

7. Yet even now I have not come to the worst, or anything like the worst. For the abuse of drink, besides being, by unanimous testimony, a main cause of pauperism, disease, and madness, is also, by irresistible evidence, the main cause of crime—the all but conclusive cause of crimes of violence. I might quote the emphatic, the oft-repeated, the uncompromising testimony of almost every judge upon the bench. They have done their best to interpose between us and our degradation the purity of their ermine. They have said, for instance, that Saturday "pay-day means drink-day and crime-day," and that many a man "enters the door of a public-house respectable and respected and leaves it a felon." On one occasion several instances at Liverpool came before Mr. Justice Mellor, of a savagery so loathsome, of a callosity so bestial, of a dehumanization so unutterable, that he spoke of drink—which, in this country, is the sole cause of such abnormal wickedness—in terms which might, one would have thought, arouse any country, however sunken. But I will confine myself to the remarks made by one judge in one cathedral city—by Mr. Justice Hawkins—at the last Midsummer Assizes in Durham. They may be well known to you. Yet I will repeat them. It may be that the words, spoken so solemnly from the bench of justice, may derive yet further emphasis when they are solemnly repeated in the House of God. "When I come," he said, "to look through the calendar, and when I see the number of cases which have been committed under the influence of drink, I cannot help saying a word or two on that subject. Every day I live the more I think of the matter, and the more firmly do I come to the conclusion that the root of almost all crime is drink, that revolting tyrant which affects people of all ages, and of both sexes; young, middle-aged and old; father and son, husband and wife, all in turn become its victims. It is drink which, for the most part, is the immediate and direct cause of those fearful quarrels in the public streets at night which terminate in serious mischief, or some other outrage. It is drink which for the most part is the incentive to crimes of dishonesty. It is drink which causes homes to be impoverished, and traces of the misery which it causes are to be found in many a cottage, denuded of the commonest articles of comfort and necessity, which have gone to the pawnshop simply to provide for that hideous tyrant, drink. I believe, knowing what I do, and having by experience had my attention drawn to it that" (hear it, gentlemen! hear it, Christians! hear it, ministers of God in this Cathedral which stands in the very centre of all our history!)—"I believe that nine-tenths of the crime in this country is engendered inside the doors of public houses."

8. Will anyone venture to say—for there is no end to the subtleties of minds brazened by custom—that these are mere opinions? Well, if you want, not opinions, but hard, glaring, patent facts, untinged with any opinion whatever—facts black, rugged, comfortless, and horrible—facts in all their ghastly nakedness, denuded of all vesture of human thought and of human emotion in narrating them—it will be the most flagrant hypocrisy to say that such facts are not forthcoming to you, when every day and every newspaper teems with them. Not one single day passes over one single town in England without some wretchedness, crime, and horror caused by drink. Week by week, in the *Alliance News*, is published a ghastly list, called "Fruits of the Traffic." It is not invented; it is not concocted; it is not garbled. It consists simply of cuttings from multitudes of perfectly neutral newspapers, the records of police courts and sessions. I cannot enter into these. The human hand can perpetrate, the human heart can conceive, the human frame can suffer horrors of which the human lips refuse to speak. Take the evidence of two weeks alone; the blessed week in which we listen to the melody of angel songs, and the first week of the glad New Year. For twopence you may purchase the records of events which drink caused for those two weeks in 1882 in England only. It fills a large double columned pamphlet of thirty-six pages. Thirty-six pages of what—in this our Christian England, in Christmas week? Thirty-six pages of stabbing, cutting, wounding; of brutal assaults on men, on women, on children; of public peril and accident; of deaths, sudden, violent, preventible; of homicide; of parricide; of matricide; of infanticide; of suicide; of every form of murder. In four hours on one evening in one city 36,803 women were seen going into public houses! The results form a tragedy so squalid, and so deadly, as to sicken the heart like the impressions of a nightmare, whose very memory we loathe. Read that hideous list, and then prattle, and lisp, and sneer about exaggeration; read that list, and then, if any man can still quote Scripture for the purpose of checking Temperance Re-

formers, or of encouraging our immense capacities for delay and indifference, I can only say of such a man, that

"Though in the sacred place he stands,  
Uplifting consecrated hands,  
Unworthy are his lips to tell  
Of Jesu's martyr-miracle;  
Thy miracle of life and death,  
Thou Holy One of Nazereth!"

9. And is all this to take place all over England always? It was so again last year, it has been so for many years; next year again, and the next, and the next, are we, in those two weeks of blessedness, to have the whole country, from John o' Groat's to Land's End, deluged and disgraced by this filthy stream of blood, and misery, and crime? Is this to be the prerogative of our national morality; and are we to go on leaving these crimes, and the sources of them, and the temptations to them unchecked, till the pit swallow us and them?

10. I must end; but I must ask you not to suppose that I have brought before you one half of the evil, or one tenth of the motives which should stir us up to counteract it for Christ's sake, and in Christ's name. I have not shown you as I could, most awfully show you, how, by introducing our accursed firewaters, we have destroyed and exterminated whole races of mankind, until our footsteps round the world, instead of being "beautiful upon the mountains," have been as footsteps dyed in blood. I have not shown you the extent to which drink neutralises the works of the school, the library, and the Church, so that it is the chief barrier against the efforts of religion. I have not shown you how, in our great dependencies, it has gone far to turn into a curse the blessing of our rule, so that, to take but one instance, there rises louder and louder, from our great Empire of Hindostan, the agonising cry that her children were once sober, and that we, by our beloved gin and spirits—those good creatures of God—are rapidly turning them into a nation of drunkards. I have not told how this curse transforms into a bane what would otherwise be the great national boons of larger wealth, and higher wages, and shortened hours. And how long do you mean all this to continue? How long are our working classes to be hemmed in with glaring temptations, and their dwellings—in the teeth of their wishes, to the conflagration of their interests—to be ringed by public houses on all sides as with a cordon of fire? How long is the reeling army of our drunkards to be recruited by those who are now our innocent sons and daughters? We pity the gladiators, and the poet cried, "Arise ye, Goths, and glut your ire!" And will you not pity the widows, who are made widows by drink; and the orphans who are fatherless; and they whose blood is poisoned by it; and the women who are kicked, and burnt, by drunken sons, and brothers, and husbands; and the little children who are killed, or who die so slowly that none call it murder? Will you wait till the accumulated miseries of souls, which might have been innocent,—

"Plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
The deep damnation of the taking-off;  
And Pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
Striding the blast, on heaven's cherubim, horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
Shall blow these horrid deeds in every eye  
That tears shall drown the wind?"

And if you are careless about this misery; if selfishness, and custom, and the gains of brewers and publicans, weigh with you against all this evidence; if you see no need to blush for all this national disgrace; if it rouses in your heart no feeling as a patriot, as a Christian, or as a man;—are you not at least afraid, lest, if we suffer these things to go on unchecked, a voice should at last cry "Arise!" to the awful angel of retribution; and lest, when he stands with drawn sword over a country so guilty and so apathetic, the cup of our iniquity and of our drunkenness being full, there should be none to say to him, "Put up thy sword within its sheath?"

11. But if all that I have said admit of no possibility of refutation, how could I possibly urge any more effectual plea for an agency, which, like our beloved Church of England Temperance Society, has, with such holy earnestness and such conspicuous moderation, been labouring now for twenty-one years to alleviate a nation's misery, to avert a nation's curse? It needs special support. Help, I entreat you, with warm hearts and liberal hands, to avert the national catastrophe, which would be involved in the failure or exhaustion of a Society so noble and so indispensable! Let England, if not for very shame, yet at least out of gratitude and in self-defence, provide the Society with the £25,000 which are required. For if Temperance Societies have done nothing else, yet at least, in the words of Lord Shaftesbury, "but for them we should

have been by this time plunged in such a flood of drunkenness, immorality, and crime, as would have rendered the whole country uninhabitable." Will you then be callously supine, will you be immorally acquiescent, about the fate of your country? Your fathers did a thousand noble deeds to put down immorality and wrong; to defend the cause of innocence, and to smite the hoary head of oppression. Your fathers, by the loveliest act in the long annals of English history, swept away the slave trade. With quiet perseverance, which would see no discouragement; with dauntless courage, which would quail before no opposition; with illuminated insight, which pierced the sophistry of interested defenders; with the true freedom which would not be shackled by unhallowed interests—they fought to the end that glorious battle! Will you be unworthy of them? Will you do nothing to deliver England and all her dependencies from a deeper misery and a deadlier curse? Yonder is the grave of Wilberforce; there is the statue of Sir Fowell Buxton; there is the monument of Granville Sharpe. Oh, that God would hear our prayers, and out of the gallant band of godly men who fought that battle

"Of those three hundred grant but three  
To make a new Thermopylae."

11. Englishmen and Christians, if such facts do not stir you up, I ask, could they do so were they even in the thunder's mouth? It is not in the thunder, it is by the still small voice of history and of experience, that God speaks to the reason and to the conscience. It is not by the lightning-flash that He would have us read His will, but by the quiet light that shows all things in the slow history of their ripening. When he speaks in the thunder and the lightning, by the tornado and the earthquake, He speaks in retribution then. And what is retribution but the eternal law of consequences? If you cannot see God's warnings against drink, if you cannot read in the existing condition of things His displeasure and our shame—if you cannot see in the marriage-tie broken and dishonoured—in sons and daughters ruined—in the peace of families laid waste—in the work of the Church hindered—in whole districts blighted—in thousands and tens of thousands of souls destroyed:—If you cannot see it in the records of crime, and murder, and outrage, and madness, and suicide; in the fathers who, in these very months, through drink, have slain their sons; and the sons who, through drink, have slain their fathers; and the mothers who, for drink, have sacrificed the lives of their little ones upon the breast—what will ever make you see it? Men of England, if these things do not wring your heart, and fire your zeal, what do you expect? Can the letters glare more plainly on the palace wall of your power? Are you waiting till there fall on England the same fate which, for their sins, has fallen in turn on Assyria, and Greece, and Rome, and Egypt, and Carthage, and Jerusalem, and Tyre? They perished; sooner or later all guilty nations perish, by sudden catastrophe, or by slow decay.

"The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite,  
Nor yet doth linger,"

but when it does smite, it is apt to smite once and smite no more. Will you be so complacent over your epigrams, and your vested interests, and your Biblical criticism, when vengeance leaps at last upon the stage, and strikes sore strokes, and pity shall no longer avert the blow? You are Christians; yes, but see that you have not been admitted into a holier sanctuary only to commit a deeper sacrilege! Why, had you been Pagans these very same arguments ought to be irresistible to you! To millions of Pagans they have been so. The sobriety of China was due to Confucius. The sobriety of India and of Burmah are due to Buddha. The sobriety of vast regions of Asia and Africa was due to Mahomet. In the day of judgment, shall not Confucians, shall not Buddhists, shall not Mohammedans, rise up in judgment against this generation and condemn it, for they abstained from strong drink at the bidding of Confucius, Buddha and Mahomet, and behold a greater than these is here! Ah, if the voice of all these tempted, suffering, perishing miserable souls be nothing to you—if the voice of your country be nothing to you—yet, if you be Christians, listen to the voice of Christ, pleading with you in the pathetic accents of myriads of the little ones—that it is not His will, that it is utterly against His will, that His Cross and Passion be thus rendered of none effect to multitudes for the very least of whom Christ died. "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we know it not" (when now, at any rate, you have no excuse for not knowing it), "doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul doth not he know it? And shall not He render to every man according to his works?"