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AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A POSSIBLE
GOOD.

It is an ill wind that blows nobody good. If the benefits to arise from prohibition are more than doubtful, and if even a more moderate reduction fails to be attended directly by the vast amount of good expected, the disrepute into which the business of the publican has fallen is still not without its advantages. The great drawback—we use the definite article advisedly—to success in the colonies, and the great hindrance to colonial progress, are the false views generally entertained as to the line of settlement to be followed. Most of the people who have come here were at Home working people. In the case of the Irish immigrants, for whom we especially write, they were people brought up to country work—men and women, or boys and girls, who had from their childhood been accustomed to work in the fields. Naturally they came to the colonies with the intention of raising themselves in life, but, unfortunately, in the greater number of instances, when they were in a position to do so, they took the wrong turn. Instead of making use of the money they had earned to settle themselves on the land, the true source of independence and prosperity to the individual, and the source whence safety and welfare to the country must proceed, they turned their thoughts to trade and business. In doing this, however, the Irish settlers, for whom, as we have said, we especially write, laboured under comparative disadvantages. They came from a country where they had had no opportunity of acquiring business habits. They had not, to any extent, even had an opportunity of seeing, from a distance, business carried on. All their experience was confined to agricultural pursuits. It must be admitted, in passing, that with these they had become acquainted under difficulties. This, and not the want of schooling as has been sometimes supposed, for, as a rule, the Irish publicans are quite as much masters of the three "R's" as their neighbours of other nationalities, who are otherwise engaged in trade, this it was that inclined the Irish settler who had made a little money to seek for its investment in a public house. Here was a business that could be conducted without any particular training, and for which the tact and geniality with which Nature had endowed his race exceptionally qualified him. As to the agricultural pursuits in which he had been engaged at home, he had seen the worst side of them. There was hard work and little for it. If it was on his own or his father's farm he had to put in his twelve hours a day, barely to make as much as—when the claims of the landlord were settled—kept a miserable roof over his head and supplied him scantily with inferior food and insufficient clothing. If he worked for an employer he was even worse off than the farmer and his son. People have wondered that on coming to America or the colonies the Irish immigrants, a people of agricultural breeding and habits, have herded together in the towns and not sought the labour to which they had been accustomed and for which they were well fitted. But they had been hardly pardoned in the fulfilment of that labour, and no wonder they were glad to feel themselves free of it once for all. What the Irish immigrant failed to see was that it was one thing to work for a landlord or a master, but quite another to work for himself. What of those publicans, for example, who are now about to lose their licenses? When they entered the business, at least, they had some money. Possibly, and most probably we fear in most cases, they have since lost it. Had they taken up land and spent their capital and labour there how different would be their position. The calling of the farmer, it may be, had its drawbacks. It involved a life of more or less loneliness. There was a trudging about in the mud and an exposure to the weather, and many unpleasantnesses, if not hardships, peculiar to the pursuit. But were there not drawbacks and unpleasantnesses in the other line of life?—late hours and sleepless nights, whims to be endured, and patronage to be courted, and, now, finally, the mercies of the "wild women" to be experienced? If, therefore, the business of the publican has been discredited and placed in such a position that no one can any longer look upon it as an easy means

of living, or even one by which he can be secure from year to year against total ruin, so much good ensues that people who have eared money will no longer risk it in this way. The Irish settler, too, must turn his thoughts to some other opening—and for him, more than for any other, that opening is the land. It would be well, indeed, if our settlers would consider this matter in its proper light, and recognise that here lies the point to determine not only their own future, but that of their children. The people who own the land must be the real masters of the country. All our fortunes will lie in their hands. They must be the men to save us, for instance, from the spirit of communism now growing in the towns and certain to increase there. The temper of the age is such that without their restraining influence the Colony must become the plaything of wild or unscrupulous theorists guided by folly or designing ends. And is not the life of personal independence and useful influence over public affairs, that settlement on the lands offers, the life that any sensible father would choose for his children? What, in fact, is there to be compared with it? The civil service, with its scanty pay and expensive obligations of a shabby gentility—liable, too, to reduction at a moment's notice for any cause or no cause? The clerkship with its scores of applicants for a paltry place, and the risk of instant discharge at the first hint of an increase to starvation wages? The whitest of hands and the best made up of collars cannot compensate a man for the loss of his independence or for being—under the false appearances of a gentleman—no better placed or more manly than a flunkey. Or, in cases where there are means to aspire to the proud standing of the learned professions, shall the boy gain, who might, if his parents desired it, be a land-owner? The law is already overstocked. The danger is, so numerous are the learned gentlemen, and so slender the chances of their being able to make both ends meet, that the profession may become degraded. There was a time, for example, when the name of "attorney" had gained in the old country such a signification that men refused any longer to be known by it, and adopted instead that of "solicitor." Filling the ranks with starvelings, may, perhaps, renew the past. We do not know that anything much more brilliant is to be expected from overcrowding the ranks of our medical men. We do know that, quite commonly at Home, the country and the lesser town doctor was a person of no very illustrious means and no very distinguished social standing. He did not rank with the gentry, nor was he admitted, even as a medical attendant, into their houses. For the gentility of the average medical student we may consult Bob Sawyer. Men therefore, who have the true interests of their sons at heart—even men who have money, and who might educate their boys for the learned professions—will turn their thoughts for them to the land. Here is the certainty of independence and prosperity, and the sure ground of safety and defence against an uncertain future. And now is the time; the chance is lessening every day. If, then, as we have said, the closing of the public houses has the effect of placing many of those, who would otherwise occupy them, as settlers on the lands, the measure will be of great benefit—first of all to those people themselves, but also to the community in general.

To have to blow your own trumpet is bad enough. A MELANCHOLY When the tune you have to play is equivalent, STAVE. for example, to that which the old cow died of—*abail omen!* we refrain from saying jigs played to milestones—it is plain that the need becomes much worse. Such, however, is the task that now devolves upon us. We have got to blow our own trumpet, and we have got to play upon it a most lugubrious tune. In this case, however, our readers need not be afraid. It is we, not they, who stand in the place of the old cow. We are more likely to die, if not of the tune of something quite as bad, than they are. It is they who, if they are cruel and hard-hearted, may act the part of the milestones to whom the trumpeter vainly plays his jigs. We do not, however, so harshly judge those with whom we have to deal. We have known them now for a good many years, and we have no reason to complain of their treatment of us. All we have to do is to jog their memory a little as to the good turn they owe us. We may safely say that the NEW ZEALAND TABLET has been faithful to the duty undertaken by it at the outset. It undertook to defend