

BRITISH WORKMAN



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THE NEW YEAR.

How rapidly year after year passes away! Every succeeding year appears to pass away more rapidly than the preceding one.

Our life is a dream, our time, as a stream,
Glides swiftly away,
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.
The old year has been a most eventful one for Great Britain, and the new year on which we have now entered is doubtless "pregnant with great events."

To not a few employers, and to thousands of the working classes, it is likely to be a trying period. Numerous factories, each employing hundreds of hands, are now either on "short time" or are altogether standing. Many honest and industrious artisans and their families are feeling the pangs of bitter hunger, and compelled to seek relief from others. We are thankful to know that many of our readers have by their frugality got a few pounds put by in the Savings' Bank against the "rainy day." Let all who

can, lend a helping-hand to those in need—remembering that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."
Let us, in this our commercial trial, contest and forsake our national and individual sins, and seek consolation in Christ, the only refuge in distress.
May it be said of Great Britain as of ancient Israel, "When they in their trouble did turn to the LORD GOD of Israel, and sought Him, He was found of them." If this be so, it shall yet prove a "happy new year!"

THE CRUCIBLE;
OR, "LET US SEE WHAT IT HAS IN IT."
BY THE LATE GEORGE MOOREHEAD, ESQ.

CHAPTER IV.
The Greenwich Pensioner.

AND so, Mr. Pensioner, you are come to be tried in the crucible. We thought it likely that some veteran was approaching us when we heard the sound of your wooden leg in the passage.



GROUP OF GREENWICH PENSIONERS.



MR. T. A. SMITH, LECTURER ON ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, AND CHEMISTRY.

THE SELF-TAUGHT CHEMIST.

"Who is this Mr. T. A. Smith, whose interesting Lectures on Chemistry are said to be promoting so much frugality, cleanliness, and sobriety amongst the working classes?" enquired a friend.

"An intelligent and persevering working man," was the reply.

Mr. Smith is now on a lecturing tour in the provinces, and we cannot refrain from urging all our readers who can do so, to avail themselves of the opportunity of hearing this able and self-taught analytical chemist.

About twenty-three years ago, that noble and warm-hearted friend of the working man, the late Jas. Silk Buckingham, Esq., M.P., held his first temperance meeting in the Marine's Church in Wellclose Square, and which he urged the entire abstinence of all alcoholic stimulants. Discussion was invited, and a working man (one of a group) arose, and said that he desired as much as any man the removal of drunkenness, but he did not think that the labouring man or the mechanic could execute his full amount of work without beer; it might do for gentlemen like the chairman, or a Parliament man," but for a hard-working man like himself, a journeyman wheelwright, to do without it was perfectly ridiculous.

In this sentiment all the group loudly joined.

With great tact Mr. Buckingham replied, "Have you ever tried it?" "If not, how are you able to judge?" and after a few of his happy sentences, he proposed to adjourn the meeting for a month, and in the meantime that the wheelwright and his comrades should make the experiment and then give their honest verdict.

To Mr. Buckingham's delight, the group of men accepted the challenge.

On leaving the meeting, that earnest-hearted temperance labourer, William Morris, gave to the speaker a copy of Harris's tract, "The Only Cure for Drunkenness," and with a shake of the hand encouraged him to make a "fair trial."

The second meeting night arrived. The church was crowded for two hours before the time for taking the chair. Immense crowds assembled, and Mr. B. had the utmost difficulty in approaching the door of the church. Mr. Buckingham says—

"On reaching the interior of the church, and taking my place on the platform, I was glad to find the group of working men already in their place, waiting patiently for the opening of the meeting; and as soon as the rush and murmur occasioned by every one desiring to be near enough to see and hear there was subsided, I called on the workmen to ascend the platform, and give to the meeting, through their spokesman, the result of the experiment which they had undertaken to make, of abstaining entirely for a month from the use of beer and every kind of stimulating drink."

A profound silence ensued, during which all eyes and ears were open, and directed towards the men. They ranged themselves along the front of the platform, and the foreman, addressing himself to the audience, stated in substance as follows—

"We have faithfully kept the promise we made since

the last meeting held here, a month ago, and from that time to this, not one of us has tasted any intoxicating drink. For the first few days of the experiment, we found the use of water as our ordinary beverage instead of beer, to be extremely flat and insipid, and were glad of the relief of coffee at breakfast, and tea in the afternoon. But we confess that on the first Saturday night we felt ourselves less wearied and exhausted by our ordinary work's labour, than on any previous Saturday that we could remember; and on the Sabbath morning, instead of being drowsy and lying in bed an hour or two longer than on working days, which is a common custom, extending with some workmen even towards noon, we were as fresh as on any previous day of the week. During the second week, the flatness and insipidity of the water as drink was considerably abated; and we found ourselves so much less thirsty than usual, that we took very little liquid except at our meals. We found the next Saturday and Sunday an improvement even on the former ones; and remarked that our appetites were stronger, our digestion better, our tempers less liable to irritation, and our vigour and cheerfulness greatly increased. We were therefore so satisfied with the experiment, that we rejoiced at having made it, and continued it to the end, improving sensibly as we proceeded; and as we had not been a single day, or even an hour absent from work during the said period, there were no deductions from our wages for 'loose' time; so that besides being stronger, healthier, and happier than usual, we commenced this substitution of water-drinking for beer, we had each of us, at the end of the fourth week, from thirty to forty shillings more in our pockets than we were formerly accustomed to have for the same period. We rejoice therefore, that we attended the first meeting, though we came to oppose it; and we mean to persevere as we have begun, and recommend all working men to follow our example."

The effect of such a statement as this, on such an excited crowd may be easily imagined.

I may add that the chief of this group of working men, who acted as their spokesman, was

Mr. T. A. Smith, who subsequently employed his leisure in the study of anatomy, physiology, and chemistry, and who has now for many years past been one of the most able and successful lecturers in the metropolis.

We had an inquiry that Mr. Smith has engaged to be a lecturer at the following times during the month of January:

Hull Jan. 7 & 8.
 Northampton 11 & 12.
 Sunderland 13, 14, 15.
 Huddersfield 16 & 17.
 Southampton 18, 19, 20.
 Newcastle 21, 22, 23.
 Glasgow 24, 25, 26.
 London 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

For a much more detailed account of this interesting meeting, we refer our readers to pp. 440-441 of "The Coming Era in Britain and the West," the last volume of Mr. Buckingham's works, and which, at the present time, is a worthy & extensive present.



HINTS FROM HELPERS.—No. 1.

The following letter from a medical gentleman in Leicester, contains an excellent suggestion.

Sir,
 With the view of extending the knowledge of your admirable publication, the *British Workman*, amongst the class of readers to whom it is especially addressed, I have caused six copies of it to be circulated monthly in the wards of our infirmary here. It is very popular with the patients, and it reaches them at a time, when, through the chastening influence of sickness, their minds are best prepared to appreciate its lessons. A hint on this head might probably induce other officers of hospitals throughout the country to do the same.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
 F.R.C.S.
 [The Editor will be obliged by the receipt of further suggestions for increasing the circulation. Address, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Brompton Park, London, N.]



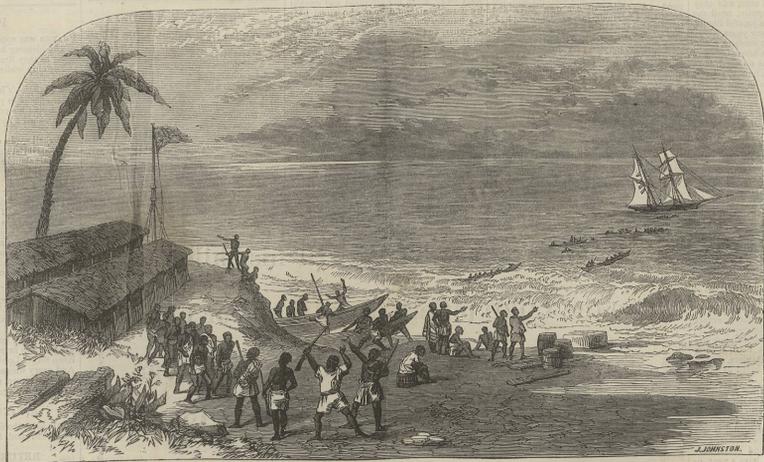
THE BRITISH WORKMAN'S ALMANACK, FOR 1858.

We are gratified by the numerous expressions of approval which have been awarded to our Penny Illustrated Sheet Almanack. The first edition of 18,000 copies was quickly disposed of, and we have gone to press with the second edition of the same number. We have a deep conviction that the verses accompanying the country picture entitled "Dip your roll into your own pot at home," will, by God's blessing, be the means of arresting many a tippler, and leading him to promote the welfare of his

own house instead of the *Public House*, ployers will kindly farther its introduction into workshops and the kitchens of their workmen. Four copies may be had *post free* by sending four stamps to Messrs. Partridge & Co., 34, Paternoster Row, London.

The Yearly Part of the "British Workman" for 1857 may now be had through all Booksellers, price Eighteen-pence.

A complete Edition of the "British Workman" from the commencement may now be had, (with 400 engravings) bound in cloth, price 5s. 6d. Gill edges, (forming a handsome Gift-book) price 6s.



Shipment of poor slaves from Bhydash. Alarm on seeing the British cruiser, the "Teaser," in the distance. (See previous page.)