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**A TEMPERANCE ARCADIA AND ITS FOUNDER.**

All who can speak with authority agree that the great outstanding curse of our country is "the drink." An evening paper lately termed it "the mother of many miseries." We are roundly told by philanthropists that if the money which goes into the all-devouring maw of the publican's till were devoted to righteous uses, the pauperism of our great cities would recede almost to vanishing point. With one consent our judges say that the drink is the parent of nearly all the crime. Statisticians declare that it compasses, directly or indirectly, the premature death of 120,000 persons within these realms every solar cycle. Mr. Gladstone has made the startling assertion that the roll-call of its victims exceeds those of war, famine, and pestilence combined.

One might naturally suppose that, as a practical and sensible people, we would make all speed to relieve the nation from such a fearful incubus. Strange to say, we do not. The statesman we have named has done much to aggravate the situation—unintentionally, we doubt not—by his Grocers' Licences Bill; but neither he nor his colleagues have made any serious effort to ward off the giant evil, he has so graphically portrayed. And other Governments have followed suit. What can be the cause of our amazing supineness? In plain, if somewhat inelegant, English, it is this: "There is money in it." While we have slept, the enemy has been stealthily but steadily sowing the tares, and a crop of so called "vested interests" has sprung up. For these we calmly barter away hecatombs of the bodies and souls of men. Strangest fact of all, the professing Church of Christ is so implicated, by actual participation in, and patronage of, the traffic, or by the receipt of blood-money and hush-money from those whom it has enriched, that her collective testimony is virtually powerless.

A black enough picture truly; but none too black. We turn from it with all the greater relief to welcome a ray of light that comes from across "the silver streak." In these days we are almost ready to believe that no good thing can come out of poor, unhappy Ireland. And yet it is there that we find this great problem solved; not on a very extended scale, it is true, but large enough to show that it is possible and practicable. The name and fame of Bessbrook have gone throughout the world. Across the Atlantic we find great communities slowly struggling through seas of turmoil and conflict towards the peaceful shores of prohibition. Across the Irish

Channel we find a veritable Arcadia, where, in the words of one who knows whereof she writes:—

It is a fact that we are happy here without that which is separating so many from God. The people are quiet and contented, while the work of God is flourishing among the youth.

Surely that is a phase of Home Rule that "Whig and Tory," Radical and Nationalist should "all agree" to establish in the Green Isle, from the Giant's Causeway to Bantry Bay. Meantime, let us take a

firm has a reputation for genuine, honest work in that branch of industry, as high as that enjoyed by "the house of Morley" in another branch. The Bessbrook damasks are unexcelled, we believe, in the markets of the world. It has been said of the goods that come from Mr. Richardson's looms. "You may purchase them in the dark."

If we covered reams of paper we could formulate no higher praise than that. But our object in drawing attention to Bessbrook is mainly to gather from its history the light it throws on the only satisfactory

of the five items in that small peck of p's! If our faith were strong enough, and our works did but correspond, we suppose it ought to be done. The hand of the Lord is not shortened; therefore the preventing cause must lie in our unbelief, because of which he cannot do his mighty work.

It is true, no doubt, that in Bessbrook they began well, and that is half the battle. The entire works, we are told, employ about four thousand men, women, and children. Though the accursed drink is not to be bought in the township for love or money, it can be had in Newry, which is not three miles distant. There is no sumptuary law in Bessbrook compelling the people to abstain. Some do walk to the neighboring town to procure liquor, but the moral education of the temperance system has been such that the householders of the place have endorsed the prohibitory arrangement by a vote of six to one. And so Bessbrook, to quote the expressive words of an impartial correspondent of *Land and Water*, "stands out like a gem in this sombre and commonplace world, and like a star in the black sky of crime and intemperance."

There do not seem to be any workless workers in Bessbrook. From morn to eve the whirr of the wheels and the click of the spindles are heard; and the beautiful, well-compacted material is unceasingly turned out, to find acceptance with housewives, the wide world over, as the product of clear heads, and supple, steady hands. Some £70,000 per annum are distributed as wages, but it does not go to enrich the brewer and the publican, at the expense of the health and morals of the people. Mr. Richardson has erected pretty and suitable homes for his workers, and no Court is needed to reduce rack rents. There they live in comfort and independence. Every house has its garden, so that there is plenty for the men to do during the leisure hours. For winter evenings there is a Library Institute, with its reading, lecture, and recreation rooms. There is a dispensary, supported by a common sick fund, to which all contribute their quota. There are excellent schools, supported also by a small general tax, in proportion to the size of the family. There is a savings bank, the depositors in which receive four percent interest; some of these have placed there goodly sums to meet the calls of the inevitable rainy day. No sort of favoritism is shown in matters of religious favor; for there are five places of worship—Episcopal, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Society of Friends, and Roman Catholic. All these are supported by their congregations without the aid of any grant from the State. Like an



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peep at Bessbrook, an Ulster town of nearly 4,000 inhabitants. It was founded as a temperance colony some forty years ago by Mr. J. G. Richardson. He has now attained to an almost patriarchal age, having been born in 1813; for many years he has been a leading member in the Society of Friends, consistently carrying out their principles of a humble walk with God, and earnest labor for the good of others. Like his immediate ancestor, his worldly calling is that of a linen manufacturer, and his

solution of the ever-present and ever-pressing drink problem.

Mr. Richardson and his partners chose a spot in County Armagh, near which Mr. Richardson owns an estate of 6,000 acres, and there erected a great linen factory, and established the colony, as we have said, on strictly temperance lines. The motto was "No public-house." The natural corollary is that there is and has been no prison, no police, no paupers, and no pawnshop. Only think of London being without each