

ACTING on the principle embodied in the familiar proverb "Wide will wear, but tight will tear," Lieut.-Governor Royal proposes to license responsible persons in the Northwest to sell light beer. The proposal is naturally giving rise to much difference of opinion, even among friends of temperance. It can scarcely be denied that the present system is, to a large extent, a failure. Strong drinks of the most fiery character are being constantly smuggled into the Northwest, in spite of the efforts of the Mounted Police. In view of the great length of the boundary line separating the Territories from the United States it may well be doubted whether any possible vigilance could prevent American liquors from being brought in in large quantities. The "permit" system, too, has hardly been such a success as to commend its operation to the public. To say nothing of the manner in which it was used by the former Lieut. Governor, it cannot be denied that there is something repugnant to ordinary notions of Canadian freedom, in a regulation which virtually puts it in the power of one man to say who may, and who may not, import a keg of beer or a dozen of wine for his table. It cannot be denied, however, that the scheme now proposed, savours scarcely less of the offensively "paternal." If beer of a certain strength may be imported, why not the stronger article, and why not other alcoholic beverages? And if importation is permitted, will the free people of the Northwest long submit to have manufacture prohibited? Why should they pay tribute to Manitoba or Ontario, on an article which they can just as well produce for themselves? Is there not, moreover, a legal question involved? Prohibition is now law by Act of Parliament. Can the Lieutenant-Governor, even with the consent of the Dominion Government, legally set aside that Act? It may be said that the power to grant temporary permits implies power to make them permanent. But, if that is so, the law has been a farce from the beginning, and the Lieutenant-Governor is the supreme law of the Territories. The whole question is beset with difficulties. Local option must probably be invoked before a satisfactory solution is reached.

THE promise said to have been given by the Chancellor of the British Exchequer to Sir Charles Tupper, of a handsome yearly subsidy for a period of ten years for a monthly line of steamships between Vancouver and Yokohama, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, is a matter of great interest to Canadians. It will enable the possibilities of the new route between Europe and the East to be thoroughly tested. There seems every reason to hope that the experiment may be eminently successful, and that Canada may become at no distant day the great highway of the European nations in their intercourse with Australia, China, and Japan, and even with India. It is not to be expected, perhaps, that so novel and costly an experiment can become financially successful at once. Time for development will be needed. As was observed by the Hon. David Wells, the other day, in his interview with the *Globe* reporter, in reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway, the national benefits conferred by such enterprises cannot be measured by their immediate financial results. The true statesman must work with an eye to the future. This is an economic truth which is too much lost sight of by many Canadians. It is possible that many now living may see the day when the great Pacific shall become almost as thickly dotted with the white sails, or rather, as prosaic regard for exactness compels us to say, with the smoke stacks of commerce, as the Atlantic now is. It is not inconceivable even that other transcontinental railways may yet be needed on Canadian soil.

COLONISTS who may have, or think they have, reason to dread an excessive immigration of pauper children from the workhouses and industrial schools of Great Britain, have no reason to complain of the attitude of the British Government on the question, as represented by Mr. Ritchie, the President of the Local Government Board. Replying to Mr. Samuel Smith's amendment to the emigration clause of the Local Government Bill, which amendment proposed to empower the new County Councils "to make grants of money in aid of the boarding out, training and emigration of pauper children," Mr. Ritchie spoke the following wise words, as quoted by the *Canadian Gazette*, though for some reason, no London journal reported them: "There is nothing that requires greater safeguards than the State emigration of children, and while I am very desirous that pauper children should be emigrated, I am also very desirous that they should not be emigrated in a wholesale fashion. The emigration should be carried out in the most careful way, with every precaution that the children are well trained here and properly cared for when they arrive. We do not desire to proceed by leaps and bounds in this matter." With such reasonable care and precaution there is no reason why large numbers of properly trained children may not be transferred to the colonies with great improvement of their own prospects of happiness and usefulness, but with great advantage to all parties concerned.

THE Hon. Thomas B. Reid, of Maine, makes an apparently strong point against the Mills Tariff Bill, in the current number of the *North American Review*. He contends that the effect of the Bill in operation must be to increase income rather than to lower it, inasmuch as the reduction of the duties will facilitate importation of the articles affected. We have before referred to this law of trade as one likely to interfere seriously with any computations based upon an assumed falling off of revenue proportionate to the reduction of tariff. The best answer of the tariff-reformers was given by Mr. Mills in his closing speech in the House of Representatives. After showing that, on the basis of present tariff rates and importations, the total reductions of revenue from that source to be affected by his Bill would be almost \$50,000,000, he went on to argue that the actual reduction instead of being less, would be still greater by reason of the decline in imports of manufactured goods. As the *Philadelphia Record* puts it: "More wool, hemp, jute, flax and other raw materials would be imported, and consequently there would be a diminished importation of manufactured products. When manufacturers should become relieved of taxes upon their raw materials, and could thus compete with their European rivals in cheap production, what inducement would there be to send abroad for goods and pay heavy duties upon them?" There is a degree of plausibility in this view. The claim is, of course, that the Mills Bill, instead of being a step in the direction of free trade, is really more efficiently protective than the tariff now in force. The question is a very interesting one from every point of view. Should the Mills Bill become law, its operation would be watched with great attention by political economists everywhere. Should Mr. Mills and his committee prove themselves able to increase protection by reducing the tariff, their achievement will be comparable and yet in contrast with the famous feats of financiering by which Mr. Gladstone used to succeed in increasing revenue by reducing taxation.

THE Committee on Manufactures appointed by the United States House of Representatives have submitted a report on "Trusts," which sets in a very clear light the extent which the operations of these new commercial devices have already attained, and the astuteness of the modes of working by which they hope to evade hostile legislation. The two most important are the Sugar Trust and the Standard Oil Trust. These Trusts are composed each of a certain number of corporations organized under the laws of the different States. These corporations issue their stock to individuals, who in their turn surrender it to certain trustees, named in the agreements creating the Trusts, and receive in place of it certificates issued by those trustees. Each of the various corporations whose stock is thus surrendered and manipulated retains its identity. The duties of the trustees, under the "Trusts," are confined to the receipt of the dividends declared by the respective corporations, the distribution of those dividends to the holders of the above named certificates, and the holding and voting upon the stock of the corporations thus transferred to their hands by the individual stockholders. The "Trusts" carefully avoid any transactions of any kind in commodities or any agreements in regard to them. The whole plan of operations is carefully devised for the purpose of relieving the Trusts and trustees from any charge of "being a combination to regulate or control the price of production of any commodity," and to this effect the Committee has reported, calling the attention to the House to the fact that the legislation which has been proposed and referred to the Committee "has been directed against combinations to fix the price or regulate the production of articles of merchandise or commerce." Some new form of legislation will evidently have to be devised if the Trusts are to be crushed, or their movements checkmated.

THE fourth report of the Civil Service Commission of the United States brings out some facts which seem to show that the Civil Service Examinations in the United States have a much more practical meaning than those of which we occasionally hear in Canada. During the years 1886 and 1887 33,343 persons were examined, of which number 11,378, or 34 per cent., failed to pass, and 21,965 passed. Of those who passed, 8,612, or 39 per cent., received appointments. Of those examined during the period of a year and a half covered by the present report, 32.2 per cent. of the men failed, and but 18.6 per cent. of the women. This fact would seem to show either that women are, as a rule, more thorough in their preparation, or that, by reason of the larger sphere of activity over which the energies of the young men are distributed, the women competitors in these examinations belong to a better class. A late number of the *Washington Capital* had a striking article on the excellent effect of the Examination system in improving the average of female character in the Departments, into which, it is intimated, an increasing number of unworthy women were being inducted under the patronage system. The following extract will suggest the drift of the article and conveys a hint that Canadian politicians