

The Great Exhibition.

The proposed "Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations," which is to take place this year in the metropolis, is a grand conception, worthy of a princely head. But as no human project is absolute perfection, so there are obvious defects in this magnificent scheme.

There is one class of persons and traders, for the exhibition of whose products there seems no provision at all. This class, too, is a very large one. It exerts a decided influence on the national character and social condition of England. It annually absorbs a sum equal at least to both the whole revenue of the country and the entire value of our foreign commerce. The amount of capital embarked in the business is immense, and the profits enormous.

The persons and places devoted to it out-number, in almost every town, every other single class of traders.

It finds direct and abundant employment, at great cost, to a vast army of functionaries; and its indirect advantages, in the shape of profits, to many others, is beyond all calculation.

To omit specimens of the products of so vast and formidable a business, in a scheme for the exhibition of national industry, is a manifest defect.

The omission may well be regarded as a direct insult to the persons concerned. It puts the brand of exclusion upon them. It marks them as not fit to be present in a grand assemblage of the world's intellect and genius. It, in short, is tantamount to ignoring their existence—than which nothing is more notorious. The proof of the wide and active operation of the business we are thinking of, may be seen in all the towns and villages of England, every day in the week, and be learnt at any police-office in the country.

It is expected that much benefit will arise to the arts and handicrafts from the proposed Exhibition; and why is this business to be excluded from the benefits of comparison and competition? It is allowed on all hands to have been brought to great perfection,—it is equally certain that it admits of great improvement. Besides, the exhibition of its pure products—stripped of those deceitful adjuncts which greatly serve to disguise its real character—could not fail to exert a highly beneficial influence on the tastes and social habits of the people;—and is not that one chief end of the Exhibition, and one of the main tendencies of all art and well-directed science?

Were a large space of the Crystal Palace appropriated to the more finished specimens of "the trade," it would be worth while all the working men of England to go specially to see them. The effect would be of great advantage to themselves and their families.

The utility of the experiment would be greatly enhanced could the whole process of manufacture from the first beginning, through the several stages, to the last result, be minutely and faithfully described.

A row of figures (live specimens, if possible,) might be had to explain how the fine bright eye—the pearly hue of health and strength—had passed away; how the natural fluids had all been gradually sucked in from the surface, to re-appear in little red carbuncles, with an especial cluster about the nose.

A set of jolly, bloated fellows, with leering look,—to intimate the intellectual character of the concern.

Some good effigies, exhibiting the gradual progress from shining broadcloth to "seedy" and "ragged," would not be amiss.

A few felons, handcuffed, and in the piebald prison dress—some convicts from New South Wales—a gentleman of the road, with short cropped hair, exhibiting his industry on the "Tread Mill," would be likely to have a good moral effect.

Some choice specimens from the back alleys where the business is carried on very actively—women with caps dirty

and torn—men with hats broken in, blackened eyes, short pipes in their mouths, holding dogs by a string,—would form a very interesting group. Perhaps a few lunatics and paupers, made so by the business in question, might be advantageously added. It might not be amiss to have also some specimens of broken-hearted parents; and children plunged in vice, crime, and irretrievable ruin, from the same cause. This would form a truly moving spectacle.

A model of a drunkard's habitation—windows stuffed with rags—bare walls within—bricks for chairs—an old shutter on a barrel for a table—an almost fireless grate, with a pale, emaciated woman and three hungry, ragged children grouped round it—in one corner a heap of straw, with the heavy figure of a man stretched upon it—may be suggested.

No difficulty can be experienced in obtaining such models, as the originals may be found in thousands among the great towns of Christian England. A contrasted group of fat, paunch-shouldered, well-dressed publicans and brewers on one side; their cadaverous, down-looking, ill-clad customers on the other—showing at one view the difference between the producers and their finished products.

A full-length statue (at his own expense) of the philanthropic brewer of Spitalfields, who profits by the demoralization of his countrymen, and is much concerned for negroes, Hottentots, and heathens.—A similar representative of that "eminent" distiller who makes children ragged, and then benevolently builds them Ragged Schools; doing for some of them in an infinitesimal degree what their parents, by reason of their "industry" in his behalf, have not the means of doing. Such an "eminent" specimen of his class is eminently deserving of a conspicuous place in the Exhibition—to attract the admiration of England and foreign nations.

A decided attraction would be some of the big brewers from Barclay and Perkins' who drubbed General Haynau. We will answer for it that there will be present some staunch-hearted teetotalers who mean to drub the brewers.

LOOKER ON.

Conference of Temperance Reformers in Leicester.

We observe from the *British Temperance Advocate*, for March, that, on the 11th of February, a Conference was held in the New Hall, Leicester, England, respecting a demonstration of teetotalers in London during the Great Exhibition. Nearly fifty representatives, from various parts, were present, and letters were read from more who could not be present, but all approving of the object:

Mr. I. Doresey, Secretary of the National Temperance Society, and Mr. Newcombe of Leicester, were appointed Secretaries of the Conference.

The Chairman said, the first question to be considered was, whether any demonstration should be held at all. He had little faith in mere show, and thought it better to devise some means of bringing the arguments of the teetotalers to bear upon the metropolis. Means might be adopted by which the leading men in the country could attend meetings in all parts of London. Novelty and interest would be given to the various gatherings, and more be done to give an impetus to the cause.

Mr. D. Burns thought demonstrations were of great service in calling public attention to the question, and impressing the public with an idea of activity.

Mr. Cunliffe suggested a succession of gatherings in July, August, and September. There would be more variety, and a constant series of agitation, keeping the question before the public mind.

Mr. Swindlehurst, of Preston, said, if he went to London, he would go to do good. He recommended them to hold meetings in all parts of London, conducted by all classes of persons.

Mr. R. Horns said it was something for the teetotalers to go to London, were it only to see one another. A powerful demonstration was needed to impress some who cannot and will not argue, and who were more likely to have their attention aroused by such means.