glass of beer at supper.

Very sympathetic with the man who likes his beer at supper ; but what about the millions, who, through drink, are obliged to go supperless. "Is it," says the *Watchman*, "in-