

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-

cating liquor. I therefore humbly request that you will write a few lines to my parish priest, the Rev. Mr. Ryan, on the subject, as it will be the means of keeping myself and family from begging. *I do hereby pledge myself to resign this business the moment Mr. Ryan shall have received your letter, and that I will take the Temperance pledge myself, as my son has done.*

Awaiting with anxiety your favourable reply, I have the honour to be,

Rev. sir,

Your most obedient servant, &c.

MICHL. CANNON.

At a period subsequent to the date of this letter, Father Mathew thus alluded to the fact that numbers of the retailers throughout Ireland had joined his society, while he happily replied to those who interestedly cried out against it and its principles:—

There is no public good effected without some individual injury being occasioned; the introduction of steam-engines, for example, put, necessarily, many hands out of employment; the railroad conveyances have seriously affected stage-coach proprietors, and those who had hack-coaches and cars to let out for hire; but the public is confessedly benefited by such improvements. In the making and vending of spirits and other deleterious drinks, many have previously made a livelihood, and some a fortune, whilst not a few of them have been sufferers to a considerable extent. *I am, however, happy to say that numbers of them have nobly come forward and joined our society.* To be sure, in every change, be they ever so pregnant with blessings for the community, some interested persons will be always found to stand up and oppose their progress; and so it is with us. Some concerned in the manufacturing and retailing of deleterious drinks cry out incessantly against our society. They forcibly remind me of the conduct of the people of Ephesus to St. Paul, when he came among them to preach the Gospel, and diffuse the blessings of Christianity. Many of them were silversmiths, whose principal emolument arose from the making of statues of the goddess Diana (the idol then worshipped at Ephesus), and their constant cry then was, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' Thus it is always with many in this country engaged in the spirit trade, who are heard to cry out incessantly, 'Great is Whisky! Potent is Ale! Great is Whisky! Potent is Ale!' But I say to you, 'Greater, far greater still, is Temperance—greater, far greater still, is Teetotalism.'

Many testimonies of the respect paid to Father Mathew by those who had large capital embarked in the manufacture of whisky and porter, and whose interests had been seriously injured by the spread of temperance, could be adduced; but that manifested towards him by one of the most eminent distillers, and one of the most honourable and high-minded men in Ireland—George Roe, of Dublin—made a deep impression upon the temperance leader, and is honourable to both. Father Mathew made a short visit to Dublin, with the object of collecting for his new church, which he had very much neglected, and in fact had been compelled to sacrifice to the cause to which he had now devoted all his energies. Among others on whom he called was George Roe, to whom, as he afterwards said, he 'appealed in fear and trembling.' The answer was characteristic of the princely-minded gentleman. 'No man,' said George Roe, 'has done me more injury than you have, Father Mathew; but I forget all in the great good you have done my country.' And he presented his proud and delighted applicant with a handsome donation.

And among the distillers and brewers of his own city he possessed many friends, to whom he was never afraid to present himself in the cause of charity. The Beamishes, the Crawfords, the Wises, the Murphys, the Hewitts, the Lanes, the Dalys, and others, never failed to evince their respect for Father Mathew; and when the citizens of Cork met, in 1857, to commemorate his memory by a public statue, Colonel Beamish, the head of the great establishment of Beamish and Crawford, was one of the most eloquent eulogists of his fame and character.

Father Mathew had now—indeed, even before the year 1840—become every inch a leader. Each day his ardour seemed to be, if possible, on the increase. Next to the duties of his ministry, the promotion and spread of temperance was the great object of his life. To widen, deepen,

and strengthen the foundations of the great fabric which he had reared up; to extend its influence among the higher classes; to enlist men of talent and zeal in its advocacy; to induce employers to set an example to their work-people; to prevail on masters and mistresses to do the same to their servants; to attract the young and innocent into the ranks; to interest the feelings of his brother-priests in the progress of a cause which, as he said, next to that of religion, ought to be the one dearest to their hearts—in fine, to go on until the inhabitants of the country were gathered into one great temperance fold, was his fixed resolve. Assist the cause, and you complimented him. Do so even by an admission of its usefulness, and you pleased him; do so by your own personal example, and there was no sacrifice which he would not willingly make for your advantage. But look coldly on it, and you pained him; sneer at it, and you wounded him; attack it, and you roused his indignation. As a leader, he valiantly stood in the van, and challenged the enemy to strike at his shield. Assail the society, and you assailed him; attack its members, and it was he who felt the blow. The 'cause' had become part of his very being; and this was one of the reasons of his marvellous success. Nor was he averse to meet his opponents, or to encounter their opposition by the trenchant logic of common sense, in such vigorous language as this:—

What filled our gaols and bridewells? The effects of intoxication. What crowded the very lunatic asylums? Drunkenness and its effects. What fed the very gibbets? Drunkenness. I never will give up until we are freed, with the blessing and the assistance of God, from all these deplorable evils; and if I encounter during the progress of my career the sneers of some, and the contumelies of others, I must expect it. Some there are, and it is strange, look with an evil eye upon me. But cannot I say in the words of St. Paul, 'Am I your enemy, because I tell the truth?' Let them show me anyone brought to misery or ruin by total abstinence. Show me anyone brought to gaol or bridewell by total abstinence. Show me anyone

sent to the lunatic asylum from total abstinence. Oh, no! not a single one.

After having enrolled hundreds of thousands in various parts of the island—50,000 in one place, 100,000 in another—and become the moral leader of 2,000,000 of his countrymen, Father Mathew, in the June of 1840, wisely turned to the fountain source of the religious teaching of the Catholics of Ireland, all of whom he hoped to embrace in his society,—namely, to the College of Maynooth, to which he had been invited by the President. Within its walls were being trained the future priesthood of Ireland; and if he could but enlist their young and warm hearts in his cause—the cause of the country they loved—it would be of greater permanent advantage than if another million, carried away by the impulse of the moment, were added to his ranks. His reception was an ovation, his success great beyond his most sanguine expectation. Of those outside the college walls no less than 35,000 were computed to have taken the pledge; and as to what took place within its walls, the following, from a glowing description written by one of the students who was among the 'postulants,' and who was inflamed by the generous excitement of the hour, will afford the reader a vivid idea of the effect produced by this memorable visit, and of the extraordinary enthusiasm which the presence and preaching of Father Mather excited in the minds of hundreds of educated young men, whose days were divided between severe study and the practices of piety. If such were the effect produced by the Apostle in the halls of an ecclesiastical college, what must not it have been in the market-place, or on the hill side, with working people and peasants for his auditors? The student, who writes in all the impassioned ardour of his first feelings, thus depicts the scene:—

I had the good fortune to be present in the great hall of the college when the professors and students knelt down with edifying humility

under the inspiring eloquence of an humble priest. The scene was majestically grand; it threw back the mind upon itself; it drew forth in full light all that is high and all that is amiable in the Irish heart; and to a day-dreamer, like myself, recalled in tender recollection the memory of other times, and looked for a while like their revival. On an elevated bench, which extends along one side of the quadrangular room, stood the Apostle of Temperance, 'reasoning of justice and temperance and the judgement to come.' The able and amiable Dr. Hughes, Bishop of New York, was present on every occasion, and showed by his feelings how deeply he loves the land of his birth. Mr. Mathew was supported on either side by the maters and professors of the college. The room was piled to the utmost extremity by the students and several distinguished strangers were occasionally present. A small vacant space under the bench was the hallowed spot consecrated to the virtue of temperance. The words of wisdom which he uttered were followed by deep emotion—they won the heart and subdued the judgement. No pen can describe, and none but an eye-witness can conceive, the stirring effect produced on a thoughtful spectator by the appeals of Theobald Mathew—the conflicting emotions of joy and astonishment in his audience, and the thunders of involuntary applause that greeted each new accession of converts as they moved deliberately forward in successive files, and with eager emulation, to the arena of virtue and heroic self-denial.

For the more convenient management of so great an institution the discipline of the college wisely separates the senior and junior parts of the community. The good man, after his first successful essay in the senior college, requested to be led to the junior house. He briefly stated the object of his mission. They listened in silent wonder; their innocence was startled by the turpitude of the unfelt gratification, and their humility was alarmed by the exalted act of virtue they were invited to imitate. No postulant appeared, and the holy man retired with perfect composure, but not without hope. Their own reflections created a speedy revolution of sentiment, and they requested him to return. He hurried with eager zeal to see them again, and the little Benjamins, as he endearingly called them, repaid his paternal solicitude by fully emulating, at each successive visit he paid them, the generous enthusiasm of their seniors.

The writer's feelings are further described by his own act, and the hopes to which the success of the day gave rise in the mind of an ardent youth:—

Yielding cheerfully myself to the many generous examples I had seen in the town and in the college, I did what an Irishman should do under such circumstances. I must be like them, said I; I will do as they have done; after ages will bless this day; and, folding my arms in deep deliberation, I knelt amongst the crowd, I registered in heaven my solemn promise of total and perpetual abstinence, and got the benediction of Father Mathew.

The fruits of this visit to Maynooth were 35,000 of the people, 8 professors of the college, and 250 students.

During his visit to Maynooth he was the guest of the Duke of Leinster, at Carton. This amiable nobleman—'Ireland's only Duke,' as he was termed by O'Connell—received Father Mathew with the greatest distinction. Indeed, it might be said with justice that his attention to him was extraordinary; for the housekeeper of Carton said she never received an order as to the arrangements or preparations which she should make for the reception of the most distinguished nobleman, even for the Lord-Lieutenant; but when Father Mathew was expected, the duke requested that she would take 'particular care' in her arrangements for his reception. If he were a crowned monarch instead of a lowly friar, he could not have been treated with greater respect and distinction by his noble host.

In the month of October of the same year, he visited Carlow, near which town there is a lay and ecclesiastical college, in which the illustrious Dr. Doyle had been a professor many years before. The meetings were held in the cathedral; and such was the enthusiasm excited by the addresses of the Apostle of Temperance, and the ardour of the thousands who rushed forward with impetuosity to adopt the pledge, that the students of the college speedily caught the contagion, and made known their desire to imitate the general example. Father Mathew was delighted at the intelligence, it being that, of all others, which he most longed to hear. He appointed to meet the students in the evening, and having dined at a late hour in the college, with a large

party assembled to do him honour, he proceeded to the refectory of the ecclesiastical students when their supper was over. Several of the lay students were admitted on the occasion, as they had expressed a wish to take the pledge at the same time. He won the hearts of the students by his affectionate manner, as he went from table to table, and enquired of them of their parents and friends, many of whom he had personally known, and spoke to them of their town, or their parish, or of something in which they were interested. He then addressed them on the object of his visit.

My dear young friends (said he) I am inexpressibly delighted at hearing that many among you are disposed to take the pledge. I am well aware no one present requires words of advice or encouragement from me, as a necessity does not exist for your becoming pledged to the principles or practice of total abstinence. But your example will have a powerful influence on many others, who will be induced to emulate your virtuous and noble resolution, either through motives of religion and moral purification, or from necessity and a distrust in their own weakness in withstanding those strong temptations to indulge in excess, which were so frequently, and are still, presented in Ireland. The humbler classes in this country naturally look to their clergy for good example as for direction, and hence it affords me the greatest possible delight to find the young aspirants to the priesthood, and also the young gentlemen of the lay college, prepared to make sacrifices which cannot fail to give great edification to the people.

Father Mathew then administered the pledge to a considerable number, and requested that if any others desired to do the same on the morrow, they would do so on the steps of the high altar in the cathedral, 'in presence of the assembled thousands of their countrymen;' and he added, 'The Almighty would bestow His choicest graces and blessings on them, in return for their generous and sublime resolve.'

Those of the ecclesiastical students who had not taken the pledge on this occasion, held serious communion with themselves during the night, and asked for direction from on high. The result of their earnest deliberation was, that a large additional number resolved on affording an example in their

own persons. A respectable clergyman, who was then one of the students of the college, has furnished the author with an interesting sketch of Father Mathew's mission to Carlow, from which is taken the account of what happened on the following days:—

On the day following, the students who had resolved on taking the pledge ranged themselves on the steps of the platform before the high altar, whilst a vast multitude assembled in the nave and transepts of the cathedral. With a feeling of proud gratulation, Father Mathew pointed to the band of students who were prepared to set an example to the people, and after an animated address to the congregation, the candidates knelt down and repeated the words of the Total Abstinence pledge after the great representative of the temperance movement. Immediately afterwards, the good Father, full of emotion and bending over each student in succession, embraced him warmly, and kissed him on the cheek, whilst he repeated words of the following import on passing before the line of kneeling ecclesiastics: 'God bless you, my dear sir! God bless you! God bless you, my dear young gentlemen!' Before leaving Carlow, he requested a list of the names of all those students to be left with his secretary, and no long interval elapsed until each one received from him the gift of a silver medal, as a *souvenir* of the occasion, and as a token of the Very Rev. Father's grateful appreciation of this accession to the ranks of his teetotalers.

Whilst successive congregations filled the cathedral at intervals during each day, the late Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Bishop of the dioceses of Kildare and Leighlin, was in almost constant attendance, as a spectator, whilst he seemed truly anxious in every way to promote the success of the good Father's mission. Although the pious missionary frequently disclaimed all pretensions to the possession of supernatural or miraculous powers, yet such was the faith and fervour of the peasantry, that many afflicted with various diseases felt desirous of receiving the pledge at his hands, and of obtaining his benediction, in confident expectation that they would experience instant relief and a permanent cure. In very many instances, by a sort of preternatural effort, cripples were seen casting away their staves and crutches, as no longer needful, whilst they walked erect, or nearly so, to the great astonishment of all present, Protestants as well as Catholics. In those instances, pious ejaculations resounded through the cathedral, both from the afflicted patients themselves and from the crowds that flocked around them, within and without the sacred building. For any

restoration of this kind, Father Mathew invariably requested the people to give all praise and glory to God, under whom he was an unworthy instrument, permitted to exercise the duties of a holy ministry, and to effect only what he believed to be a great social reformation.

All day on Tuesday, the crowds pouring into the cathedral were in no manner diminished, and the sun went down without the slightest interruption to the immense mental and physical exertions of Father Mathew.

At an early hour on Wednesday he was similarly employed; but his engagements elsewhere obliged him to leave by the midday coach, which awaited his arrival on the Dublin road. The good Father sent his luggage forward, and remained himself in the cathedral to the last possible moment, when he told the people he must absolutely leave, but he promised that he would take the first available opportunity to return again and resume the labours of his abundant harvest in Carlow. The coach had been already delayed beyond its time, and Father Mathew, with a hurried grasp of the hand to a few of the numerous friends about him, and a courteous adieu waved to others, ran through the College Park by the nearest route to his destination. Groups of men had contrived to scale the college walls, and these threw themselves on their knees before him, asking to take the pledge before he should leave. In breathless haste, it was administered in a number of instances, and whilst he was in rapid motion across the park. Others, again, had passed round the road to the coach, where a great multitude of men, women, and children were collected. It was utterly impossible to comply with their urgent requests to be enrolled, as the coach-driver was obliged to ply his whip with vigour, to make good his time between the intermediate stages to his ultimate destination.

On Friday, July 10, 1840, the Marquis of Westmeath asked a question in the House of Lords, which elicited valuable testimony in favour of the temperance movement. He called attention to what he termed a 'proclamation,' which had been issued by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Lord Ebrington), in which this passage occurred: 'To the benefit which the temperance pledge has conferred upon Ireland, in the improved habits of the people, and the diminution of outrage, His Excellency bears a willing and grateful testi-

mony.' He desired to learn whether this proclamation was authentic or not.

The Marquis of Normanby could give no official answer on the subject; but he would say, from all the information which he had received with respect to the movement then going on in Ireland, he was convinced that a most beneficial change had been effected amongst the people by the pledge.

The Earl of Devon said that, so far as he had an opportunity of judging, a great and substantial good had been done. I believe, continued the noble earl, that it has been effected by perfectly legitimate means and legitimate exertions, and that it is as little connected with fanaticism, with party, or with appeals to religious feelings of a peculiar character, as could be imagined. I have myself heard Father Mathew address the people; and his manner is such as any noble lord who hears me might adopt in addressing a public body in support of such an object. It is, I conceive, *pessimi exempli* to speak in reproachful terms of that which has been productive of very great good.

The Earl of Wicklow thought that the temperance societies were calculated to effect much good; and the individual who had devoted himself to the furtherance of the temperance movement deserved the greatest praise for what he was doing.