

probably be adverted to, and more fully discussed, in a subsequent letter,—the subject now to be examined, is that of,—the effect of the legal restrictions already intimated, in regard to limiting or preventing the anticipated evils of the traffic. Fact and experience alone, can here decide; and they have long since, and in every land, most fully and manifestly decided the matter. So numerous, so constantly occurring, and so fearfully pernicious, have those evils been, in every land where such legal restrictions have been in force, that it is scarcely credible to suppose that they have, in any degree whatever, prevented, or even limited, those afflicting results. Probably, from a consideration of the magnitude and number of those results, the restrictions and penal provisions, have, in several countries, from time to time, been made more pointed and severe; but, still, the evils have continued to be nearly, if not quite, as numerous and destructive as before. But, further, with a strange inconsistency, while the law so licensed the sale of the intoxicating liquors, by the same authority penalties were imposed for every act of open drunkenness. And so *pernicious* and *degrading*, did the law makers justly consider that offence to be, that for a *first* repetition of it, in addition to a second fine, the offender was made liable to be bound with sureties to keep the peace, and be of good behaviour, for a limited time, as it was fairly presumed, that such an offender, in every probability, would be led to disturb the public peace, and commit other offences; besides the injurious effects of his evil example. And for a third offence, the law provided that the offender should be openly placed, for a time, in the *public stocks*. But, did these severe and degrading inflictions and punishments, *in terrorem*, restrain or prevent either the commission, or the repetition of the offence? *Not at all*, may be confidently answered. Perhaps, there has scarcely ever been a magistrate, in the British dominions, or in any other country, who has been better qualified than I am, from extensive experience, to afford information and testimony on the point. On my first entering upon the office of a magistrate, feeling conscientiously bound,—by the solemn obligation of the oath I had taken, to carry into effect, all the laws against evil doers, as far as empowered to do so, and noticing upon our Provincial statute book, the law alluded to, against all open drunkenness, and daily seeing drunkards about the town where I resided, and officiated, as well as occasionally in other places, within my jurisdiction, I commenced the performance of my official duty, and convicted and fined, without distinction of persons, rank