

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pilgrimage to Cork—'Father Mathew's Parlour'—The House in Cove Street—His man John—The Great Powers of the Kitchen and the Pantry—The happy working of the Cause.

THE 200,000 on the roll of the society in the month of January, 1839, were not exclusively from the city and county of Cork. It is true, the city and county contributed a large portion of the entire; but the number was partly made up by those who poured in from the adjoining counties of Kerry, Waterford, Limerick, Clare, and Tipperary—and even from remote Galway. The tidings of the great moral reformation worked in Cork quickly spread, through the agency of the public press, throughout the island, and to all parts of the United Kingdom. The speeches of Father Mathew and his assistants were copied from one paper into another, and with them accounts of the success of his mission, the benefits which it conferred on the community as well as on the individual, and the evils which it remedied or prevented. Attention was thus arrested and interest excited, and it was only natural that those who read or heard accounts of what was doing in Cork, should come to the conclusion that what was good for Cork was good for other places, and that what had done one person good would do another person good; and so, as Father Mathew did not come to them, they resolved on coming to him. Thus it was that the public conveyances brought numbers into Cork every day, and that multitudes of pilgrims might be seen on the roads leading into

the city, with their little bundles in their hands, and generally lame and foot-sore after their long journey. To Cove Street the pilgrimage was directed. To see Father Mathew—to take the pledge from him—to be touched by him and blessed by him,—this was sufficient reward for the longest and most painful journey. But never did Father Mathew send the poor pilgrim from his door without having first fed and comforted him, and, where necessary, provided for his safe and easy return. A seat on a public car, or something in the pocket, enabled the poor traveller from a distance—often of 50 miles, sometimes of 100 miles—to return happy and joyful to his home. Thus, through the accounts given by the early pilgrims, of the good man who had heard their story, who had sympathised with them, who had blessed them and prayed for them, who had treated them as a father and a benefactor, was the fame of Father Mathew spread abroad, even more effectually than through the columns of the public press. The expense entailed on Father Mathew by what may be described as this pilgrimage to Cork, the Mecca of temperance, was considerable; and before he ever sold a single medal, he was involved in debt to the amount of 1,500*l.*, notwithstanding the numerous offerings which he continued to receive as a priest. His resources were not increased, but his expenditure, even thus early in the movement, was so to a very great extent.

The lower apartment, or parlour, which was on a level with the street, was converted into a reception room for those who came to take the pledge: and here was the book in which the names were enrolled, and here the pledge was administered. It was in this celebrated apartment that scenes such as the following might be daily witnessed. At all hours of the day and evening—even to ten or eleven o'clock at night—'batches' of ten, twenty, or even thirty, might be seen waiting to be enrolled. Some were sober and penitent; others smelling strongly of their recent potations,

and ashamed to commit themselves by uttering a word; more boisterous and rude, their poor wives and mothers endeavouring to soothe and keep them under control. One of this class—a big, brawny fellow, with rough voice, blood-shot eyes, and tattered clothes—would roar out:—‘I won’t take the pledge—I’ll be——if I do. Is it me! What oc-oc-occasion have I for it! I won’t demane myself by taking it. I always stood a trate, and I’ll stand it again. Me take it! Let me go, woman! I tell you, lave me go!’ ‘Oh, Patsy, darlin’, don’t expose yourself. You know—I’m for your good. And what would his reverence say to you if he heard you? Do, alana, be quiet, an’ wait for the holy priest.’ ‘Well, hoould off of me, any way. Can’t I take care of myself? Can’t I do what I like? Who’ll dare say I can’t?’ ‘Oh Patsy, Patsy, darlin’!’ ‘Is, indeed! Patsy, darlin’! Let me go, woman!’—and, bursting away from the trembling hands of the poor creature, who struggled to hold the drunken fool, Patsy would make a wild dash to the door, amidst muttered expressions of sympathy, such as—‘God help you, honest woman! ’t is you’re to be pitied with that quare man.’ ‘Yes,’ another would remark, ‘an’ a fine man he is, and a decent man, too, if he’d only be sober.’ But just as Patsy was about effecting his escape, and swearing that ‘he would never be the one of his name to demane himself by taking their dirty pledge,’ he was certain to be arrested by Father Mathew himself, who at a glance knew the nature of the case. Catching Patsy with a grasp stronger than that from which he had escaped, Father Mathew would say, in a cheerful voice to Patsy, as if that gentleman had come of his own free will to implore the pledge at his hands—‘Welcome! welcome! my dear. Delighted to see you. Glad you are come to me. You are doing a good day’s work for yourself and your family. You will have God’s blessing on your head. Poverty is no crime, my dear child; it is sin alone that lowers us in the eyes of God.

Kneel down, my dear (a strong pressure on Patsy’s shoulder, under which Patsy reluctantly sinks on his knees), and repeat the words of the pledge after me; and then I will mark you with the sign of the Cross, and pray God to keep you from temptation.’ What could poor Patsy do, but yield, as that magnetic hand rested affectionately on his tangled locks? And so Patsy’s name was added to the long muster-roll of the pledged.

We doubt if there was a tap-room in Cork in which a more decided odour of whisky and porter—or, as the phrase went, ‘strong drink’—was apparent, than in ‘Father Mathew’s parlour’—especially on the evenings of Saturday and Monday, but more especially on the latter. The odour did not however ascend higher, for a door, covered with faded green baize, shut off the upper from the lower part of the house; into which, if the reader has no objection, we shall take a peep.

If Father Mathew lived in a cloister, he could not have lived more modestly and quietly than he did. His principal room—his *only* room, save that in which he slept—was at once breakfast and dining-room, study and reception-room. It certainly did not exceed sixteen feet from wall to wall. Not a morsel of carpet concealed the well-washed boards; while the furniture consisted of the barest necessaries—a centre table, a sideboard, a side-table, some chairs, and a writing-desk. On the side-table was a large-sized bust of Lord Morpeth, the popular Secretary of Ireland, and friend of Father Mathew. Two enormous volumes of the Sacred Scriptures, one containing the Old and the other the New Testament, flanked the bust; and a glass filled with flowers, when flowers were in season, completed the adornment of this show-table. On the wall opposite the fire-place hung a good oil painting—a portrait of Cardinal Micara, the head of the Capuchins, who had constantly exhibited the deepest interest in the career of the illustrious Irish friar. Opposite the

windows, a good engraving of a celebrated picture of the Holy Family was suspended. But, framed with richness and glazed with reverent care, was a marvellous production in worsted, intended to represent, and fondly believed by the donor and artist as well as by its grateful recipient to represent, the religious profession of St. Clare. The desk was fearfully bespattered with ink, and otherwise exhibited signs of being an article of furniture more useful than ornamental. But everything, save the said desk, was neat and in perfect order. If it were poverty, it was willingly and honestly assumed; but the neatness and order bespoke the presence and influence of a gentleman. In this modest apartment the Apostle of Temperance was visited by many of the great and distinguished of the earth, and here he exercised a hospitality which made those who partook of it experience that most agreeable of all feelings in the mind of a guest—namely, the consciousness of being welcome, and *at home*.

There was one, however, in that house who, in it, was a much greater man than its master. That was the servant John. Now, as much of Father Mathew's internal comfort and peace of mind depended upon John, and the mood in which he happened to be in, it is necessary to say something of that august potentate of the pantry.

John was a dried-up, wizened-faced, dapper old bachelor, who entertained the most exalted opinion of his own wisdom and knowledge of the world, and the profoundest contempt for nearly every human creature, save Father Mathew and his own marvellously-old mother. John was sour of visage and still more sour of speech. The gleam of his small eyes, and the downward curl of his thin lips, were pretty good indications of his general state of mind, which was apt to be ruffled at the slightest provocation. He was eminently aristocratic, and hated to be bored by the poor. For his part, he did n't know what the priest wanted with them, or they with him; but he could unhesitatingly say that he

detested their knocks at the door, their constant enquiries, their vulgar manners, and the sight and smell of their clothes. John had served in a noble family—hence he was an infallible authority on all matters of taste, style, and fashion. He had been in London—therefore he was equally an authority on foreign travel and the world in general. There was one article which he specially prized, and which, indeed, divided with Father Mathew and his venerable mother that small amount of affection which he condescended to bestow upon anyone or anything save himself. This was a silver watch of formidable dimensions, which was encased in *three* leather wrappers, no doubt as a precaution against chill or rheumatism. If one desired to conciliate the favour of the magnate, one perhaps might achieve that grand result by respectfully requesting to know 'what the exact hour was.' John would graciously proceed to satisfy a curiosity so natural, and would draw forth the well-protected time-piece, and gravely divest it of its three wrappers; then, having glanced with a kind of scientific air at the dial, which was of prodigious surface, he would loftily announce the time, to the minute and to the second; having done which, he would caress the back with a tender hand, and at once restore the valuable article to its wrappers and his fob.

This sweet-tempered bachelor did not at all admire little boys. He did n't know what good they were, or why they were brought into the world, unless to stuff themselves unpleasantly with pastry, to spoil tablecloths, and to worry deserving and inoffensive servants. It was a source of anguish to him to be compelled to allow the priest's two nephews—boys keen after sweets, and of daring appetite—to have the run of his pantry. But, 'John, give the boys that pie,' was too direct a command to be resisted; and John would retire with a grumble, while Father Mathew would stand looking on, his hands deep in his pockets, and a smile on his face, while the boys ploughed deep into the con-

tents of a pie-dish, and made paste and fruit vanish before their combined attack. No doubt John must at times have wished that some unlooked-for ingredient had been mixed with the sweets, to punish the lads for the liberties which, on too frequent occasions, they took with him, and especially with his age.

The priest was in the habit of inviting young people to breakfast, always to John's disgust. On one occasion, a young fellow, nervous and awkward, spilled his tea, and upset his egg—the shame of which double catastrophe was terribly enhanced by the display of John's sublime disdain, and the ostentatious solemnity with which the mischief was temporarily repaired. The poor lad felt himself in a social Coventry,—banished from polite society for ever.

John was a good servant, so long as he did not attempt to play the part of master. He was neat of hand, clean in person and in habit, and an admirable cook. In the artistic laying of the cloth for dinner, and the scientific arrangement of the table, there was not, as he often declared, his superior in the universe; and really few could excel him in his soup and coffee. John brought in the soup-tureen with a solemnity of deportment which would have done honour to a master-of-ceremonies; and as it was distributed to the guests, he awaited with grim dignity the accustomed praise. Should an unhappy guest look dissatisfied, or even indifferent to the merits of the elixir, he was lost—marked down from that day in John's darkest tablets. But if he praised it in this fashion—'Really, this soup is so delightful, that I must trouble you again, Father Mathew'—he won the artist's heart—took it by storm. There was, however, one commendation for which he always looked, and which he invariably obtained—that of his master, who would have drunk the soup were ditch-water its principal ingredient, rather than have pained his old follower. The usual formula of approval was thus pronounced—'Very nice, indeed. Why, John, you are getting better

every day.' These words were like sunlight to John's moral landscape. His sour features brightened with delight, and for the moment the natural vinegar and lemon-juice were banished from his thin lips.

John loved his master, in his own way, and after his own fashion; but he had a mission to fulfil, and that was to tyrannise over that master, and to retain Bidy, the woman servant, in a state of abject subjection. He succeeded in the former object rather too well; but in the latter he had not equal success, for Bidy was a woman of spirit, and stood on her rights, defending them with the valour of a heroine against the encroachments of the enemy. Little knew the admiring world outside the difficulty which the Apostle of Temperance had to maintain even an armed neutrality between the Great Powers of the Kitchen and the Pantry in Cove Street, or the many and unavailing efforts he had made to effect a solid and lasting peace on terms honourable to both. When peace did reign between the Powers, Father Mathew rejoiced in spirit.

We shall renew our acquaintance with our friend John.

There was no flagging in the good work, as the gradually widening circle of the 'batches' in the Horse Bazaar, and the increasing numbers pouring into the parlour in Cove Street, sufficiently attested. The interest of the local community was excited in the movement, and the pride of the citizens of Cork was gratified by the fact of their city being the birth-place and cradle of a great moral reformation. But a deeper feeling was aroused, as the practical results of sobriety were being daily manifested, not only in the greater quietness and good order of the streets, but in the material and moral improvement of those who adopted this once much-ridiculed pledge of total abstinence. The numbers in the prisoners' dock in the Police Court were steadily diminishing, week after week; masters and employers expressed their satisfaction at the improved conduct of their servants and

work-people; the attendance of children in schools became more steady and continuous as their parents became sober and self-respecting; and the appearance of the people generally was marked by an air of comfort which they had not previously exhibited. If the trade of the publican was lessened, which undoubtedly it was, those who dealt in necessaries and humble luxuries were correspondingly benefited. Temperance-rooms began to spring into existence; and in these members gathered together, and drew other members towards them, as well by the example which they afforded, as by the inducements they held out. Working men could sit at the bright fire of the reading-room without risk of temptation, hearing the news, discussing the topics of the hour, or glorying in the progress of the cause from which they were taught to expect great honour and lasting advantage to their country. These reading-rooms ere long assumed a very important feature in the movement, and became one of its most effective means of practical organisation.

During all this time Father Mathew was as much the priest as ever. The same early hours, the same attendance in the confessional, the same attention to his clerical duties, the same activity and punctuality in whatever he had to perform. The Father Mathew of 1838 and 1839 was in all respects, save one, the same as the Father Mathew of any year since his arrival in Cork; and that one exception was in the greater labour which he was compelled, from his new position, to undertake, but which he cheerfully, and indeed delightedly, went through. Doubt and uncertainty as to the step which he had taken, and the course which he was now fairly entering upon, vanished altogether from his mind at the spectacle of the rags and misery, the squalor and wretchedness, the sorrow and crime and ruin, which the experience of each succeeding day proved to be the consequence of the prevailing habit of a people naturally possessed of the highest moral and social qualities. Whatever may

have been his former apprehensions as to the difficulty he would have to encounter, and the risk of failure in his undertaking, he had entirely forgotten that he ever entertained such a sentiment. In fact, Father Mathew had caught the contagion of the movement, and was now as confident and fearless as the least responsible member of his already vast society. From a timid yet willing convert, he had warmed into an enthusiast; and that too, ere many months had passed since he used the memorable words—'Here goes, in the name of God!' There was not a man in Ireland whose heart and soul were more thoroughly enlisted in the cause. He saw in it the social redemption of the individual, the national elevation of the country; and he gave himself up to it without reserve, in the spirit of a Christian and a patriot. And he had his reward in the happy faces and decent appearance of the people, as he met them in the streets, saw them in their homes, or observed them in the body of the church, or at the rails of the altar.

It was thus, in four years from the commencement of his work, that, at a 'festival' in the town of Nenagh, he happily referred to the motives which had induced him to undertake the task:—

This great temperance movement which we witness, was not lightly thought of by me; it was not the result of sudden excitement; it was not the impulse of a moment, that induced me to undertake the share I have had in it. I pondered long upon it; I examined it carefully; I had long reflected on the degradation to which my country was reduced—a country, I will say, second to none in the universe for every element that constitutes a nation's greatness, with a people whose generous nature is the world's admiration. I mourned in secret over the miseries of this country; I endeavoured to find out the cause of those miseries, and, if that were possible, to apply a remedy. I saw that those miseries were chiefly owing to the crimes of the people, and that those crimes again had their origin in the use that was made of intoxicating drinks. I discovered that if the cause were removed, the effects would cease; and with my hope in the God of universal benevolence and charity, reposing my hopes in the

Omnipotent, I began this mission in Cork, with the cordial assistance afforded me by persons widely differing in creed, and particularly by members of the Society of Friends in that city. Four years have passed away since the grain of mustard-seed was sown; many perils were encountered; many objections had to be met; misrepresentation had to be combated; opposition had to be faced. I went on, notwithstanding all. The grain of mustard-seed grew by degrees into that mighty and majestic tree that has overshadowed the land, and under whose peaceful and protecting branches we are met this evening.

Invitations now began to pour in upon Father Mathew from many parts of the country, more particularly from the adjoining counties, soliciting his presence, that he might administer the pledge, and organise local societies. For some time he did not yield to these entreaties, however supplicatory and pressing; but his compassion for the pilgrims from a distance, who so often knelt before him hungry, fainting, and foot-sore, at length prevailed over his reluctance; and from that moment might be said to have commenced a new phase in the movement, whose progress thenceforward was prodigious, and whose success was almost miraculous.

CHAPTER IX.

He visits Limerick—Extraordinary Excitement caused by his Visit—Its Result—Visits Waterford—Speech of Bishop Foran—Whimsical Occurrence—First Sale of Cards and Medals—In Borrisokane—Goes to Dublin—Denies he can effect Cures—Simplicity and Efficacy of the Pledge.

THE city of Limerick was the first scene of his missionary labours. He had been invited to visit that city by his venerable friend, the Right Rev. Dr. Ryan, a man simple and homely in manner, but of solid good sense, and true Christian piety. Father Mathew the more readily yielded to the invitation, as his doing so afforded him the opportunity of visiting his sister, Mrs. Dunbar, to whom he was tenderly attached, and to whom he had always stood more in the relation of a parent than a brother. The announcement of his intended visit—of the coming of the 'Apostle of Temperance'—produced the most extraordinary effect, as it was borne from village to village, from town to town, from county to county, along the banks of the noble Shannon, and far away into the wilds of distant Connemara. Father Mathew, of whom mothers told their children, and the old, by the fireside, spoke with reverence, was coming to Limerick! The first week in December 1839 was a memorable time in that fine city. Even on the day before he was expected to arrive, the principal roads were black with groups of people from all parts of the county, from the adjoining counties, and from the province of Connaught. During the next day, the streets of Limerick were choked with dense masses—with a

multitude which it was impossible to count, and whose numbers were guessed at, as being something fabulous. It was an invasion, a taking of the town by storm. The necessaries of life rose to famine prices—for who could have anticipated such a mighty rush?—and where were food and drink to be found for those myriad mouths? What the authorities, the Bishop and his clergy, and the good citizens could do, to relieve the necessities and minister to the wants of the strangers, they generously did. The public rooms were thrown open for their shelter at night; for were the town ten times its size, it could scarcely have afforded ordinary sleeping accommodation for those who now stood in need of it. Father Mathew's reception was an ovation such as few men ever received; indeed still fewer had ever excited in a people the same blended feelings of love, and reverence, and enthusiasm. Though with a serious and solemn purpose in their minds, the people rushed towards him as if possessed by a frenzy. They struggled and fought their way through living masses, through every obstacle, until they found themselves in his presence, at his feet, listening to his voice, receiving his blessing, repeating after him the words which emancipated them, as they felt, from sin, sorrow, and temptation.

With considerate kindness, the authorities had taken such precautions as would have sufficed on an ordinary occasion; but the following extract, from a biographical notice, written in a few months after, by the late Rev. James Birmingham, P. P. of Borrisokane, will show with what result on this extraordinary occasion:—

So great was the rush of the temperance postulants, that the iron railing opposite the house of Mr. Dunbar, the rev. gentleman's brother-in-law, in which he had stopped, were carried away, and a number of persons were precipitated into the Shannon. Fortunately they were all safely picked up, and no further accident occurred. I have been told by those who were spectators of the scene, that some of the horses, with their riders, of the Scots Greys, who attended to keep order, were occasionally lifted from the ground, and carried away

for a short distance by the rushing multitude; and so densely were the people crowded, that several, in their eagerness to approach Mr. Mathew, ran along to their destination quietly and securely on the heads and shoulders of the vast assemblage.

After four days of incessant labour—preaching and exhorting so long as the least remnant of voice was left him—Father Mathew concluded one of the most successful of all his temperance missions, and one that imparted an amazing impetus to the progress of the cause, which, in those four days, had obtained 150,000 additional disciples and propagandists. Thenceforward there was no going back, no halt or hesitation—the word was 'Onwards!'

Though Limerick may claim the honour of the first missionary visit of the Apostle of Temperance, Waterford claims, through the Right Rev. Dr. Foran, the good Bishop of that day, the distinction of being the first city which invited him. That invitation was given in the following letter, which is the more important as it describes, in a few words, the earlier phases of the wondrous popular movement:—

Waterford: November 4, 1839.

VERY REV. DEAR SIR,—Anxious to cooperate with you in your zealous and, under God, successful undertaking of bringing the people of this country to habits of temperance and sobriety, I, and the clergy of this city, are doing what we can to induce our flocks here to enroll themselves in your society. A great number of habitual drunkards have willingly come forward and expressed their ardent desire to become members of your Temperance Society, but many of them, from their extreme poverty, are unable to defray the expense of a journey to Cork. If you could make it your convenience to come here, any time between this and Advent, and begin the good work in this city, you would, I have no doubt, do incalculable good. While you are here, my house shall be yours. May I request, at your convenience, a few lines in answer?

I remain, very reverend dear sir,

With esteem, yours faithfully,

✠ N. FORAN.

The success which attended the first visit may be best

described in the words of the amiable prelate, whose apostolic character was depicted in the sweetness of his countenance, and the mildness and gentleness of his manner. On a subsequent occasion, when the *élite* of Waterford were assembled in the Town Hall to do honour to Father Mathew, Dr. Foran, when responding to the mention of his own name, said :—

Your Chairman told you that I was the first Catholic Bishop who invited Father Mathew to his diocese. It is true I was. The cause of temperance commenced in Waterford before Father Mathew visited our city. When he was administering the pledge in Cork, and when the fame of his great mission had gone abroad, hundreds of the people of Waterford journeyed to Cork, and on foot, at an inclement season of the year, in order to become enrolled under his banner. Some good and humane gentlemen, on seeing this, came forward and offered to raise a sufficient sum to send the people on cars. 'No,' said I, 'but we can write to Father Mathew to come to us for a day or two.' I did write accordingly, and Father Mathew acceded to our wishes. He came to Waterford in December, 1839, and spent three or four days here. I thought at the time that three or four thousand persons might be induced to join his standard within that period; but what was my extreme astonishment, as well as gratification, when in three days not less than 80,000 received the pledge at his hands!

In the course of his address, the speaker thus explained why he, as a bishop and a patriot, lent his aid to the temperance movement :—

My dear friends, why should I not encourage this movement, and sanction and support it by every means in my power? If I did not do so, I would not be an Irishman; if I did not do so, I would not be a Christian; and if I did not do so, I would not be a Bishop. I would not be an Irishman if I did not countenance and support the great cause by every influence I possess—and I am an Irishman; and being an Irishman, I love my country, as every Irishman does. Loving my country, I wish for its peace, happiness, and prosperity; and I am convinced that until the people of Ireland become an entirely temperate, sober, and moral people, they never can enjoy prosperity or happiness. I would not be a Christian or a Priest if I did not encourage and sanction the movement, for no one can assert that either the temporal or eternal interests of mankind can be obtained without the

practice of sobriety. Much as I value temperance, if it did no other good but merely render the people of Ireland sober, I would not think much of it. But you all know that drunkenness was the curse of the country, and the chief cause of its degradation. You know that faction fights resulted from it, and that many victims have been offered up to its dreadful power. It is a many-headed monster; it is not the parent of one crime alone, but it drags a thousand others in its train. The habitual drunkard is a swearer, a blasphemer; he is a bad man, a bad father, a bad husband, a bad son, a bad member of society; and therefore a person addicted to this vice will be liable to fall into a thousand others. Look at the mighty reformation already effected in the people of this country!—they have become a sober and a thinking people; they have improved in every relation of life, as fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, and members of society—they are more than ever devoted to the practice of true religion, and more obedient to the commandments of their God. These are the advantages of temperance, and if they did not come in its train, I should not value it. But they do follow from its practice, and therefore it is my bounden duty as an Irishman, a Christian, and a Bishop, to support the temperance movement by every influence within my limited jurisdiction.

The good Bishop who thus spoke is, if we are to believe in the promises made to the just, now enjoying in heaven the reward of his virtues in this life.

It was in Waterford, on an occasion subsequent to Father Mathew's first visit, that the following whimsical occurrence took place. The hall of the Court House was too confined in its space to accommodate the vast numbers that pressed on continually to take the pledge, and the weather being then peculiarly severe, the meetings were necessarily held in the Catholic Cathedral, a very fine and spacious building. In one of the enormous batches, of which there were several during the day, was a poor fellow who was decidedly 'the worse of liquor'—in fact, unmistakably tipsy. He nevertheless managed to repeat the words of the pledge with due gravity and decorum; but no sooner had Father Mathew approached him to mark his forehead with the sign of the Cross, as was his custom, than the new member of the Tem-

perance Society clutched his leader by the skirts of his coat with such a grasp as a drunken man can take, and, in a voice much broken by hiccups, cried out—'Father Ma-ma-chee, darlin', you m-m-ust k-k-iss me!' 'My dear, do let me go. God bless you, my dear child; be a good boy for the future. There—do let me go,' said Father Mathew. 'No, Father Ma-chee, darlin', I won't l-l-ave go my houl't till I get wan k-k-iss!' 'Oh, my dear, do let me go!' 'No; wan is all I ax, an' I m-m-ust have it. Do'n't r-r-efuse a poor fellow-craychure wan kiss—only wan!' persisted the tender soul. Several gentlemen, including the clergymen in attendance, approached, and tried to pacify Jim, and induce him to quit his hold of Father Mathew's coat; but all to no purpose. Jim was determined to have his 'wan k-k-iss.' 'Jim, avick, ar'n't you ashamed of yourself—the holy priest!—an' in the chapel, too!' remonstrated an old woman near him. 'Jim, you bosthoon you! quit yer hould of his reverence this moment!' insisted a sturdy friend at the other side. 'No, not till I get wan k-k-iss; no, af I died for it, I won't lave go.' Father Mathew, seeing that unpleasant consequences were likely to ensue if Jim's rather inconvenient request were not at once complied with, resolved to make him happy, and accordingly kissed Jim on both cheeks, saying, 'Now, James, my dear, go home and remain quiet, and be a sensible boy for the future.' The 'boy,' we may remark, was not much short of forty years of age. Jim relinquished his grasp of the skirt of the coat, and retired, proud of his achievement.

It was of very common occurrence to see a tipsy or even drunken man take the pledge. With many, this drunkenness was the result of premeditation. They were resolved to have a parting 'd'rop of the crayture;' and, with tears in his eyes, and even heart-rending sobs, more than one poor fellow tossed off his last pint of porter, or swallowed, 'at a mouthful,' his last glass of whisky. Father Mathew was often asked why he administered the pledge to persons 'in

a beastly state;' but his answer was, 'I will never refuse the pledge to anyone, and I find that people who come to me drunk remain faithful to the pledge.' A Protestant magistrate, from Macroom, in the county of Cork, communicated to the writer a remarkable instance in support of this statement. He says:—

An accidental occurrence gave me the honour of an acquaintance with the great and good Father Mathew. I was waited upon by several of the townspeople to request my company at a temperance meeting, at which Father Mathew was to preside. The evening passed most happily. Several persons had the pledge administered to them; and among the number, a shoemaker was hauled in, quite unable to speak or walk, from sheer drunkenness. I at once objected to his getting the pledge, but Father Mathew resolved on giving it, and was right. *That man kept it.*

Father Mathew returned to Cork for the Christmas, and returned as a conqueror. The quarter of a million of pledged teetotallers which that memorable journey added to the ranks of the society, produced an effect throughout the whole country such as could not have been anticipated. Local societies were called into existence, reading-rooms were established, and bands were formed. The organisation soon became complete; and, ere long, there was scarcely a parish in any part of Ireland that had not its society, its room, its banner, and its band.

And with the growth of the society, and the perfection of its organisation, increased the expenditure entailed upon its leader. To meet the enormous expense which his temperance mission involved, Father Mathew adopted the plan of issuing cards and medals, which were sold at a profit, but which were not purchased by the twentieth of those who took the pledge, and whose names were inscribed on the register. We shall have subsequently to deal with this matter of cards and medals, as much misconception was created by the alleged enormous gains made by their sale; not, to be sure, in the first flush of the miraculous progress of the cause, but at a

later period. We must at present refer somewhat further to the manner in which the movement progressed.

Having discharged his ordinary priestly duties during the important festival of Christmas with the same zeal as previously distinguished him, dispensed charity with a still more unsparing hand, administered the pledge during all hours of the day and evening, visited the temperance rooms, given audiences, taken counsel with his lieutenants, assisted materially to extend and strengthen the organisation in Cork, and having moreover visited with unflinching punctuality his host of friends in the city, he again set out on his mission.

The most remarkable meetings held during the next three months were those held in Parsonstown, King's County, and in Dublin. An eye-witness, the Rev. Mr. Birmingham, thus describes the scene in Parsonstown :—

On entering the area, on which stands the Roman Catholic Chapel, a scene presented itself highly calculated to stir up, even in hearts not very susceptible of such impressions, feelings of intense interest and of awe. In front of the chapel was stationed a large body of police, presenting a very fine and well-disciplined force; outside these were the rifles on bended knee, with bayonets fixed and pointed, forming a barrier to oppose the rushing multitudes; whilst within and without this barrier, to keep the passages clear, the cavalry, 'in all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war,' with flags waving to the wind—moved up and down in slow and measured pace. Beyond, and as far along the streets as the eye could reach, were the congregated masses swaying to and fro with every new impulse, and by their united voices producing a deep, indistinct sound like the murmur of the ruffled waters of the sea. Within the vicarial residence, and in strong contrast to the stirring scene without, sat the mild, unassuming, but extraordinary man, round whom had collected this display of martial pomp and numerical force. He seemed perfectly unconscious of the excitement he had produced, and spoke and acted as if he regarded himself as the least remarkable man of the age. Here I had been introduced by a friend to the Apostle of Temperance.

It is not necessary to trace Father Mathew's progress through the country on that occasion; it is sufficient to say

that it was marked by the same wonderful enthusiasm on the part of the people as was displayed at Limerick and Waterford. The good priest of Borrisokane, who has been already quoted, thus describes the results of a casual visit which was paid to his own parish :—

Mr. Mathew arrived late at night, and unexpectedly. Only a few had been aware of his arrival; and in the morning, when I waited on him, the postulants were but thinly scattered up and down the street. I asked Mr. Mathew to do me the honour of spending the day with me. He expressed his regret that time did not permit him, and stated that he should be off the moment he had received into the society the few who presented themselves. Fame, however, was busy in trumpeting the rev. gentleman's visit to our neighbourhood; and I became indebted to the number and enthusiasm of those who poured in to be enrolled, for the honour of receiving at my humble board the distinguished guest, whose company, it had appeared, I should for that day be obliged to forego. Each moment Mr. Mathew was on the point of moving away; but each moment brought numbers from the surrounding parishes, who having heard that the rev. gentleman had been in Borrisokane, threw aside their various implements of industry, and hurried in to enlist themselves under the standard of temperance, and receive the good man's benediction. Fatigued and breathless, men, women, and children, rushed forward indiscriminately to take the pledge. Mr. Mathew could not bring himself to disappoint such eagerness, or damp such ardour. He was consequently obliged to remain; and standing on a stone seat under a venerable ash tree—now more venerable than ever—he received in this small town, without any previous notice having been given, 7,000 or 8,000 souls.

Next in importance, as to its effect upon the country, and, indeed, upon the United Kingdom, to his visit to Limerick in December 1839, was that which he paid to Dublin on the 28th of March, 1840. It was bringing the movement into the capital and heart of his country. He was ardently welcomed by the Most Rev. Dr. Murray, the prelate by whom he had been ordained thirty-six years before, and the friend who had been faithful to him through life. Father Mathew was now famous; and his sermon, preached for one of the

orphan institutions of Dublin, was a striking success. Long practice had imparted to his voice the strength and volume which it lacked during many years of his ministry; but the simplicity, persuasiveness, pathos, and earnestness which at all times distinguished his preaching, had lost nothing of their charm. The collection amounted to between 300*l.* and 400*l.*

The great area of the Custom House, or Beresford Place, was selected for the open-air meetings; and, day after day, from an early hour, the indefatigable Apostle was at work in his mission. One or two extracts from his addresses on this occasion are of special interest. In the following he publicly disclaims, not for the first or even the hundredth time, having any power whatever to effect cures; and he justly denies that he ever in any way encouraged the people to think that he could effect them:—

My dear friends, I wish to allude to a certain subject, to which I adverted on the first day I attended here—it is with regard to the great number of infirm and sick persons that are coming here to take the pledge. I mentioned before what brought them here. They attend to join the society in consequence of the exaggerated accounts they received from those who had been drunkards, and who, to encourage others to become teetotallers, showed the benefit they enjoyed from being temperate in their habits. They state that their health, which had been impaired by the use of intoxicating liquors, became renewed, and that their constitutions, which were broken down, were repaired by the practice of temperance. The first person I heard speak on the subject was Mr. Smith, the great teetotaller, who stated that persons who for years could not work, when they became teetotallers, were able to resume their avocations. This induces people who are suffering from various diseases to come to me, under the impression that I could cure them; but it is not in my power to afford them relief; that is all in the hands of God. I received an anonymous letter on the subject, finding fault with my conduct; but I do not mind those attacks, it is my wish to please and satisfy all. St. Paul said he would himself be an anathema for the sake of his brethren. Some persons say, why not put them away;—but I would not envy the feelings of the man that could treat these poor people so unkindly. Persons who are free from superstition have brought me to those sick persons, to

gratify them; and when I went to them I did not refuse them my blessing. I went through no ceremony of any kind, but simply invoked a blessing on them, and it is no harm to do that to anything, animate or inanimate, or to any creature, rational or irrational. Whatever the consequences may be, though I do not wish to see them coming here, I will not refuse them my blessing, or, rather, refuse to ask God to bless them. If, for one moment, I relieve them from pain of mind, or despondency of heart, I care not what is said about it, for it should not give scandal. Several of those persons have been turned out of hospitals incurable; and it is natural that when man cannot afford them aid, they apply to heaven for it. Persons of strong religious belief have importuned me to give them a blessing and let them go away. I cannot, as I said before, bless them, but I can say, 'God bless you.' I use neither candle nor holy water, nor go through any ceremony, but merely give them a blessing. I have seen Protestants invoking a blessing.

The efficacy and simplicity of the pledge are most happily described in the following passage, which is quite characteristic of the use to which he applied his familiarity with the Scriptures:—

I do not know how it is possible, but I can assure you there is very little difficulty in adhering to the pledge. I have been told by numbers in all parts of the kingdom that they had not the slightest trouble in adhering to the pledge, or the least wish to break their promise. The pledge appears to be, in fact, as fast binding as the strongest oath, though nothing could be more simple than it is in detail. Simplicity, however, never takes away from the efficacy of any proceeding. It reminds me of the case of Naaman the Syrian, who, when he went to the prophet to be cured of leprosy, was told to go and wash himself in the Jordan. He at first refused, on account of the simplicity of the cure, and said that he had rivers enough in Syria to bathe in if he thought bathing could do him any good; but his servant at length said to him, 'Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it: how much rather what he now said to thee: wash, and thou shalt be clean.' Naaman then went and did as he was desired, and he was at once cured, and his skin became as the skin of an infant.

During his stay in Dublin, he was treated with the greatest distinction by persons of all classes and creeds, who vied

with each other in evincing their respect for 'the moral regenerator of Ireland,' as he was now frequently termed. Several young men of the higher class, including a number of the students of Trinity College, took the pledge at his hands. But the most remarkable feature in his first visit to Dublin was thus, in two years after, described by himself when addressing a meeting in Glasgow :—

When in Dublin, administering the pledge in Beresford Place, I happened to allude to the necessity and importance of the ladies doing their duty in this respect, when I was told that if they could obtain a convenient place, a number of them would take the pledge. Well, a meeting was called in the Royal Exchange, and 500 ladies enrolled themselves teetotallers

CHAPTER X.

Admirable Conduct of the Irish Publicans—Curious Letter of a Publican—Respect of the Brewers and Distillers for Father Mathew—George Roe of Dublin—Father Mathew visits the College of Maynooth—Extraordinary Scene—The Duke of Leinster—Visits Carlow—Incidents of his Visit—Testimonies in the House of Lords.

THAT there should have been some opposition to the temperance cause, was not only what was natural to expect, but what Father Mathew had fully anticipated from the first. Strange to say, and much to their credit, the opposition, such as it was, did not arise from the publicans of the country. That they were seriously injured by the spread of temperance was certain, and that they would be injured still more was inevitable; but still their conduct throughout the entire continuance of the agitation, for a period of some eight years, was in the highest degree creditable to their good feeling. The following letter from a publican is amusing for more reasons than one, and will indicate the effect produced, even thus early, by the movement upon the retail business of the trade. It need scarcely be said that 'the respectable farmers' sons' referred to had improvised an ingenious excuse for not paying their lawful debts :—

Newbawn, New Ross : May 16, 1840.

REV. SIR,—I beg leave to inform you that about a year ago I commenced public business, in a house which cost me upwards of 100*l*. I gave credit to respectable farmers' sons to a considerable amount, but, in consequence of their having taken the Temperance pledge, they say that you would not allow them to pay for any kind of intoxi-