

Miscellaneous.

CHARLES KINGSLEY AS A TEMPERANCE LECTURER.

[From the Evening Mail—Justin McCarthy.]

I WAS present the other night at a meeting called to consider the possibility of making some beneficial alteration in our liquor-licensing laws, and during the proceedings the chairman called upon a distinguished clergyman present to give an account of the effect of drinking in the country parish over which he presides as pastor. When the name was called every one became attentive. There came to the front of the platform a tall, robust, muscular man, with a florid, handsome face, and a bearing so odd and uncouth that a kind of titter ran around the room. He rocked and swayed upon his legs, backward and forward, and from side to side, like a man trying to stand on the deck of a steamer during half a gale. He speaks in a powerful voice and with the soft, thick accents of the south of England; and what with the accent and what with the racking motion, he took the audience so much by surprise at first that I grieve to say a lady just behind me was heard to remark, half aloud, "why he is intoxicated!" Intoxicated, however, most certainly he was not as you will believe when I tell you his name; but if any comic actor were to move and gesticulate on the stage as this speaker did upon the platform, the performance would be accepted as a capital imitation of drunkenness. The speaker now and then thrust both his hands down to the wrist in his trousers' pockets, and in this attitude so swung to and fro, that I began to be afraid he would throw himself off the platform. At the end of any sentence which was meant to be specially effective, he jerked or rather flung back his head so far and so violently that it seemed as if it must fly off to the rear of the platform, and at the same moment he thrust forward at the audience his stomach in such a manner that his shape was as that of half a barge, with the convex side turned toward the meeting. When he had made himself emphatic in that way for a second or two, he as suddenly unbent himself and immediately was rebent in the opposite direction. All the time that he was speaking he never ceased the display of these extraordinary and fantastic attitudes. Many of those present could not keep from laughing at each new stagger, jerk and gyration. Yet he commanded hearing, partly by his name and partly by the earnest feeling and manly good sense which characterized his speech. For this was Charles Kingsley, Cannon of Eversley, the poet, merchant, and scholar, the author of "Alton Lock," and "Apostle of Muscular Christianity." With the manner and gestures of a huge polichinelle and accents that reminded one of a country farmer noisily laying down the law at a harvest home festival late in the evening, with these astounding disadvantages, Mr. Kingsley did manage, somehow, to command the attention and admiration of his hearers. His speech seemed so spontaneous, so natural, so simple earnest, that you could not but like the man. His task was rather a delicate one, for he had to speak of the immoralities of that most odious den of bestiality, a low public-house in a country village, and the audience was made up of both sexes. The awkwardness of his manner and the grotesque mixture of blunder and good sense were peculiarly apparent here. Sometimes he would himself suddenly up and say, with a shudder of evident sincerity, "God forbid I should mention in this room what I have known to happen in those public-houses" and then having thus caught himself in time, he would turn away to some other topic, only for a moment, to return again to the horrors of the public-houses, and forgetting all his former protest, he would describe with a plainness of speech that was positively scriptural the temptations and the evils that the drink-shop holds out to the young. No one was offended by this outspoken simplicity. No woman in the audience felt, I am sure, anything but respect for the earnestness which carried the speaker away in spite of himself. Cannon Kingsley has often gone wrong on public questions; he's almost invariably wrong on politics; he's a constant making some blunder or other, as a man with so much exuberant energy and little thinking power is sure to do; but he has a manly spirit and a good heart. As for his gestures and deportment while delivering a speech, I can only say that the manner of the late Lord Brougham seems graceful and stately by comparison.

MARVELOUS CONJURERS.

SOME of the feats of the Japanese Jugglers are very remarkable. One will lie down on his back with a boy balanced on the end of his nose, the boy supporting an umbrella on the end of his own nose. Another will hold up his foot, upon the sole of which the boy plants his nose, and balances himself in the air. Some of these feats seem impossible, without the aid of some concealed machinery. One juggler exhibited to the spectators a large open fan, which he held in his right hand, then threw it into the air, caught it by the handle in his left hand, squatted down, fanned himself, and then turning his head in profile, gave a long sigh, during which the image of a galloping horse issued from his mouth. Still fanning himself he shook from his right sleeve an army of little men, who presently bowed and dancing, vanished from sight. Then he bowed, closed the fan and held it in his two hands, during which time his own head disappeared, then became visible, but of colossal size, and finally appeared in its natural dimensions, but multiplied four or five

times. They set a jar before him, and in a short time he issued from the neck, rose slowly into the air, and vanished in clouds along the ceiling. But nothing in record, parallels the astonishing exhibitions of the Russian Pirnetti, styled the Wizard of the North. The Czar Alexander, having heard Pirnetti much spoken of, was desirous of seeing him; one day it was announced to the conjurer that he would have the honor of giving a representation of his magical powers at court, the hour fixed for him to make his appearance being seven o'clock. A brilliant and numerous assembly of ladies and courtiers, presided over by the Czar, had met, but the conjurer was absent. Surprised and displeased, the Czar pulled out his watch, which indicated five minutes after seven. Pirnetti had not only failed in being in waiting, but he had caused the court to wait, and Alexander was not more potent than Louis XIV. A quarter of an hour had passed, half an hour, and no Pirnetti! Messengers who had been sent in search of him returned unsuccessful. The anger of the Czar, with difficulty restrained, displayed itself in threatening exclamations. At length after the lapse of an hour, the door of the saloon opened, and the gentleman of the chamber announced Pirnetti, who presented himself with a calm front, and the serenity of one who has done nothing to reproach himself with. The Czar, however, was greatly displeased; but Pirnetti assumed an air of astonishment, and replied with the greatest coolness, "Did not your majesty command my presence at seven o'clock precisely?" "Just so!" exclaimed the Czar, at the height of exasperation. "Well then," said Pirnetti, "let your majesty deign to look at your watch, and you will perceive that I am exact, and that it is just seven o'clock."

The Czar pulling out his watch violently, in order to confound what he considered a piece of downright insolence, was completely amazed. The watch marked seven o'clock! In turn all the courtiers drew out their watches, which were found as usual exactly regulated by that of the sovereign. Seven o'clock! indicated with a common accord all the watches and clocks in the place. The art of the magician was at once manifest in this strange retrogression in the march of time. To anger succeeded astonishment and admiration. Perceiving that the Czar smiled, Pirnetti thus addressed him.

"Your majesty will pardon me. It was by the performance of this trick that I was desirous of making my first appearance before you. But I know how precious truth is at court; it is at least necessary that your watch should tell it to you, sire. If you consult it now, you will find that it marks the real time."

The Czar again drew forth his watch—it pointed to a few minutes past eight; the same rectification had taken place in all the watches of those present, and in the clocks of the palace. The exploit was followed by others equally amusing and surprising. At the close of the performance the Czar, after having complimented Pirnetti, brought back to his remembrance that in the course of the evening's amusements he had declared that such was the power of his art that he could penetrate everywhere.

"Yes, sire, everywhere!" replied the conjurer, with modest assurance.

"What!" exclaimed the Czar, "could you penetrate even into this palace, were I to order all the doors to be closed and guarded?"

"Into this palace, sire, as easily as I should enter into my own house," said Pirnetti.

"Well, then," said the Czar, "at mid-day to-morrow I shall have ready in my closet the price of this evening's amusement—one thousand rubles. Come and get them. But I forbear you that the doors will be closed and carefully guarded."

"To-morrow at mid-day, I shall have the honor of presenting myself before your majesty," replied Pirnetti, who bowed and withdrew.

The gentlemen of the household followed the conjurer to make sure that he quitted the place, they accompanied him to his lodgings, and a number of police surrounded the dwelling from the moment he entered it. The palace was instantly closed, with positive orders not to suffer, under any pretext whatever, any one to enter, were they prince or valet, until the Czar himself should command the doors to be opened.

These orders were strictly enforced, confidential persons having watched their execution. The exterior openings to the palace were guarded by the soldiery. All the approaches to the imperial apartments were protected by high dignitaries, whom a simple professor of the art of legredmain possessed no means of bribing. In short, after greater security, all the keys had been carried into the imperial cabinet. A few moments previous to the hour fixed for Pirnetti's interview with the Czar, the chamberlain on service brought to his majesty a despatch which a messenger had handed him through an opening in the door. It was a report from the minister of police that Pirnetti had not left home.

"Aha! he found out the undertaking is impracticable, and he has abandoned it," observed the Czar, with a smile.

Twelve o'clock sounded. While the last stroke reverberated, the door which communicated from the bedroom of the Czar to the cabinet opened, and Pirnetti appeared. The Czar drew back a couple of paces, his brow darkened, and after a momentary silence, he said,

"Are you aware that you may become a very dangerous individual?"

"Yes, sire," he replied; "but I am only an humble conjurer, with no ambition save that of amusing your majesty."

"Here," said the Czar, "are a thousand rubles for last night, and a thousand for this day's visit."

Pirnetti, in offering his thanks, was interrupted by the Czar, who, with a thoughtful air, inquired of him, "Do you count on remaining some time in St. Petersburg?"

"Sire," he replied, "I intend setting off this week, unless your majesty orders a prolongation of my sojourn."

"No," hastily observed the Czar; "it is not my intention to detain you; and, moreover," continued he with a smile, "I should vainly endeavor to keep you against your will. You know how to leave St. Petersburg as easily as you have found your way into this place."

"I could do so, sire," said Pirnetti; "but far from wishing to quit St. Petersburg stealthily and mysteriously, I am desirous of quitting it in the most public manner possible, by giving to the inhabitants of your capital a striking example of my magical powers."

Pirnetti could not leave like an ordinary mortal; it was necessary that he should crown his

success in the Russian capital by something surpassing his previous efforts; therefore, on the evening preceding the day fixed for his departure, he announced that he should leave St. Petersburg the following day at ten o'clock in the morning, and that he should quit by all the city gates at the same moment! Public curiosity was excited to the highest degree by this announcement. St. Petersburg at that time had fifteen gates, which were encompassed by a multitude eager to witness this marvellous departure.

The spectators at these various gates all declared that at ten o'clock, precisely, Pirnetti whom they all perfectly recognized, passed through. "He walked at a slow pace and with head erect, in order to be better seen," they said; "and he bade us adieu in a clear and audible voice." These unanimous testimonies were confirmed by the written declaration of the officers placed at every gate to inspect the passports of travellers. The inscription of Pirnetti's were inscribed in the fifteen registers. Where is the wizard, whether coming from the North to South, who could in these degenerate days perform so astonishing an exploit?

FORMATION OF A BED OF COAL.

We can comprehend the formation of a bed of coal in the olden time. Let us suppose that a certain bed of coal has been completed by the growth of luxuriant plants over a low-lying tract subject to inundations from the sea. Rising ground of granite or schistose rock in the distance defining the boundaries of a continent from which the sedimentary materials of the coal strata are derived. The growth of vegetation mark a period of rest; but now a low subsidence of the whole tract commences. The brackish waters of the estuary, and the salt waters from the ocean invaded the jungle, carrying dark mud in suspension, with floating stems of trees and fronds of ferns. Presently the mud subsides, and covers in one uniform sheet the accumulated vegetation of centuries. The process of subsidence goes on while the sea currents and rivers pour into the estuary fine sand and mud, in which branches and stems from the uplands are inclined.

This process continues until the sinking of the ocean bed altogether ceases, or is counter-balanced by the rapidity with which the sediment is deposited. The basin becomes gradually shallower, and plants begin to appear, commencing perhaps at the coast, and creeping seaward until the basin is again overpread by a forest of huge cryptogamic trees, arborescent ferns, and conifers, with a dense undergrowth of giant grasses. These, generation after generation, flourish and die, their leaves, branches and trunks are falling around, and gradually accumulating, till the pulpy mass attains a thickness of twenty, fifty, or a hundred feet. The process completed, the basin again commences to subside, the waters run and carry the mass of thousands of centuries, strata upon strata accumulates till the vegetation pulp is subjected to the pressure of it, may be, thousands of feet of solid matter.

Meanwhile, chemical as well mechanical changes ensue, and in process of time what was once a torrent is changed into a bed of coal. By repetition of this process with local variations we may conceive the formation of any number of coal seams, frequently amounting in some districts, to fifty or sixty, embracing within a vertical thickness of several thousand feet of shales and sandstone. Ages roll on, the strata are removed from their foundations; upheaved from the bottom, the breakers and currents sweep away a portion of the covering, and the coal is brought within the reach of mining industry.

BRAVE TRUTHS.

AT the anniversary of St. Francis Xavier's College in Cincinnati, last week, Archbishop Purcell took occasion to make some very forcible remarks on Trades Unions. He said that "He agreed with a recent writer, who believed that the trades unions were detrimental to the laboring men and every person concerned. With reference to the eight hour movement, if eight hours were agreed upon to-day, six or four hours might be demanded to-morrow, for who should set a limit to such arrogance and dictation. If labor said to capital to-day it must have five dollars, to-morrow it might demand ten. No government could continue to exist under such a system. The next cry might be that to possess property was robbery, and a division be demanded. Thus every 'loafer' and drunkard would require a new division each Saturday night until there should be nothing to subdivide. A remedy for these evils lay in a liberal education." These truths are timely, and coming from a man so eminent for purity of life, universal charity, conceded piety and great force of mind, cannot fail to make more than ephemeral impression on the public mind. The tyranny of the "Union" system when carried to its full extent, is the most wide-reaching and intolerable among men. It was devised by the very classes of workmen the Archbishops refers to—viz, the incorrigibly idle, the loafers and drunkards for the purpose, not so much, at the first, for controlling capital as of compelling the industrious, sober, and able workmen to support them in their idleness. Conversing last week with the superintendent of one of the largest and most important public manufactures of the city, he related to us a single instance which, if there had never been another, would stamp the system as odious and intolerable. One of the hands was idle, insolent and in fact useless. For 1133 1133031 he was discharged. But he was a "Union Man." The

next day the whole body of hands, numbering hundreds, notified their employers that unless this idle and impudent rascal were restored, they would have to strike. They despised the man, but their obligation as union men compelled them to the course threatened. The business was so great, and such possible evil as well as private loss, would have resulted from even a six hour stoppage that the insolent rascal was put back. Can any business be carried on under such conditions; and might not employers as well exist with the sword of Damocles suspended over them, as with the constant dread of this secret and pervading power which, in a moment can defeat the best laid plans of business and bring ruin on the toil and efforts of a life?

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