

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

MR. JAMES DE MILL, ASSISTANT EDITOR

GEO. W. DAY, Printer.

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1855.

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The Reviewer Reviewed;

Or the Reply of the Rev. Charles Mackay to the Review of his Pamphlet on Capital Punishment by the Editor of the Morning News.

No. 1.

The Editor of the News having finished his series of articles headed, "Review of the Rev. Mr. Mackay's Pamphlet on Capital Punishment;" we proceed at once to review his review.

We shall pass over the apology which he makes in his opening remarks for "any imperfection of style or composition that may present itself" simply observing, that his apology is not admissible. A man who has sat so long in the editorial chair as Mr. Fenety has done ought not now to need to apologize for imperfection of style or composition. And as we shall make no such apology with a view to disarm criticism, we shall not accept of one on this ground from him. There was no need of his being in any haste to reply to us, and had he required more leisure to correct imperfection of style or composition, he was at perfect liberty to have taken it.

After his apology, we have the following statement: "The arguments and opinions advanced belong to ourselves alone. We have received no aid from any quarter."—This, we verily believe. For such arguments, and such opinions, on the main question at issue between us, and the others incidentally alluded to, we think, no man, in the City of Saint John, but the editor himself, who wished to be regarded as making any pretensions to the possession of a literary character, would have had the confidence publicly and prominently to set forth. "We have received no aid from any quarter!" Why had the editor at the outset to tell his readers this? Why? if not from a lurking impression on his own mind, that the public generally, had such a strong conviction of his inability to make a vigorous reply, that they needed an assurance from his own pen, that the "arguments and opinions" advanced belonged to him: if alone; "And that he had received no aid from any quarter."

How the editor could have penned what follows without a wilful intention to misrepresent us, we are wholly at a loss to understand. He says: "We remarked in a paragraph of a dozen lines in the month of January that the time will come when we shall all look back with horror upon the days of cannibalism, hindooism, and savage brutality, whether conducted under the guise of law, or in any other form." This is our mortal offence. It was a paragraph written at the spur of the moment, and like a thousand others not intended as a standard reference, or challenge, for a polemical discussion; and although in a subsequent number of our paper we retracted what was construed into offensive language, our apology is not accepted; we are not suffered by the writer to atone for the sin we have committed; on the contrary the obnoxious sentence is brought forward and used as a text or almost every page of the Pamphlet—or, rather, we might say, it is used as a plea for writing, and writing too with unseemly asperity." The whole of the above statement we deliberately pronounce to be a misrepresentation of facts; and when we have placed the points referred to, in their proper light, we shall leave the public to decide. We certainly did take exception to the language in the paragraph alluded to, and hastily addressed a courteous communication to the editor—which the reader may see on page 4 of our pamphlet—complaining of said language, and requesting its insertion in the next issue of his paper. Instead, however, of complying with our request—although it was made early on the same day that the paper containing the obnoxious paragraph was received—in the following Monday's issue he informed the public that our communication had come too late for that issue, but would appear on Wednesday. Now, had our letter been inserted without note or comment as we certainly imagined would be the case; and had the amende honorable been made in two lines, as could easily have been done, the matter would have been at once and for ever at an end. We did not even ask an apology. We simply wished to take exception to objectionable language in the same paper in which that language had appeared. But, to our amazement, there was appended to our letter a column and a half of such plausible, yet sophistical comment that we allowed it to pass without the exposure we have given it, would have made it appear to the over-weening self-complacency of the editor, and to those of his readers whose censure is no sharper than his own that the editor had signally triumphed over the reviewer; for, most undoubtedly, the preacher's silence would have been construed into an inability to reply to the very potent and extraordinarily cogent reasoning (!) of the editor. Who, now, Mr. Fenety, is seen to be the challenger in the present controversy? or we? We wanted no "plea" for entering upon a polemical discussion with you; and for writing and writing too with unseemly asperity." Hear us, reader, in our first communication to the News: "The writer does not wish to enter minutely and extensively into the question, which he might do on the grounds of humanity, reason, and scripture; as he knows that there is a great wide difference of opinion on the subject. But he thinks the editor of the News is hardly justifiable, at least, on the score of courtesy, to designate the maturely formed convictions of others—and that mainly on Scriptural grounds—and the practical carrying out of these convictions, when un happily, necessarily and imperatively called for, as re-arranging cannibalism, hindooism, and savage

brutality, whether conducted under the guise of law, or in any other form." We ask our editor, and we ask the public, whether the above language indicates an intention on our part to draw the News into a polemical discussion? or of making the obnoxious paragraph "a plea for writing and writing too with unseemly asperity?" Hear us again in the opening remarks of our first Reply: "Let your readers, however, at the outset, distinctly note the object of my last communication. It was not to enter into controversy with the News on the question of the death penalty; but only by a few brief and general remarks to show, that, personally, I had sufficient cause to find fault with the Editor of the News for the offensive language in which he expressed his own sentiments in opposition to that of others." In view of these statements we indignantly repudiate the charge of having any desire, or intention, or wish, or "plea," to get into "a polemical discussion with the News; or for writing and writing too with unseemly asperity." And we now call upon the editor publicly to retract the unfounded charge he has made against us; or else we shall hold him—and the public too will doubtless hold him—guilty of being a FALSE ACCUSER.

"Although," says our editor, "in a subsequent number of our paper we retracted what was construed into offensive language our apology is not accepted; we are not suffered by the writer to atone for the sin we have committed, &c." This, too, is incorrect.—There was no retraction of the offensive language. He told us indeed, "that it was by no means intended to give offence to those differing with him in his views respecting capital punishment." That was no retraction. We never questioned his intentions. It was not with what he did or did not intend that we found fault but exclusively with the offensiveness of his language. Has he retracted the obnoxious language? He has said he ought not to have used it. He has not.—The retraction, therefore, has yet to be made before we can acquit him of a moral wrong done, and a provoking insult given to all who differ with him in his views on the death penalty.

"We are not suffered to atone for the sin we have committed." So says the News.—This again is a mistake. And how the editor could make it with the following statement in our pamphlet before his eyes, is to us astonishing! We put it to you, sir, are you morally justifiable in the use of such language on such a subject? If, on mature reflection you are convinced that you are not; then, honestly and candidly say so, and we are satisfied. We think none the less, but rather the more of the man who, having inconsiderately or inadvertently committed a fault, has the magnanimity to acknowledge it." And yet the editor of the News is not suffered to atone for the sin he has committed!!

Having now, as we think, clearly shown, that this polemical discussion has not been of our seeking; yet, at the same time, we most firmly believe that it has been of Providence's producing. We have no faith in accidents. Accident is a word, which although found in the vocabulary of the worldling, has no place in the creed of the Christian. And since this discussion has tended to make the editor of the News let himself out, we do not regret that it has taken place. The time had come for the advocate of the theatre, the approver of ball-parties, the applauder of almost all the mountebank travelling companies that have visited our City, from negro melodists to circus performers, and the opponent of a prohibitory liquor law for our Province, to have administered to him a merited rebuke; and we seem to have been chosen by Providence to be the administrator. The intelligent and religious portion of the community will now know better than before what sort of a moral Teacher occupies the editorial chair of the Morning News. And will henceforth be able to estimate at their proper worth the weight of his opinions on moral and religious subjects.

"It will appear presently," says the News, that the very fault charged against, viz: rudely assailing a large class of persons with coarse language—is equally, if not more painfully applicable to the Rev. author himself." The best way to have the truth of this statement tested, is to bring both passages together and compare them. The language of our opponent and of which we complain is as follows: "To imprison the felon for life would answer every purpose, without shedding his blood. Alas, the time will come when we shall all look back with horror upon the days of cannibalism, hindooism, and savage brutality, whether conducted under the guise of law, or in any other form. We do not believe in the death penalty, and never did. On Monday next a human being is to be slaughtered in Halifax in the public market place." Our language which our opponent affirms is equally—if not more painfully offensive than his own is this: "The time will come when the liquor business—that heaven-dishonouring, misery-spreading, crime-engendering, murder-producing, hell-peopling business will be put an end to." &c. Now leaving the reader to decide for himself whose language in these two passages is the most refined, or the most coarse, let us ask, Do all men, who under the authority of law, are concerned in taking away the life of the deliberate murderer, from the occupant of the throne to the public executioner; and all who sanction the death penalty in the case of such a criminal—and in such a case alone—reasonable in the feeling and manifestation of cruelty, cannibalism, hindooism, and savage brutes? They do not. The assertion is a calumny on a great majority of the best men in existence. On the other hand,

let us ask, Does the liquor business not dishonour heaven? Does the liquor business not spread misery? Does the liquor business not engender crime? Does the liquor business not produce murder? Does the liquor business not produce hell? History, observation, and human experience attest that it does. And with all the energy and emphasis with which we can give it utterance we affirm that it does. Our assertion, therefore, is no calumny. Our language is justly and appropriately expressive of the legitimate effects of the liquor traffic; the language of our opponent is not justly and appropriately expressive of the feeling and conduct of the men to whom it applies. Hence, the difference between the language of the editor of the News and our own is this: his language is not correct; ours is correct. There is all the difference between our respective passages, that there is between what is undeniably true, and what is palpably false.

The editor "cannot imagine what would be the fate of the liquor dealers and all who believe in liquor if the power to dispose of them were placed in the hands of the Rev. Charles Mackay." Well, we shall so far gratify our editor as to let him know. First of all, we should pour out their liquors, before their eyes, into the gutter; which is a much better and less injurious place for them, than to have them poured down men's throats to burn up the coats of their stomachs, and consume their flesh; and having thus disposed of their liquors, we should next turn round with an indignant look on these men and say, Begone, gentlemen, and betake yourselves to a more Christian, and more humane business than selling liquid poison to your fellow men, producing social disorder, personal and domestic misery, disease, insanity, poverty, pauperism, crime, and death—all for the sake of sordid gain. That, Mr. Fenety, would be the fate of the liquor dealers if the power to dispose of them were placed in our hands. And as it regards those who believe in liquor. We should not allow them to have a drop, except under medical prescription; and that simply, because we believe in a certain old book called the Bible, in which it is written, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth the bottle to him, and maketh him drunken."

Our passage on the liquor business, says the News, "is a piece of pulpit eloquence, that he has rarely seen excelled." As to its being a piece of pulpit eloquence, it is a mistake; as to our editor rarely ever having seen it excelled, it may be so; for we presume that he does not listen very frequently to the eloquence of Temperance orators. Happily for us, we do not need to advocate Temperance in our pulpit. We have not, so far as we know, a male member in our church who is not either a Son of Temperance, or a pledged abstainer. And we have not, in our entire congregation, to our knowledge, a single individual who, is either directly, or indirectly connected with the traffic.

The News next casts a slur upon the labours of the ministry, for allowing the work of moral reform to be taken out of the hands of the churches; and argues that they must have preached the Gospel with very little effect; as it is the Gospel that is to overcome the lusts of the flesh,—to subdue our evil passions, and to direct us aright in the paths of virtue. This is specious. We shall see presently what it is worth. The Temperance Reform is not exclusively a moral reform.—It is a civil and a social reform, as much as it is a moral one. But let us here put a few interrogatories to our editor to answer at his leisure. Do the liquor dealers as a class, and their principal customers as a body afford us the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to them with power and effect? Are they found in great and eager crowds attending on the labours of the ministry? Do they all come in a condition to be benefited by the ordinances of religion? Stomachs irritated, and partly burnt up by the liquid fire; heads heavy and confused by drinking habits; do not constitute the best conceivable preparation for receiving advantage from the religious instructions of the sanctuary. Bodies saturated with alcoholic poison; intellectual powers benumbed and deadened by drinking usage; are not the best possible media for conducting divine truth powerfully, impressively, and savingly to the understanding, the conscience, and the heart. Had we liquor dealers, attending on our ministry we should lift up our voice like a trumpet and show them their transgression. We would not, could not, dare not, be silent. One or other of two things would be the inevitable consequence. Either they would abandon the liquor business; or they would forsake our ministry. They could not sit under the author of the sermon entitled "DEATH IN THE POT," and continue to sell out its contents to their fellow citizens with a view to enrich themselves at the expense of the temporal and eternal ruin of many of their customers. We would not—were it offered—have their blood-stained support. We should just as readily think of taking support in our work of preaching the Gospel from a slave-dealer, as from a liquor-seller. We place them very much upon a par as evil-doers. And here, we must candidly allow, that the ministry, generally, have not done their duty in relation to the great cause of Temperance. They have not exerted themselves earnestly, vigorously, unitedly, perseveringly, by the enlightenment of public opinion, and the education of the moral sense of the people to put down this British Juggernaut—the gigantic nuisance of the Rur traffic.

The News expresses the hope that we do not smoke. We are happy to inform him that we do not, and never did. We regard it as a

low, disgusting, and injurious practice; second only in its injuriousness to the practise of drinking. We think almost as little of a smoking clergyman as we do of a drinking one. Both are behind the age; and the sooner all such clergymen are removed to heaven, and a race of no smokers, no snuffers, and no drinkers are raised up to occupy their places in the pulpit the better it will be for the church and for the world.

We are next introduced by the News to a great authority as proof that it is not wrong to drink wine, viz: Dr. John Cummings of London. Now, we beg to say, that we have two objections to Dr. Cummings as an authority on the Temperance question. The first is, that he himself drinks wine; and that he has a large, wealthy, aristocratic wine-drinking congregation. Hence, having had occasion to lecture on the marriage of Cana in Galilee where our Lord turned water into wine; he had of course, to speak of wine drinking; and has doubtless made as good a defence of his own and his peoples' practise as he was able to do. Yet we regard it as a most signal failure. Great as Dr. Cummings is, as a controversialist on some other question, we hesitate not to affirm that we would undertake to furnish from among the Cadets of Temperance in this City, some youth who would willingly enter the lists with this champion of wine; and who would most assuredly lay him with weapons as simple as those with which David slew Goliath. "A Christian man will not become intoxicated if he drinks from a cask!" So says Dr. Cummings. How a minister of the Gospel could make such an assertion, with ten thousand facts to contradict him, is to us, marvellous! Are not hundreds, if not thousands, excluded from the British Churches annually for the sin of drunkenness? and were none of these Church members Christian men? Are not many clergymen annually suspended from the discharge of their ministerial functions for the sin of drunkenness? And are none of the clergymen who are thus suspended Christian though fallen men? "A Christian man will not become intoxicated if he drinks from a cask!" We give the assertion an unqualified denial. Dr. Cummings, notwithstanding. What is to hinder a Christian man from becoming intoxicated if he drinks from a cask? The grace of God in his heart. Dr. Cummings would reply, "But we have just seen that the grace of God in the heart has not prevented thousands of Christians from becoming intoxicated although they drank only from a bottle. The truth is, that the grace of God in the heart only keeps us from the effects of temptation, when we are prayerfully and watchfully careful to keep out of the way of temptation. We should like to see a Christian man approaching a cask to drink, and just before he begins to partake of his Christian beverage, to hear him giving an interpretation of the following petitions in the Lord's prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." The Christian man has no promise that he will be preserved from evil if he willfully exposes himself to it; and for him to approach a cask of rum to drink, looks to us very like a wilful exposure of himself to temptation, and whether he will, or will not become intoxicated will be a question easily decided after we have ascertained the quantity he has consumed, and how he looks.

The second objection which we have to Dr. Cummings on the Temperance question is, that although he is a very showy and popular preacher and writer, he is by no means either an original, or a profound thinker. He is one of the greatest borrowers of other men's ideas perhaps, any where to be found. In support of this statement, we have his own published testimony. Here it is: "I candidly own that in any thing I have written I never aspired to be original. I employed such ideas, as memory, and pretty extensive reading called up, and never stopped to acquire what was new, or to improve upon what I have seen or felt to have been better said or written before me was born. Most of my writings were lectures or sermons, and were derived from notes taken down by me, and corrected and printed." We should like to read any charge against him, or any lectures on Daniel;—implying that he had heard and read of such charges against his other works; ay, and pretty serious ones too as we happen to know; but I have no doubt that the toolers who will take the trouble to read Bishop Newton, Sir Isaac Newton, Wintle and Fiske, may succeed in making out a good case." Now, while we admire the candour of the Doctor in making this acknowledgment it destroys all confidence in him as an authority on this and other questions. Who knows but that his lecture on the marriage of Cana in Galilee was hastily prepared—it bears evident marks of haste—and that the ideas it contains in favour of wine drinking were culled from some old commentaries, even more fond of a glass of this "good creature of God" than himself? Dr. Cummings believes, and most earnestly and eloquently preaches, that the world is to come to an end sometime between 1860 and 1865. Does the editor of the News take the Doctor as an authority on that solemn and momentous question? Not he. He has no idea of his paper's type, power-press, life, and all that belongs to him being so very near their final extinction. To that question, and even to Dr. Cummings as an authority our editor would exclaim, Poo! Poo! So to the Doctor as an authority on the Temperance question we do the same. We exclaim, Poo! Poo! But to grapple fairly with this great authority we defy him and all the wise-champion doctors of divinity in existence to prove that the water which our Lord turned into wine at the marriage of Cana of Galilee, was turned into

fermented or intoxicating wine. There is a complete begging of the question. The very thing to be proved is presumptuously assumed. To assert that the Lord Jesus who gave us the mouth of His inspired servant the command "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when he giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth himself aright. At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," should, afterwards, when incarnate, miraculously convert a hundred gallons of water into a hundred gallons of just such wine as he had previously forbidden to be looked at; to minister to the enjoyment of a poor marriage party, is in our view, a vile and profane calumny, not only on the purity of our Lord's character, but also upon the consistency of our Lord's Words. Would He, we ask, who gave the command "Look not upon the wine when it is red;"—that is, lest the looking should lead to the handling, and the handling should lead to the drinking, and the drinking should lead to a feeling, like the biting of a serpent and the stinging of an adder:—would He, we ask, who gave this command not to look upon the wine, afterwards, when incarnate, begin the working of his miracles by creating over a hundred gallons of just such wine for the particular enjoyment of a select party of his friends? Away forever with such a vile calumny not on the holiness of our Lord's character, but upon the truthfulness, and harmony of our Lord's inspired Word. "It has been objected," says Dr. Cummings, "by one of the German infidels, that our Lord did not shew a deep sense of the danger of wine when he created at this feast so excessive a quantity—some hundred gallons—by an act of omnipotent power." The infidel's objection, and the Doctors reasoning to refute it are both at fault. The wine was not fermented or intoxicating. Let Dr. Cummings, or any other doctor prove that it was, and we shall change our opinion, but not till then.

But, now, let us look at the logic of the editor of the News in adducing Dr. Cummings as an authority against us on the Temperance question. Here it is: Dr. Cummings, says that drinking wine in moderation is not in itself wrong; therefore the liquor business is not a Heaven-dishonouring misery-spreading, crime-engendering, murder-producing, hell-peopling business. Or take it thus: Dr. Cummings says that drinking wine in moderation is not wrong; therefore, to keep all the whiskey distilleries, gin palaces, wine and spirit cellars, wholesale and retail liquor stores, and the innumerable multitude of crimps, taverns, groggeries, and tipping shops in full and active operation, is right. Or thus: Dr. Cummings says that drinking wine in moderation is not sinful; therefore the liquor business as now existing is Christian. This is logic with a vengeance—logic so acute and profound as might, perhaps, secure for our editor, were it only brought under the eye of that distinguished logician, the flattering notice, and particular commendation of Bishop Whately!!

Is the editor prepared to meet us on the platform as well as through the press as the champion of the liquor traffic? Will he, or any other, whom the liquor dealers may be able to bring forward, publicly meet us either on the platform or through the press; he maintaining, and we disproving the three following propositions: 1. That the Liquor Traffic is in harmony with the genius, spirit, and precepts of the Christian Religion. 2. That the Liquor Traffic is promotive of personal, domestic, social and national prosperity. 3. That the Liquor Traffic on the ground of its good effects, ought not to be put down by Legislative enactment. We will throw down the gauntlet. Who will accept it?

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Again, as friends of liberty we turn our eyes to Greece, to learn if possible the character of its people. They have passed from the yoke of the Turk, to a state of freedom perhaps greater than that possessed by any other nation on the continent of Europe, Switzerland excepted. Are they fitted for self government? Can they profitably use their large liberties, or will they furnish to despotism another proof that the Creator made men to be slaves?

But still higher interests demand our enquiries as to the character of this people. Leaving the scholar, the statesman and the lover of civil liberty to their contemplations, we as Christians, as men anxious to fulfil our Redeemers last command, would ask what obstacles to the reception of the truth are presented by the Greeks? What means of evangelization does their character indicate as most appropriate to be used? Judging from what they now are, what part may we expect them to take in the history of the Redeemer's kingdom?

We owe a debt of gratitude to ancient Greece. Her heroic citizens at Marathon beat back the invading host which would have covered Europe with the torpor of Asia. Her wondrous genius has given an impulse to all succeeding time, and twice has revolutionized the mental world. It was her language which God selected as a vessel, in which might be preserved, and presented to us, that pearl of great price—the truth of the gospel.

We would willingly find something to love and admire as we view the character of those who dwell in that land at the mention of whose name such grateful emotions are awakened. We would if possible view a people united in efforts for the welfare of their native land—animated with a generous scorn for venality, corruption, and hypocrisy—eager to make up for the deficiencies, which tyranny has caused—determined to use every means of improvement, consistent with honor. If such should be our hopes we would be sadly disappointed.

Many blots appear in the character of the Greeks. He is egregiously vain, nothing can exceed the complacency with which he views himself and his country. Though the native of a petty kingdom, which has just been delivered from centuries of bondage, a kingdom whose geographical position and feeble resources have hitherto rendered foreign aid essential to its existence, the Greek yet feels as much contempt for all other people, as though Athens were still the centre of the civilized world, and Greece unrivalled in arms, in arts and song. His vanity blinds him to his real deficiencies, and his true interests, while the boasting which it prompts, and the silly ostentation to which it leads has rendered himself and his country ridiculous in the eyes of Europe.

(To be concluded.)

The Power of the Pence.

A TRUE MANCHESTER STORY.

In the course of a lecture delivered in the Liverpool Concert Hall, lately, the lecturer related an anecdote, strikingly illustrative of the power which lies in the hand of the working men to promote their own social comfort and independence, if they would only exert it. A Manchester calico printer was, on his wedding-day, persuaded by his wife to allow her two half-pints of ale a day as her share. He rather winced under the bargain; for, though a drinker himself, he would have preferred a perfectly sober wife. They both worked hard, and he, poor man, was seldom out of the public-house as soon as the factory closed. The wife and husband saw little of each other except at breakfast; but, as she kept things tidy about her, and made her stinted and even selfish allowance for house-keeping meet the demands upon her, he never complained. She had her daily pint, and he, perhaps, had his two or three quarts; and neither interfered with the other, except when at odd times she succeeded, by dint of one little gentle artifice or another, to win him home an hour or two earlier at night, and now and then to spend an entire evening in his own house. But these were rare occasions. They had been married a year; and, on the morning of their wedding anniversary, the husband looked askance at her neat and comely person with some shade of remorse, as he observed, "Mary, we'n had no holiday sin' we were wed; and, only that I haven't a penny 'ill th' world, we'd take a jaunt to th' village to see thee mother!" "Wouldst like to go, John?" asked she softly, between a smile and a tear to hear him speak kindly as in old times. "If thee'd like to go, John I'll stand treat." "Thou stand treat!" said he, with half a sneer, "has't got a fortune, wench?" "Nay," said she, "but I'n gotten the pint o' ale." "Gotten what?" said he. "The pint o' ale!" was the reply. John still did not understand her, till the faithful creature reached down an old stocking from under a loose brick up the chimney, and counting out her daily pint of ale in the shape of three hundred and sixty-six shrope (i. e., £4 11s. 8d.), put it into his hand, exclaiming, "Thee shall have the holiday, John." John was ashamed, astonished, conscience-stricken, charmed. He would not touch it. "Hass't thee had thy share? then I'll ha' no more," he said. They kept their wedding-day with the old dame, and the wife's little capital was the nucleus of a series of investments that ultimately swelled into shop, factory, warehouse, country-seat, a carriage; and, for aught the lecturer knew, John was mayor of his native borough at last.

So that you see what the pence can do, reader!