

CHAPTER XII.

His Reception in the North—Expenses of his Mission—His Unceasing Generosity—The Temperance Bands—The Appeal and Response—The 'Poor Drummer'—A Village Tea-party—'Beautiful Music'—Who paid for the Music.

FATHER MATHEW'S success in the Province of Ulster was far greater than he or his friends could have anticipated; as, from various reasons, into which it is not within the scope of this work to enter, the spirit of sectarian strife was more active and acrimonious in that portion of Ireland than in the provinces of the West and South. There was one reason for the existence of this feeling in the North, which did not apply to the other provinces—the population were, at least in some counties, about equally divided between the different religious denominations. Thus, while, as a rule, the Western and Southern counties were Catholic, the Northern counties had a nearly equally balanced number of followers belonging to the two great denominations, of Protestant and Catholic, including Presbyterians under the head Protestant.* It must be admitted that no other Catholic priest could have succeeded in conciliating the goodwill, and indeed in arousing the enthusiasm, of the sturdy Presbyterian and the strong Orange Protestant of Ulster. Had Father Mathew been a controversialist, who had wrestled in theological conflict, like his distinguished predecessor Father O'Leary, not only would the heart but the very highways of Ulster have been closed against him. But, as before stated,

* By the census of 1861, the three Churches were thus represented in Ulster: Catholics, 963,687; Protestants, 390,130; Presbyterians, 511,371.

polemical controversy was repugnant to his nature; and strife of any kind, especially in the name of religion, he would neither take part in, nor do anything to promote. His character had gone before him, and his presence accomplished the rest. As he said himself at a meeting in Newry, in 1841, to which he had been invited by the Right Rev. Dr. Blake, Catholic Bishop of Dromore—'that Bishop after St. Paul's own heart,' as Father Mathew described him—the progress of temperance in the North had been one continued triumph. 'I had, it is true,' he added, the aid of the press of Ulster, of all parties; and I rejoice that some of the most talented conductors of that press are here to-night.' On the same occasion he thus described the manner of his reception in the North:—

We had no military, no police, no constables; but, in lieu of them, we had several excellent young gentlemen from Belfast, Lisburn, and other places, who kept order. I must here speak particularly of young Mr. Hancock, of Lurgan, whose efforts in the preservation of the peace, and in aid of the cause, were most laudable. I had the happiness of being the guest of his amiable mother, whilst in Lurgan; and I had the honour, also, of being the guest of the noble proprietor, Lord Lurgan. Col. Blacker there met me, and read to me a beautiful poetical tribute to the success of teetotalism, during the reading of which every eye in that gilded saloon beamed with pleasure. In coming originally to the North, I had great difficulties to contend with. I was told I would be assassinated in Ulster; but I had confidence in my cause, as I came in the name of the Lord, proclaiming aloud, 'Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, to men goodwill.' I knew the people of Ulster were too virtuous to refuse me their aid in this total abstinence movement, on any sectarian grounds. I had also too much reliance on the honour of Irishman to suppose the people of this province would arise in their might, and crush one humble individual, who was merely trying to promote public morality. In the words of the poet, slightly altered, I may say, in conclusion—

Blessed for ever the day I relied
On Ulster's honour and Ulster's pride.

On a subsequent occasion he referred to his further experi-

ence of the kindness and good feeling almost universally manifested towards him by persons of the most opposite opinions on all matters of importance, and showed how, by his tact and good nature, he converted into a compliment that which some few ill-conditioned or ill-mannered persons intended as an insult to the Popish Priest:—

When I was about visiting Cootehill, there was a great number of placards posted about the place cautioning me not to go there, as it was supposed the Protestants would not receive me kindly; and the Catholic Bishop wrote to me not to visit the place; yet I went there, and the first person who met me, and who gave me the most cordial welcome, was the Rev. Dr. Douglas, rector of Cootehill, together with all the respectable Protestants of the town. I discovered afterwards that the person who got the placards printed and posted up was no other than a Catholic publican of the town. I met some of my warmest friends from Armagh to Caledon, amongst whom were Messrs. Ellis, Moore, and many others, who, for the sake of good example and edification, took the pledge, in order to induce others to do the same; and I can tell them that from the time I went into Ulster till my last visit to Drogheda, I have received the greatest kindness at the hands of all persons and parties. At Clones there were two orange flags raised there when I visited it, and, instead of an insult, I thought this a very great compliment, never having seen one or being honoured with one before, and when I saw them I called for three cheers for the orange flag, and the Catholics and Protestants became the greatest friends from that day forward, and during three days while I remained there, the different parties were the best friends imaginable. I could have apprehended nothing save goodwill and kindly feeling from one end of Ulster to the other, and this was amply demonstrated by my visits to Lurgan, Lisburn, Belfast, Downpatrick, Derry, and other places; and the 'Prentice Boys' of Derry showed me the greatest kindness, but it was not to me alone, but to the glorious cause. Thousands of them came out to Moira from Belfast and other places, and actually detained me three days longer than I intended to have stopped; and was not this truly delightful?

Invitations now continually poured in upon him from all parts of Ireland—from bishops and parish-priests—from presidents of temperance societies—from noblemen and gentlemen, who desired to obtain for their poor neighbours and

their own dependents the advantage of his presence. Generally speaking, when he was invited to a town by a clergyman, it was with two objects in view—that he might administer the pledge to the people, and preach in aid of funds for the erection or completion of a church, a convent, or a school. And thus, wherever he went with this double object, he was sure to be himself one of the most liberal, indeed *the* most liberal contributor to the charity on behalf of which he appealed. It was no uncommon thing for him to hand 10*l.*, or even 20*l.*, to his friend, the clergyman who had invited him to his parish, and who, in so doing, had conferred on him the greatest of all favours—namely, afforded him the opportunity of prosecuting his mission. The local temperance society was always certain to benefit by his visit. If they were in difficulty from debt, he released them from their embarrassment, and set them on their legs again; for he wisely regarded the reading-room, with its hundred or couple of hundred members, as a rallying-point and a stronghold for the cause.

Mr. Purcell and Mr. Bianconi had, no doubt, acted in a kind and thoughtful manner towards Father Mathew, when they made him free of their coaches and cars; still the cost of an inside seat in a mail coach did not represent the fiftieth part of the expense of an ordinary journey made by Father Mathew during the ardour of the campaign. From the moment he quitted Cove Street, in the City of Cork, until he returned to it again, after having traversed half a dozen counties, his hands were continually in his pockets—'giving—giving—giving.' At every place the coach stopped, a crowd soon surrounded him; and among the crowd—including the lame, and the blind, and the sick, the very old, and the very young—money was scattered profusely. It literally rained silver upon those occasions. This unreflecting and even reckless liberality may not have been wise or prudent; but it was utterly impossible that Father Mathew

could have reflected, or could have calculated, when his compassion was excited, or his charity appealed to. His eye and his ear were direct avenues to his heart: and when these conveyed sights of misery and voices of distress, the heart responded to the appeal, and the hand instinctively followed the impulse of the heart. Thus he gave with open heart and open hand, and could no more refrain from giving than he could refrain from feeling sympathy or expressing compassion.

A few lines from a letter written to him, about this time, by a clergyman who was compelled to proceed to Rome to prosecute a cause in which he was personally interested, will further exhibit the generous nature of this good man. The writer says:—

I accept with gratitude the sum of 60*l.* which you offered me, and will punctually repay it. Less would do, but I may have to stay two or three months, and I cannot return without making church and altar purchases, particularly if I succeed.

A respectable widow, of straitened means, called on him one day, to consult him about her son, a promising lad whom she wished to place in a certain collegiate institution: and thinking that Father Mathew might have sufficient influence with its conductors to obtain admittance for her son on reduced terms, she applied to him to that effect. 'I am sorry, my dear madam,' said Father Mathew, 'that I cannot do what you desire. I am sure the terms cannot be reduced, as they are already barely sufficient to meet the expenses of the establishment.' 'Dear, dear! what am I to do?—I am sorry, sir, to have troubled you; but, really, as you know, my means are so small, that it would be impossible for me to exist on what would remain after paying the pension,' said the poor lady, in the most affecting tones. 'Well, my dear madam, I tell you what you can do—bring me the sum you say you can afford to give, and I will pay it for you; and we will arrange it in that way, and your boy must have his chance of working his way, and being an honour and credit

to his good mother.' 'God will bless you, sir, for you have many a widow's blessing, and mine among them,' replied the now happy woman. The money was regularly handed to Father Mathew, for transmission to the college, and the young lad received an education through which he advanced in life; and it was not till many years after, that the widow discovered that the full sum had been paid for her son, and that Father Mathew had regularly made good the balance out of his own pocket.

Hundreds of such instances as the following might be given, as an evidence of 'how all the money went.' It is the concluding passage from a letter written, rather early in the movement, by the Rev. Mr. Molony, of Rosscarbery, in the county of Cork, and addressed to a Cork newspaper:—

I beg to add that he has literally forced on me a most splendid donation for the completion of the chapel, and that he has left with me, gratuitously, cards and medals for the vast number of poor people who had enrolled themselves.

It will be necessary to refer to the alleged receipts for cards and medals in a subsequent place. We now desire to say something of what were at once the pride and glory of the local societies, and a source of constant anxiety and expense to Father Mathew. These were the Temperance Bands.

Father Mathew had not the slightest knowledge of or taste for music. He could scarcely distinguish one air from another; and as for 'turning a tune,' he could as soon have turned the universe. In conversation, or in addressing an assembly, his voice was pleasing and melodious; but when, at High Mass or Vespers, he was compelled to sing—if the word can properly apply in his case—his voice was a croak, and his performance was mournful and dismal beyond description. The simplest Gregorian chant was too much for Father Mathew. In fine, he had '*no ear*' for music. Still he loved to be thrilled and stunned by the alternate shriek

and roar of the genuine Temperance Band. He delighted in the shrill fife and the shriller piccolo, and in the rattle of the small drum and the thunder of the big—simply because these harmonious sounds emanated from a band; and where there was a band, there also was a reading-room; and where there was a reading-room, there was a stronghold of temperance, a source of strength and encouragement to the weak and the vacillating, as well as a tribunal of public opinion formidable to the backslider. He also liked the bands because they amused the people; and his desire was then, as at all times, to promote amusements which were innocent and harmless in themselves, and cheering in their influence.

The rage for getting up bands soon became a kind of music mania. Thus would the members of a room yet unblessed with that costly acquisition put their melancholy case—'You see, sir, temperance is a very fine thing, and people who took the pledge ought to hold true to it—that we don't deny; but why should n't one society have its band as well as another society?—and is it to be said that *we* are to have no music for a procession, or a soirée, or a meeting, or a walk out in the country on a Sunday?—and if Father Mathew comes to honour us by a visit, are *we* to be beholden to any other society for the loan of their band? No, sir; we must have our own band, whatever it may cost.' And with such sentiments on the part of a society, of course the getting up of the band was the next thing thought of; and until the instruments were actually in the room, shining in brazen glory on the walls, or were in the hands of the performers, and a master engaged, there could be neither peace nor contentment for that society. Subscriptions were frequently raised from the local gentry in the rural districts, or from the wealthier inhabitants of the cities and towns; but there was one unailing resource for the society in want of a band—that was, in the exhaustless liberality of Father Mathew, to whom the appeal was usually made in this fashion, through

a deputation headed by an elder of the room—'The truth is, your reverence, we can't get on at all without the music. We're afeard the members will be leaving us, and that would be bad, your reverence; for the poor fellows may be falling into temptation, and that's what none of us would like, your reverence, if we could help it at all. It will keep the members together to have the band in the room; and, your reverence, the boys and girls are so fond of the music, that it would be a pity to disappoint them, the poor things! Faith, sir, we'd be ashamed of ourselves if we would n't be able to play finely for you by Easter Monday. And, your reverence, we all greatly depend on you entirely; for sure, your reverence, you're our leader in the blessed cause. Our hopes are in you altogether, and we know *you* won't desert us, please God!' To an appeal of this kind, what could Father Mathew do but respond, as he always did, not to say liberally, but munificently? His reply to the deputation was sure to be in words such as these,—'I am very happy to see you, gentlemen, and to do anything I can for your excellent society. I am proud of your fidelity, and I trust you will always stand firm, and resist temptation, and that there will be no backsliders among you.' Here, of course, he was interrupted by a disclaimer, pronounced in tones of the most virtuous energy. There was not a man of that deputation but who, according to his own statement, was to remain faithful to his dying day. 'Very good, gentlemen,—very good, boys,—God bless you all, and enable you to keep your promise! You must have a band, of course, and I will assist you as far as I can. I hope to hear you play well when next I visit you. But, remember, be true and faithful followers of the Lord, and don't give scandal to others. God bless you, gentlemen; God bless you, boys!' 'Don't be afeard of us, your reverence; every man of us is true to the cause.' 'We are, your reverence, every one of us,' would the other members of the deputation chime in, in chorus. 'That's

delightful to my ears, my dear children; and now, here is my contribution. Be faithful, like valiant soldiers in a good cause.' 'Thank your reverence! we're entirely obliged to your reverence. This will be great news for the boys and girls that are waiting for us.' And so, invariably, away would go the deputation rejoicing.

But this was not the last that Father Mathew had to do with the band to which he thus contributed, or, as the case may have been, which he thus established. If the big drum yielded to the merciless vigour of its lusty operator, whose conscientious performance was the pride of the room and the admiration of the neighbourhood, Father Mathew was probably consulted as to the condition and prospects of that much-aggrrieved instrument; and, if it were hopelessly invalided, as it too often had every reason to be, a subscription from the President for the purchase of a new victim to the prowess of the 'great drummer' was expected; and, so long as he had a pound at his disposal, it was generally given by him.

If a considerable majority of the big drums that had to do duty during the Temperance campaign did not suffer dissolution, then I would be inclined to believe that the same Providence that watches over the fall of a sparrow must also have condescended to protect the Irish temperance drum; for, as a rule, that devoted instrument was entrusted to the ablest member of the room, a man of approved muscle and vigour; and rarely, I must frankly admit, was the confidence thus reposed in the energy of the performer ever betrayed. What was expected at the hands of this most important member of the temperance band may be indicated by the following little incident:—

It was on the occasion of an emigrant ship sailing from the harbour of Cork, with several hundred passengers, mostly the young, strong, and active—the very bone and sinew of the country. The emigrants had all taken the pledge from

Father Mathew, who had, as was his invariable custom in similar cases, presented them with cards and medals. Feeling a deep interest in the welfare of these poor people, Father Mathew determined on paying them a visit on board, before the ship left her moorings for her long voyage. Out of compliment to the President, and to give greater *éclat* to the proceedings of the day, one of the city bands, consisting of some six or eight performers, volunteered to accompany the party. Father Mathew and his friends embarked in a roomy whaleboat, which was in waiting for him at the usual landing-place; the band, with the exception of the drummer, finding accommodation for themselves at the bow. The ship lay about a mile and a half from the shore; and as soon as the boat was well under weigh, the premonitory tap on the drum assured us that we were to add the charm of music to the enjoyment of a lovely day in summer, waters dancing and sparkling in the sunshine, and the contemplation of that noble picture of maritime beauty which the harbour of Cork presents to the eye. The powerful fellow who pulled the stroke oar of the boat, and whose every dip in the water left after it what he himself termed the 'rale colliflower,' appeared, from the first, to take a marked interest in the drummer, who was perched on the stern, behind the coxswain. The band was really excellent, and was led by a musician of taste and cultivation. Here the drum, contrary to the established rule, was not only a useful but a subordinate adjunct; it marked the time, and enriched the harmony of the well-balanced instruments. The 'stroke,' who had taken me into his confidence, winked at me from time to time, and directed my attention to the drummer, by various nods, and an occasional nudge, whispering, 'Yea, listen to *him*, sir. Did ye ever hear the like of *that*?' His amazement deepened into the profoundest contempt, as the drummer was still contented with his shamefully subordinate and humiliating position; and most eloquently were the feelings

of my friend the 'stroke' depicted on his expressive countenance. At length his disgust, long brimful, overflowed; and stooping over to me, he thus gave vent to his feelings—'Wisha, sir, he's a mighty poor dhrummer all out. I'd get a boy of ten year old in our room to bate him. He ought to be ashamed of himself, a great big fellow of his size! Ah, sir, if ye'd only hear *our* band, then you'd know what a rale dhrum is.' The critic was not perhaps altogether impartial, for he was the vigorous and most successful performer on the big drum of his own room; and, it must be added, no artist stood higher in the esteem of its members, or in the admiration of the small boys of the town. To use his own expressive words, 'he was the lad for knocking life into it, and no mistake.'

Though many years have passed since then, I have to this moment the liveliest recollection of the performance of a genuine village band, which had been established, as its patrons alleged, 'to cheer and delight the members with its strains of melody.' I had been requested by Father Mathew to accompany him to the 'Festival;' and as the carriage approached the door of the house in which the tea party was to be held, we were saluted by a startling outburst of complicated sounds that, on the whole, bore some resemblance to the air generally known as the 'Conquering Hero.' Had not the spirit of the horses been rather tamed down by a long pull, it would be difficult to say what might have happened; for the big drum was beaten by the village blacksmith, who was, to do him the barest justice, a powerful performer. Of course, there was a dense crowd assembled in a moment in front of the 'hall,' as it was proudly designated; and cheer after cheer welcomed the arrival of the world-renowned Apostle of Temperance. In a moment, and as if by impulse, a 'batch' was formed in a small semicircle, down on their knees in the street; and, for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, Father Mathew was hard

at work administering the pledge in the centre of the little village.

At length we were enabled to enter the 'hall,' which was a moderate sized but low-ceiled room, whose walls were decorated with evergreens and garlands of flowers—for it was in the middle of June. The banner of the society occupied a conspicuous place over the chair, which was grandly upholstered with crimson merino; and on the wall, at the end, the words, '*Cead Mille Fealtha*'—in English, 'a hundred thousand welcomes!'—were painted in large yellow letters on a strip of green calico. At the top of the room, before the chair, was a mahogany table, lent for the occasion by some local patron of temperance; and this table was resplendent with tea-pots and coffee-pots, some of silver and more of grand 'Britannia,' also lent to do honour to Father Mathew. There was a goodly show of currant cake, a present to the society; and the whitest sugar and the richest cream showed the zeal of the members, and the liberality of the neighbouring gentry—not a few of whom were present, and occupied the place of honour. Two narrow tables, made of planks, knocked together for the occasion, ran down the length of the room, and sustained mountains of bread and butter, the slices of substantial thickness; also jugs of enormous size, and cups of liberal dimensions. At the tables sat young and old, from the grandmother to the child in arms. The *élite* of the village was there; and many a healthy decent-looking man, now sitting in quiet gravity in the midst of his family, was, not many years, perhaps even months, before, the tyrant of his home, and the pest of the neighbourhood. The elderly ladies rejoiced in snowy caps, with grand borders and flaring ribbons; and the young exhibited equal taste in the simple neatness of their dress, and the careful arrangement of their glossy hair. The appearance which the crowded but over-close chamber presented was a pleasing and a hopeful one indeed. On a

raised and railed-off platform at the end of the room, the band had taken their position; and as Father Mathew entered, the 'Conquering Hero' was again given, in a style which would have impelled the 'Enraged Musician' to instantaneous suicide, had he been present at that merciless piece of instrumentation. But the audience, whose ears were in their hearts, could hear no discord whatever, and thought it the most ravishing harmony. And Father Mathew, looking as noble as a king, beamed with delight, his eyes and lips smiling in concert. Nor was he wanting in abundant praise of the performance, which, awful and nerve-shattering as it was to unaccustomed ears, was really wonderful, inasmuch as the greater number of the performers had never held a musical instrument in their hands a month previously to this grand exhibition of their proficiency. When the last bar was concluded, up rose Father Mathew, who, bowing with grace towards the orchestra, said—"Thank you, gentlemen! thank you very much, for your *beautiful* music!" The band was in a flutter of ecstasy at this public tribute from 'one of the greatest men in the world,' and not a member present but felt the compliment. 'I knew, sir,' said a village dame to me, 'that his reverence would be plazed. Faith, sir, I think the boys plays as well as the army, if not better.' The stewards are now bustling in and out, preparing the tea, which is being concocted in an adjoining room. The beverage is borne in in the enormous white jugs, from which ascend columns of steam in this hot June night. The tea 'for the Apostle and the quality' is also supplied; and just as the company are about enjoying themselves in that luxury, which cheers but does not inebriate, the tap of the drum is heard—then another tap—and, at the third, your whole nervous being is assailed with a crash of sounds such as to bewilder you for the moment. Shriek and squeak, bur, and roar, and clash, with a blending of all, and an occasional predominance of some—this is the band exe-

cuting 'Love not!' an air which, at that time, owed much to the energy of our national musicians. The tumult is awful. The walls, you imagine, must shortly yield to the stupendous reverberations created by the big drum, which is under the able hands of the muscular blacksmith. The performers proudly persevere, their master beating time, and swaying his head from side to side, with a gravity worthy of the bandmaster of the Coldstreams. The members are in a state of rapture, and reward the musicians with a loud clapping of hands and stamping on the floor. 'Very beautiful, indeed!' is heard again from the President, whose commendation, honest and sincere, is by no means endorsed by the occupants of the upper table. The members of the band—Dinny and Ned and Larry and Tom and Billy—are invited by their delighted friends and relatives to seat themselves at the tables, and 'make much of themselves, poor boys;' and the largest cups and the thickest slices are awarded to the performers, as some faint expression of gratitude and admiration. The big drum has a place of special honour, for his labour has been mighty, and he now wipes the accumulated moisture from his manly brow.

When the band have done themselves justice, they again proceed to the 'orchestra.' Some whispered consultation is seen to be carried on; and, shortly after, a member of that important body makes his way through the crowded room to where Father Mathew is seated, and announces his message, which resulted in the following dialogue:—"Plaze your reverence, the gintlemen of the band would like to know what chune your reverence would prefer." "Oh, my dear, anything the gentlemen please themselves." "Your reverence, they'd like to lave it to yourself." "Well, my dear, "God Save the Queen" is a very fine air, and so is "Patrick's Day." "I'm afeard, sir, we're only learning them chunes; but would your reverence like the "Conquering Haro?" "Had n't we that before, my dear?" "Well, you had, your

reverence. Perhaps your reverence would be after liking "Love not?"—that's a mighty sweet thing.' 'It is indeed, my dear, a very nice air; but had n't we that also?' 'Well, you had, your reverence; but the gentlemen of the band thought you'd like to plaze yourself.' Father Mathew, of course, understood the limited nature of the band's *repertoire*, and so he gravely called for the 'Conquering Hero,' and expressed a hope that it might be followed, in the course of the evening, by that delightful air, 'Love not.' The band felt the more proud at having paid this graceful compliment, and they executed the doomed pieces of music several times that night with unabated vigour and undiminished discord.

In six months after, one could not have recognised that village band; for then they played air, and waltz, and march music, with harmony and precision. It was its first night's public performance that so long haunted my memory.

I have listened with a kind of amused horror to the first performances of a temperance band within the walls of a reading-room, or temperance hall; but a more bewildering aggregation of sounds was to be enjoyed by the musical epicure on those occasions when Father Mathew gathered round him the societies of the districts within some miles of the city, for a special jubilee. I remember one of these. It was a kind of monster meeting at Blarney, a well-known locality, famous in song and legend, about five miles distant from the city of Cork. The meeting was held in a beautiful valley encircled by hills, on the sides of which many hundreds of well-dressed people were scattered in picturesque groups. Banners of all hues and shapes floated and fluttered from every prominence and vantage ground, and more than twenty bands sent up their blended dissonance to the skies. As no one band was allowed to have precedence of the other, and as each was desirous of exhibiting its proficiency, of course no one band would give way to the other; therefore all should be heard alike; and all were heard alike, to the

greatest general advantage. One can scarcely realise, even to the wildest imagination, the sublime discord of twenty bands, each playing a different air, with twenty vigorous and athletic 'big drummers' energetically rivalling each other, and the surrounding hills multiplying while reverberating the complicated and torturing medley of sounds. Were nymphs and dryads still haunting sylvan solitudes, one could suppose them flying in dismay from such fearful discord, and never again returning to their sunlit dells and pleasant shades. But the day was beautiful, the sun shone brightly, the banners fluttered gaily, the people were happy, and Father Mathew was in ecstasy.

But Father Mathew had to pay for the music of that and similar popular festivals. Had to pay is not, perhaps, a correct mode of putting it; *did* pay, is more accurate. Many of these young men had come a distance of a dozen miles, or more, to do him special honour, and they had a dozen miles, or more, to travel before they reached home. As a rule, too, they were of the humblest class, who had but little to spare even for a day's festivity. Father Mathew was not the man to be insensible to the devotion or the sacrifices of his followers; and so his secretary was ordered to pay them such a 'compliment' as sent the poor fellows home rejoicing.

It did now and then happen that misunderstandings occurred in temperance rooms, and that the members of the band occasionally thought too much of themselves—that the cornet-a-piston sent in his resignation, that the flute gave up in disgust, or that the big drum refused to strike. Such things did happen; for it must be borne in mind that teetotallers were human, and not angels. When these little difficulties arose, it sometimes, though rarely, happened that the band was broken up, that the instruments were parted with, and that the room was abandoned; and that, when the moment of repentance came, and the society gathered together

again, and the band was to be reorganised, and all things were to be set right as before, an urgent appeal to Father Mathew was inevitable. And to respond effectively to an appeal of the kind, Father Mathew would willingly have parted with his last shilling. Through the contention of that village society the President was pained; in the backsliding of its members the Apostle of Temperance was scandalised. And what sacrifice would he not make—should he not make, he thought—to restore peace to that little society, and protect its members from folly and from danger? Thus it was that the bands, while useful to a certain extent, and a source of intense gratification to the people throughout the country, were to Father Mathew not only the cause of considerable anxiety, but of constant expense.

CHAPTER XIII.

Danger from insecure Platforms—The Catastrophe of Minane Bridge
—His Defence of the Bands—The dead Drum-major.

ON several occasions Father Mathew was placed in serious jeopardy by the insecurity of temperance platforms; but there was one adventure of the kind to which he rarely desired to allude, but to which his brother Charles now and then slyly referred, to the momentary annoyance of the priest. Father Mathew had consented to preach for an old friend of his, the pastor of a parish distant from Cork about ten miles; and, as usual, the opportunity was availed of by the friends of temperance to hold a meeting, and promote the spread of the cause in the village and the adjoining districts. The first thing to be done was to erect a platform, from which the speakers were to address the expected assembly; and the rural architect, when he surveyed his work on the Saturday night, believed in his soul that a finer, safer, or more ingenious construction than his grand platform was never devised. Sunday arrived, and with it the Apostle of Temperance, who preached the promised sermon for his reverend friend. From the chapel the congregation proceeded to the place of meeting, and the numbers were increased by people flocking in from all the neighbouring districts. The platform presented a very imposing appearance, it being seven or eight feet from the ground, and decorated with laurel branches, and with banners, which floated from the four uprights on which the