

haps, what most enhanced his local reputation, and best prepared the way to his greater works, was his heroic devotion to the poor during the terrible cholera year, 1832. The mysterious pestilence made its first appearance in Ireland at Cork, and in a neighboring parish to Mr. Mathews. He was the first volunteer who flew to the assistance of the resident clergy. As it spread through the city, he seemed to be everywhere; night and day his toils were incessant, and that powerful constitution with which nature had gifted him, was strained and burthened to the uttermost. Many an anecdote of his courage, his kindness, and his endurance, has become a tradition in the city, in which he so nobly stood up and did battle for the salvation of the people.

As to Mr. Mathews' social habits, before he took up the cause of Total Abstinence, they were always very temperate. Though extremely fond of cheerful and innocent society,—never so happy as when he had friends about him,—and though not at war, in those days, with the customs of the times, he never fell in with them in one fatal respect. And although cheerfulness amounting sometimes almost to a boyish buoyancy of spirits was the general tone of his mind, especially when his benevolent undertakings were getting on prosperously, yet Mr. Mathew was constitutionally subject to fits of depression, which any blow to his affections was sure to precipitate. His family attachments and his personal friendships were exceedingly strong and sensitive. Till the day of his death he never could speak without emotion of his father and mother; for the greater part of half a century he commemorated the death of a favorite younger brother, whom he had lost in his sixteenth year. One of these melancholy visitations completely overshadowed his spirits on the death of his venerable senior in charge of the Friary Chapel, in the year 1829.

A SINGULAR TEMPTATION.

While plunged in gloom in the deserted old chapel-house, he was subjected to a temptation of which his friend Mr. Maguire gives the following account, evidently from his own relation:

"As he sat one evening by himself before the fire, whose flickering light filled the room with

fantastic shadows, a voice seemed to whisper in his ear—"Father Mathew, that Cognac in the cupboard is delicious. You have not tasted it. Why don't you try it?" Yielding to this delusion, Father Mathew replied audibly—"Tea is much better." But you didn't taste the Cognac—it is delicious—only try it," whispered the imaginary voice. "No; tea is much better," replied Father Mathew, now starting up in alarm. He seized his hat, and almost ran the short distance which separated the Friary from the residence of Dean Collins, the Parish Priest of St. Finn Barr's. He told the cause of his abrupt visit to his venerable friend, who was then in his seventieth year. "It was a suggestion of the Evil One, my child, and you did well to resist it," was the answer of the Dean. The next day, the Cognac, which had been given as a present to Father Mathew, was sent by him to a friend. The voice was never audible again, simply because his nerves had recovered their wonted strength."*

JOYFUL NEWS FOR WILLIAM MARTIN.

Such were the antecedents, such the general character of the man, in whose ears were constantly ringing the appeal of his temperance friend, William Martin,—“Ob, Theobald Mathew, if *thou* wouldst only take this cause in hand.” The answer to that appeal came at last, and we will let the same skilful biographer just quoted tell the when and how:—

“That was a joyful day to honest William Martin, on which, early in April, 1838, he received a message from Father Mathew, requesting his presence that evening at his house in Cove street. William, as he afterwards assured his friends, ‘had a presentiment of what was about to happen,’ and for that day he carried his sixty-eight years as jauntily as if they had been only thirty. At the appointed moment he was at the door, which was open for his reception; and there, at the threshold, stood his friend Theobald Mathew ready to receive him, his handsome countenance radiant with kindness and good nature. ‘Welcome, Mr. Martin; welcome, my dear friend. It is very kind of you to come to me at so short a notice, and so punctually too.’ ‘I was right glad to come to thee, Theobald Mathew, for I expected that thou hast good news for me.’ ‘Well, Mr. Martin, I have sent for you to assist me in forming a temperance society in this neighborhood.’ ‘I knew it!’ said William; ‘something seemed to tell me that thou wouldst do it at last.’ ‘My dear sir, it was not a matter to be undertaken lightly, and I feel that there are many difficulties in the way.’ ‘There are difficulties in everything we do,’ remarked William; ‘but thou knowest we must conquer them.’ ‘Very true, my dear friend, we

* Father Mathew: a Biography. By J. F. Maguire, M. P. Pp. 55-6.