

CHAPTER XIX.

He determines to visit England—Inducements to do so—Earl Stanhope's Letter—The Quaker's 'Hotel'—Reception in York—In Leeds—In London.

THE next great event of his life was his visit to England. That he had gone through the length and breadth of his own country previous to this visit to the sister country, we have from his own words. Writing from Cork to a friend in America, in February 1843, he says: 'I have now, with the Divine assistance, hoisted the banner of temperance in almost every parish in Ireland, and, in every instance, by the pressing invitation of the parish priest, whose guest I invariably was.'

Invitations to visit England had been pouring in upon him since 1840; and had he not kept steadily in mind the task which he had undertaken in Ireland, and the necessity of completing it, so far as it was humanly possible for him to do so, he might have yielded to the pressing entreaties addressed to him. These appeals were made alike by Protestant and Catholic, by English and by Irish, by individuals as well as by societies. The Christian concord which his presence would be sure to promote among men of different persuasions—the prejudices which he would break down—the good which he would do his country through the moral elevation of the poor Irish, who, from their poverty and their social habits, were exposed to the worst temptations of large towns,—these inducements, and a hundred others

likely to impress a man of his sensibility, were constantly addressed to him; but whatever his impulse might prompt him to do, his strong sense of duty enabled him to resist these solicitations, so long as his work at home was not sufficiently accomplished. The announcement of his intention to visit England in the summer of 1843 was hailed with satisfaction by the friends of temperance, and with natural enthusiasm by the Irish populations of its great towns.

A letter from the late Earl of Stanhope well expresses the esteem in which Father Mathew was held by those who differed from him in religious belief, and the satisfaction with which the announcement of his intended visit was received:—

Chevening, near Sevenoaks: Jan. 26, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—I was inexpressibly rejoiced to learn by your letter that you propose to visit London in May next, and I fervently hope that nothing will occur to prevent your arrival, which will be hailed with extreme and heart-felt satisfaction by the friends of temperance, and will be of infinite importance to the cause; for I trust that Divine Providence will continue to bless and prosper your benevolent exertions in this country, as well as in your native land, and that you may have the happiness of conferring their benefits on many of those who in the metropolis have fallen through intemperance into a state of destitution and of moral degradation. Your presence in this country will to myself in particular afford the greatest happiness, as I entertain for you the sincerest veneration, as I am most grateful for your inestimable services, and as I have long and ardently wished to have opportunities of conversing with you, when you will find me most anxious to profit by your instructions. But I am only a very humble follower in the great cause. If your engagements should allow it, you would oblige me extremely by honouring me with a visit at this place, which at that time of the year is in great beauty.

Allow me again to assure you that I am, with the utmost regard and esteem, my dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

STANHOPE.

To the Rev. Theobald Mathew.

The pressure of his many engagements in various parts of the country did not admit of his leaving Ireland sooner than

the 30th of June, when he left Cork to redeem his long-standing and oft-repeated promise.

It is not necessary that a detailed account should be given of Father Mathew's visit to England, nor to enumerate the towns through which he passed, the addresses he received, the replies which he made, the speeches which he delivered, or the numbers that he enrolled. It was a repetition of his visit to Glasgow; the same enthusiasm and excitement, the same processions and assemblages, the same respect evinced towards him by those not of his own communion, the same wild exultation and delight manifested by his own country-people—the same impression of the character of the man left upon the minds of all who saw him, spoke with him, or were in any way brought into contact with him. By the bishops and clergy of the Catholic Church he was received with affectionate reverence; and wherever he went, in his short but triumphant tour in England, he contrived to pay back the kindness of his reception by conferring, through his preaching, some solid advantage on the Catholic mission of each locality or district.

In Liverpool, in Manchester, in Salford, in Huddersfield, in Wakefield, in Leeds, and in a number of other places, his success was extraordinary, but not greater than ought to have been the natural result of his extraordinary labours. In Liverpool and Manchester, he preached and administered the pledge in all the Catholic churches and schools of those great towns. There was not a day, during his stay in either place,—in both of which there was then, as there is now, an immense Irish population,—on which he did not lecture on temperance, and administer the pledge for several hours, frequently from an early hour in the morning to a late hour in the evening. Then, on Sundays, he preached for some special object, and also addressed crowded congregations on the ever-present purpose of his visit to England. Vast numbers of Protestants and members of the various dissent-

ing bodies came to hear him preach in the different places through which he passed; and the impression which was made on their minds added to his reputation as a Christian minister, and enhanced his popularity with the English people. The employers of labour, whether rude or skilled, soon began to appreciate the benefits which his mission conferred on themselves, through the improved habits of their work-people; and few there were, indeed, save the interested or the foolishly-bigoted, who did not wish God-speed to the good work so modestly and unostentatiously performed. Wherever he went, he received the most pressing invitations to take up his residence in the houses of his friends and admirers; but, to avoid giving trouble, and also to maintain, as much as possible, his personal freedom, he preferred remaining at hotels. Writing to a friend in London of the invitation which he had received to York, he says:—

The Right Rev. Dr. Briggs has condescended to invite me to be his guest during my stay in the archiepiscopal city. I prize the honour he has conferred on me, but I have most respectfully declined it, as it would not be compatible with the nature of my mission to be in a private mansion. I must be free to see all persons, rich and poor, at all hours.

This determination induced a respected member of the Society of Friends to resort to an ingenious device to obtain the honour of Father Mathew's company during his stay in Wakefield. The Quaker invited him to stay at his house, and received the usual reply, that he was to stop at the hotel, for the convenience of those who required to see him at all hours. The Friend would not be put off, but intimated that his house was a hotel, whereon Father Mathew gladly consented to 'put up' at it while in Wakefield. A board, with the word 'Hotel,' was placed on the outside of the mansion, and the private residence became, for the time, a most comfortable inn. Father Mathew was greatly pleased with the quiet and order, the wonderful neatness and simple elegance, which

pervaded the entire establishment; while the agreeable manners of its master, which combined the cordiality of a friend with the politeness of the most gentlemanly host, filled him with astonishment. The servants of the house were also different from the usual class to be found in ordinary hotels: they were kindly, attentive, and respectful; and though they seemed to anticipate his every wish, they were neither fussy nor obtrusive. Then the bells of this Quaker hotel were singularly quiet; so that the 'boots,' and the chamber-maids, and the waiters must have known by intuition when and where their services were required. Truly, it was a model establishment, which any visitor might leave with very natural regret. The kindly device was not discovered until the time of his departure drew near, when the master of the house, no longer fearing the abrupt departure of his guest, appeared in his true character—as a generous and thoughtful host.

Father Mathew's reception in the fine old city of York was not only most flattering, but most significant. A grand procession of the temperance societies from the surrounding districts, accompanied with banners and bands, received him on his arrival, and escorted him through the city to his hotel. The venerable Bishop Briggs—who, in a few years after, displayed such practical sympathy with the starving poor of Ireland—Lord Stourton, Sir Edward Vavasour, and other distinguished Catholics, witnessed from the windows of a private residence this public manifestation of respect for the Irish Friar by that vast concourse of people, of various religious creeds, and of strong prejudices—in a city, too, where, as some of the party said, were a Catholic priest to have made a similar entry some years before, he would have been rather roughly treated.

In Leeds his reception was equally gratifying, and his success even more striking. Demonstrations of all kinds were got up in his honour, such as processions, soirées, meetings, and addresses. In one of his speeches in this important place

he thus rather humorously vindicated the Temperance Society of Ireland from the charge of being a political body:—

It is imagined in England that the teetotallers of Ireland, as such, have mixed themselves up with the great agitation that at present prevails in that country. Why, to be sure, when nearly all the population have taken the total abstinence pledge, it is not very likely that 300,000 persons could assemble without a few teetotallers being amongst them.

Father Mathew's appearance, and the impression which he made upon the English people who beheld him for the first time, were well described in the 'Leeds Mercury' of that date:—

That in which the attraction of the procession centered was the carriage in which stood erect, with uncovered head, the great Apostle of Temperance, Father Mathew—the object of ten thousand greetings from the vast number of spectators who thronged the windows and every spot of vantage ground in the streets through which the procession moved. . . . His manners are simple and unassuming; and the kind and hearty reception which he gives to all who approach him (whether brought into his presence through curiosity or respect) is such as strikingly manifests him to be a true philanthropist, whose love and affection for his fellow-men overstep the narrow sphere of benevolence in which moves the mere kindred, party, or sectarian benefactor. Hitherto his least-recognised excellence by Englishmen has been as a public speaker; but his addresses at Leeds, York, and other parts of England prove that in this capacity his merits have not been duly understood or appreciated. His voice is mostly shrill and feeble, and his speeches, in general, are simple as his attire; they are always short, pointed, and harmonious,—often clothed in interesting similes, drawn from surrounding or familiar objects, and invariably appropriate and well selected. His addresses, however, are never distinguished by the gaudy ornaments of rhetoric; their elegance and force are more consistent with the language natural to an enlarged, fervid, and virtuous heart, than with a studied nicety of arrangement, or a lofty figurative style. Many public speakers are more eloquent,—most more tedious; yet few were more sincere, pleasing, and effective, and fewer in all things more charitable. Such is Father Mathew, the moral regenerator of Ireland.

After having made a successful tour of most of the principal places in Lancashire and Yorkshire, Father Mathew visited London, where his services were much required. And here, during several weeks, he underwent an amount of labour which very few men could have gone through with impunity, but for which his missionary labours of the previous three or four years had well prepared him. He commenced his good work in the poorest districts of the metropolis, in which the Irish principally dwelt, and where he was received by his country-people with all the enthusiasm which his character, his sacred office, and his nationality excited in a warm-hearted and affectionate race. His success was proportionately great, as was soon evinced in localities which up to that time had been the scene of constant brawl and confusion, of stupid quarrel and of savage conflict. Bishop Griffiths and the Catholic clergy lent their willing aid to one who accomplished so much for their flocks, and who, wherever he went, left after him proofs and evidences of his good work in the improved tone and habits of those who submitted to his influence. But others of a different faith zealously assisted the efforts of the Irish Priest to prosecute a mission which had the good of all for its object.

Nor during his stay in London was Father Mathew to be found only in the midst of the poor—appealing to the wretched drunkard to abandon the cause of his misery, and affectionately exhorting those of his own race and country to allow fair play to the many virtues which distinguish them when sober and self-respecting. He was also to be seen in the mansions of the aristocracy, with whom he was a welcome and an honoured guest. It was while London was yet 'in town,' and he was the lion of the hour. His table was covered with cards and notes of invitation to all kinds of entertainments, including the fashionable breakfast and the late dinner. Father Mathew was as much at home in the gilded saloon of the noble as in the modest parlour of a

brother priest; so that, if *gaucherie* or restraint were expected from the Irish Friar in the presence of the great, the mistake was at once apparent; for in ease of manner, and quiet dignity of bearing, few surpassed Theobald Mathew. But there was superadded, in his case, the charm which springs from the purest benevolence and goodness of heart; and this, with the *prestige* of his world-wide fame, and the thought of the wonderful work which he had accomplished, invested him with extraordinary attraction in the eyes of those who beheld him for the first time, and who were pleased to find in the celebrated Apostle of Temperance a thorough gentleman. By the members of the Catholic aristocracy, at whose houses he visited, he was received with affectionate reverence, due alike to his personal character and sacred profession. To many he had been known before, either personally or as a correspondent; but in every case his welcome was as cordial and sincere as it was respectful.

The late breakfasts and the late dinners were very trying to him, from the manner in which the hours of almost every day were filled up. He rose, as usual, at an early hour, and invariably celebrated Mass in one of the chapels of the city; after which he was occupied with the poor until half-past ten, the ordinary hour of his fashionable appointment for his first meal. As soon as he could well leave the party that had been invited to meet him, he proceeded to the place fixed for the public meeting of that day, and there he remained, exhorting and administering the pledge, so long as there was a chance of obtaining an additional disciple. He then returned to his hotel, where he wrote letters or received visitors; and at eight, or half-past eight, when the hour for dinner arrived, he generally found a large party, that had been invited to do him honour. His breakfast was invariably but a moderate repast; so that the dinner, which he partook of at this, to him, unseasonable hour, might be said to be his only meal during the entire day. To those who were not aware of the

long fast to which he had been subjected, his vigorous appetite must have excited admiration, and probably it was attributed to the beneficial influence of total abstinence. At ten o'clock he contrived to slip away from his grand party; and in his bed-room at his Temperance hotel he concluded the good work of the day, by the devotional exercises which his office prescribed, or which his piety inspired.

If he received encouragement and support, he also met with opposition and insult. In Ireland, from one end of the kingdom to the other, the Apostle of Temperance never received insult or incivility in any instance, even from those whom he injured most. With Protestant and Presbyterian, as with Catholic, the purity of his motive and the benevolence of his character protected him from every attempt at open opposition or personal indignity; but, availing themselves of the stupid prejudice against 'the Popish priest,' which was felt most strongly by the lowest class of their besotted customers, some crafty publicans in Bermondsey, in Westminster, and in other parts of the metropolis, who were afraid of losing their unhappy slaves, organised several attempts to interrupt the proceedings of his meetings, to upset the platform, or to create disturbance and confusion. In some instances, the attempts were successful, and the proceedings were abruptly terminated; in others, the assailants suffered for their folly, having been soundly drubbed by the indignant Irish, who resented the insult to their country and their religion in the person of Father Mathew. The presence of the police at other times kept the publicans, who came on the ground with beer for sale, as well as their noisy and half-drunken myrmidons, in check, and prevented the rioting which had been evidently intended; but on one occasion, where drink had been distributed gratuitously and in abundance by the alarmed sellers of the locality, a mob of drunken 'roughs' was bearing down on the platform with mischievous intent, and Father Mathew was compelled to escape from the back of the plat-

form, where there was a cab in readiness to receive him. A scene of this disreputable character took place on his visit to Bermondsey, which was thus described in the 'Morning Chronicle' of the following day:—

Father Mathew arrived about half-past twelve o'clock, at which time there were about 2,000 persons assembled, and on his appearance on the platform he was met with shouts of disapprobation, mingled with cheers. Finding this was the case, the reverend gentleman dispensed with making any address, and simply called on those who wished to take the pledge to come forward. This call was met with derisive laughter; and in order to frustrate the labours of the apostle, a large body of fellows, chiefly dockmen and apparently labourers in the tan-yards, took possession of the space within the barrier, and refused to leave it. Mr. Hart, one of the temperance advocates, went amongst them to remonstrate, and was shamefully treated, one of the ruffians striking him in the face. Father Mathew proceeded to administer the pledge to a few persons who had got in front, and on the platform. The greatest confusion and uproar continued to prevail, and it was ultimately deemed necessary to send for a body of the M division of police, who, on their arrival, endeavoured to clear the barrier, but were met with the greatest resistance, and in several instances they were violently struck in the execution of their duty. The removal of the parties from within the barrier in no way tended to the preservation of order without, for the yells and hootings continued rather to increase than diminish, and whilst Father Mathew was administering the pledge to some females on the platform, stones were thrown at him from the back of the crowd. One of them, which struck a gentleman standing very near the 'apostle,' was shown to him. It was a large-sized flint-stone, which evidently, from its shiny appearance, had been in a person's pocket some time. The police, in order to prevent a recurrence of so disgraceful a proceeding, and to deter the parties, distributed themselves among the crowd. Shortly after, a gang of the dastardly ruffians were discovered in the rear of the platform, making preparations to cut the ropes fastening its cross supporters to the uprights; and, had this been effected, the most serious consequences, if not a large amount of loss of human life, must have resulted, the stage of the platform being unusually high, and at the time crowded with people. Four or five of the delinquents were, it is stated, secured, and given into custody.

An address was about to be presented to Father Mathew, from the Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Total Abstinence Association, when one of the most disgraceful and extraordinary scenes which can be imagined took place. A great noise was heard proceeding from one of the arches of the railway, and immediately after a body of the anti-teetotallers, who had left the spot a short time previously, made their appearance in procession. They were about sixty or seventy in number, followed by three times the number of boys. Some of them had staves, and were decorated from head to foot with hop-leaves. Each of them bore a quart or pint pot in his hand, and in the centre the men carried large cans, containing each at least four or five gallons of beer. They were forcing their way to the hustings, evidently with a determination to take possession of it, when they were met by the police. A general conflict then took place, in which a considerable quantity of the beer was upset. The 'Malt and Hops' gentry were compelled to retreat, but immediately after rallied, and mounted a large pile of bricks in one corner of the field, where the most gross language was indulged in, and from which the pots and cans were held up in derision. An additional body of police having arrived, the rioters were driven from their position, but not before they had thrown some of their beer into the faces of their assailants. The ground was at last cleared of these gentry; and Father Mathew, in returning thanks for the address, regretted that any men should be so lost as to attempt to disturb proceedings of the kind they had met to carry out; more especially when it was for the good of those very poor men who had done so.

Opposition of this nature had the contrary effect to that which its foolish authors intended; for it not only excited the indignation of well-thinking people, but it made the Irish residents of London more willing to take the pledge, and more resolute in keeping it.

In the account given, in the 'Times,' of one of his visits to Westminster, is the following:—

After giving the pledge to the second batch, Father Mathew said that while he was below he had heard one person say to his neighbour, 'What a shame it was that a Protestant should receive a blessing from a Catholic priest.' Now, since he had been in England, he had everywhere received the blessings of the Protestants, and he was

proud of it. If a blessing did them no good, surely it could do them no harm. Since he had been in this country he had got half a million of blessings from the Protestants. He was daily saluted with 'God bless you, Father Mathew!' 'God speed you, Father Mathew!' and such like earnest expressions. There certainly could be no evil in a blessing, come from whom it would.

CHAPTER XX.

A Rare Occurrence—A Noble Convert—The Press and the Peerage—Lord Brougham—Characteristic Incident—The Great Duke and the Apostle of Temperance—Welcomed by the Bishop of Norwich—The Bishop's noble Eulogium—Father Mathew's Good Work in England.

IT was a rare circumstance with Father Mathew to hesitate as to giving the pledge to any one, or to pause to ascertain from the postulant who knelt before him whether he had fully made up his mind as to the step he was about to take. Marvellous as the fact must have seemed to himself, when he thought of it afterwards, he did hesitate in one instance—perhaps the only one that could be recorded of him. It was on the occasion of his holding a meeting in Golden Lane, Barbican, which was attended by a great concourse of people, chiefly Irish. He had been addressing himself specially to the working classes, and earnestly impressing on them the necessity of renouncing the cause of so much misery; and when, at the conclusion of his address, several hundreds knelt to receive the pledge, Father Mathew, on looking round him, found the future Duke of Norfolk, then Lord Arundel and Surrey, also on his knees. Anxious as he was to obtain so illustrious a 'convert,' Father Mathew was of opinion that the young nobleman had yielded to a sudden impulse, and was about to take the pledge unreflectingly; and however ardently he desired to add him to the number of his followers, he was apprehensive of the evil which would follow were he to abandon the cause which he impulsively joined. So, before administering the pledge to the hundreds who were waiting

to take it, he spoke privately to the earl, and asked him if he had given the subject sufficient reflection. 'Ah! Father Mathew,' replied his noble convert, 'do you not know that I had the happiness to receive Holy Communion from you this morning at the altar of Chelsea Chapel? I have reflected on the promise I am about to make, and I thank God for the resolution, trusting to the Divine goodness for grace to persevere.' Tears rolled down his cheeks as he uttered these words, with every evidence of genuine emotion. He then repeated the formula of the pledge. Father Mathew embraced him with delight, pronounced a solemn benediction 'on him and his,' and invested him with the medal which he took from his own neck. This scene was witnessed with the most intense interest by the vast assemblage, by whom the earl was hailed with cheers, as he rose from his knees a disciple of the Apostle of Temperance. The example thus given had the effect of adding many hundreds to the ranks of the society on that day. This act, publicly performed, was regarded by the good and pious nobleman as one of no ordinary gravity; for he long continued faithful to the pledge thus voluntarily taken; and it was not until many years after, that, at the command of his medical advisers, he substituted moderation for total abstinence.

Father Mathew's rare self-denial on this almost solitary occasion was amply compensated by his zealous efforts to enlist recruits from the influential ranks or professions. It would be difficult to say whether he prized more, as a convert, a newspaper editor or a peer of the realm. 'Oh,' exclaimed he one day at a meeting in Chelsea, which was attended by several members of the aristocracy and representatives of the press, 'if I could only induce some of my noble friends and my young friends of the press to join, I should be most happy, for I know how powerful their example and influence would be.' The reporters of the daily papers were here placed in the same category as the scions of nobility, and no man bet-

ter knew than he did the service which the former could render to his cause. But an editor of an influential journal was a prize equal in value to a prime minister. His estimate of the value of the support which he received from the public press was expressed on various occasions in Ireland; but while in England he also proclaimed his obligation and gratitude to that powerful agent. At one of his meetings in London he said:—

I have often taken occasion to say that, next to God, to the support I have met with from that most mighty moral power on this earth, the public press, do I attribute the success which has attended the great moral movement, total abstinence. In Ireland, with one solitary exception, the whole press has been in my favour; and in London you all know the support I have received from the public press of all shades of opinion; and I thus publicly tender my grateful thanks to those who have the control of every metropolitan daily journal, not so much for the kindness they have accorded to me personally, as for the good they have done for the cause of morality, by sustaining my humble efforts to arrest a great evil.

During his stay in London, Father Mathew met the most distinguished men of the day, who had been invited to meet the great moral reformer. He created no small amusement to a large party at the hospitable mansion of an Irish nobleman by his attempts, partly playful, but also partly serious, to make a convert of Lord Brougham, who resisted, good-humouredly but resolutely, the efforts of his dangerous neighbour. 'I drink very little wine,' said Lord Brougham: 'only half a glass at luncheon, and two half glasses at dinner; and though my medical advisers told me I should increase the quantity, I refused to do so.' 'They are wrong, my lord, for advising you to increase the quantity, and you are wrong in taking the small quantity you do; but I have my hopes of you.' And so, after a pleasant resistance on the part of the learned lord, Father Mathew invested his lordship with the silver medal and ribbon, the insignia and collar of the new Order of the Bath. 'Then I will keep it,' said Lord

Brougham, 'and take it to the House, where I shall be sure to meet old Lord — the worse of liquor, and I will put it on him.' The announcement of this intention was received with much laughter, for the noble lord referred to was notorious as a persistent worshipper of Bacchus. Lord Brougham was as good as his word; for, on meeting the veteran peer who was so celebrated for his potations, he said: 'Lord —, I have a present from Father Mathew for you,' and passed the ribbon rapidly over his neck. 'Then I tell you what it is, Brougham; by —! I will keep sober for this night,' said his lordship, who kept his vow, to the great amazement of his friends.

The Marquis of Clanricarde, who was the noble entertainer, accompanied his distinguished guest to the hall, where he was surprised by seeing him go eagerly towards one of the servants in waiting, and shake him warmly by the hand. This was an English servant, who, afraid of losing his situation, had taken the pledge, some two or three years before, when Father Mathew visited Portumna Castle, the seat of the noble marquis in Ireland. Father Mathew, whose memory for persons was extraordinary, at once recognised his follower, and, in the presence of several members of the aristocracy—who were not a little amazed at what they witnessed—treated that servant with manly respect.

Father Mathew and the 'great Duke'—the two most distinguished conquerors of the age, though in widely-different fields of glory—met on one of these occasions. The duke was singularly gracious to his brother hero, for whose character and services he entertained well-known respect. 'I ought to claim your Grace as one of ours,' said the priest to the soldier. 'How can that be, Father Mathew? I am not a teetotaler, though I am a very moderate man,' replied the duke. 'Oh, but you are a temperance man, your Grace; for if you had not so cool a head, you would not have been the illustrious Duke of Wellington,' was the quick rejoinder.

'Father Mathew,' said a gentleman one evening to the lion of the party, 'you must have felt rather embarrassed in your visits to the north of Ireland; the people are so much colder than your warm-hearted countrymen of the south, and so prejudiced against your Church.' 'Far from it,' replied Father Mathew; 'I felt quite at home among them from the first, and they were most kind and hospitable. In Fermanagh, I was nobly received and entertained in the mansion of Captain Archdall, one of the leading Orangemen of that county.' Even if Father Mathew had any other story to tell, he would have remained silent, rather than say a word disparaging to the character and good feeling of his countrymen.

Perhaps the most gratifying circumstance connected with his visit to England was the manner of his reception by the late Dr. Stanley, then Bishop of Norwich. The bishop had been invited to Cambridge, to meet Father Mathew in that city; to which invitation he sent the following reply, addressed to Mr. E. Walker:—

Palace, Norwich: August 19, 1844.

SIR,—I regret that I cannot comply with your request that I should attend at Cambridge on the occasion of the Rev. T. Mathew's visit. If, however, he comes to Norwich, I shall think it my duty to sanction a meeting, and pay every respect to an individual to whose zealous exertions, in recovering so large a portion of the community from the degrading and ruinous effects of intemperance, men of all religious persuasions and parties owe a debt of gratitude.

I remain, yours faithfully,
E. NORWICH.

The friends of temperance in Norwich were much gratified at the publication of this testimony to the merit of the apostle of the cause; and his lordship was soon made acquainted with the fact that Father Mathew had accepted an invitation to visit Norwich on the 7th of September. The English Protestant bishop then addressed the following letter to the Irish priest:—

Palace, Norwich: Sept. 2, 1844.

REVEREND SIR,—I have just been informed that it is your intention to visit Norwich on Thursday next, Sept. 7, on which occasion I shall feel it my duty as well as my inclination to give you the cordial welcome due to one who has so zealously and so effectually devoted himself to a cause in which Christians of all denominations may cooperate. I purpose therefore attending an evening meeting, which I understand will be held in St. Andrew's Hall on the day of your arrival, and I take the earliest opportunity of expressing my earnest hope that you will favor me with your company either to dinner or breakfast, at any hour that you may name most convenient to yourself. I should be obliged by a line in reply.

I remain, yours faithfully,
E. NORWICH.

The Rev. Theobald Mathew,

Hart's Temperance Hotel, 159 Aldersgate Street.

Father Mathew received the bishop's letter with feelings which may be well imagined, when it is considered that one of the objects of his life was to cultivate the kindest intercourse with his Christian brethren of every denomination, and to reciprocate that fraternal charity which ought to exist among ministers of the Gospel, notwithstanding differences of doctrine. That letter, written in a fine bold hand, was preserved by Father Mathew to the hour of his death; and it is from that letter, now nearly twenty years written, that the above has been transcribed by his biographer. The bishop fully redeemed his promise of a cordial welcome, not only by his elegant hospitality, but by a noble eulogium, which was honourable alike to the speaker and to its grateful object. In the face of a crowded assembly, the bishop thus addressed the man whom those thousands had met to honour and to hear:—

And now, Reverend Sir (addressing Father Mathew), you, my friend and brother from another island, I meet you not here as a Roman Catholic priest; I differ from your creed—I will candidly tell you I am even hostile to it; but I meet you here in a nobler, in a more comprehensive character than that of a priest,—I meet you as a man like myself, as a Christian brother, as a Christian brother on neutral ground, where Christians of all denominations delight to meet

and congregate together. Sir, I have watched your proceedings for many and many a year. I remember, many years ago, that I censured you in public; nay more, may I not add, abused you. I believed those public reports spread, I scarcely know how, save by malign and foolish misrepresentation; nevertheless, I thought it my duty, as a man of candour, to apply to you as a gentleman, a Christian, and a man of honour, to tell me how the case really stood. You answered me in a manner that did you credit, and I turned over a new leaf—I abused you no more; and now I rejoice to meet you here as a friend. I am not one of those who will not believe a Catholic on his oath; I acted more courteously; I believed you on your candid and honest affirmation; and I am satisfied that you did not deceive me. I have watched over your character; I have had every resource in my possession, and I have endeavoured to ascertain precisely what it was. I will say, and I think it my duty to say, it is embodied and written in print. I will read you the character which I believe Mr. Mathew entitled to, and which describes that character and estimation in which he is held by those who know him better than I do. Here his lordship read the following eulogium: ‘He is a gentleman by birth; for 24 years he has devoted his energies to the service of the poor; and so far from being actuated by sordid or pecuniary motives, he has applied his private property to religious and benevolent purposes. As to politics, notwithstanding insinuations to the contrary, it is a fact that he has never, during his whole life, attended one political meeting, or mixed with any political agitation; and though entitled to the franchise, he has never voted.’ My friends, I believe it; and I may say that the good sense and the good feeling of the aristocracy of London have borne me out in the opinion I entertain of this worthy man. When in London, he was visited and most hospitably received by men of high rank, high character, and high station; they knew his worth, and they bade him go on and prosper, knowing well that they should receive the advantages, if not directly, indirectly, of his invaluable exertions. But, sir, your cause was not an easy one; it was not altogether over a Macadamised road you had to pass; but you had thorns and brakes and briars in the way. You were assailed in turn by those who, while their disapprobation and censure was eulogy, sunk them in deeper degradation. . . . Men of Norwich! citizens of this ancient city! I appeal to you, and I trust that my appeal shall not be in vain—receive this wanderer on a sacred mission from a distant country—receive him and give him a Christian welcome, for he has come on a Christian mission.

This was the crowning triumph of a visit which had done so much, not alone for the cause of temperance, but for the promotion of Christian charity amongst men of different creeds and churches.

It was computed that 600,000 persons had taken the pledge during this brief but successful campaign, which added much to the popularity and *prestige* of the apostle. It is a matter of little difficulty to compute the numbers who knelt before Father Mathew and received the pledge at his hands; but it would be a difficult task indeed to tell the good which he accomplished, the fallen whom he raised, the erring whom he brought back to virtue, the despairing whom he comforted, the hungry and the naked whom he fed and clad. For many years after, the blessed traces of that mission of peace and good will to England were not erased; and to this day—nearly a quarter of a century after the Apostle of Temperance preached in the highways of its great towns and famous cities—there are many sober and self-respecting men, and many families too, who treasure in their hearts the remembrance of that auspicious visit. It is true there are very many more who have reason to mourn in bitterness over the folly which induced forgetfulness of his advice; but even to this hour the broad foot-prints left by the Apostle of Temperance on the soil of England are not altogether obliterated.

A writer in the ‘Globe’ of that date thus accounted for the admitted success of his English mission:—

The secret of his success consists chiefly in the fact that he has wholly abstained from doing what his opponents have accused him of. He has avoided making his labours subservient either to religious or political objects; and it is by this singleness of purpose—this determination to make temperance his chief and only object—that he has been able to achieve so much for the cause he has undertaken.