

8,000,000 gallons of spirits, of which 5,000,000 gallons were for home consumption; and 9,000,000 gallons of wine, of which 6,500,000 gallons were for home consumption:—in all, 31,000,000 gallons of spirits, and 6,500,000 gallons of imported wine for one year, the sum of the duties on which is accurately estimated at £15,000,000 sterling. During the same year there were 2,527 licensed brewers in Great Britain and Ireland, 88,400 licensed dealers in spirits, and 38,658 licensed beer vendors. These facts are certainly more powerful than the finest theories that can be offered in opposition to them. They speak volumes on the necessity of more energetic steps in the temperance movement than have yet been taken. As we have just observed, the subject has begun to engage the attention of British politicians of different classes, and there is at present every probability that their efforts, based as they are on the only reliable principle, will before very long be followed by the most satisfactory results. We gladly record this important progress—this which will annihilate at once and for ever that infamous traffic, by which no real interest, either of an individual or of a class, is ever promoted; while it robs the wealthy of their wealth, the happy of their happiness, the virtuous of their virtue—while it fosters ignorance, idleness and crime, and fills the poor-houses, gaols, penitentiaries, and penal colonies of the empire.”

To the above we not inappropriately add this from the *Albany Rechebite* :—

“Just as much liquor sold as before prohibition,” is still the cry, and we have no doubt is honestly believed by some, but as the sale and use of strong drinks produce drunkenness, and drunkenness produces crime, and crime furnishes tenants for our jails, we have honestly supposed that the number of such tenants was a pretty good criterion by which to judge of the effects of prohibition. In this we were the more fully confirmed by the fact that in our examination of 16 or 18 of our jails in Western New York, we found, as we have often stated, that the law of 1845 reduced the commitments in all of them considerably, in others one-half, and in a number of cases entirely emptied them, leaving them without a tenant for months—jails too, that had never before exhibited such a spectacle. And when we see the same thing said of the jails in Vermont, we suppose that the same cause is producing the same effect, and that where crime and intemperance are actually diminishing, there cannot be an increase in the use of strong drinks.

Some time since it was announced that the jail at Burlington was empty, and now the same is said of that at Chelsea, and we confidently anticipate that others, in the course of the year, will be added to the list.

And here we will make the remark in our paper, which we often made to individuals, that if we had the pecuniary means, we would, as the best possible thing to promote the passage of a Maine Law in this and in all other States where they are agitating it, take the most thorough measures to get the exact gauge of poverty and crime, as exhibited by the statistics of the jails and poor houses of the States where that law is now in operation. We can hardly find language to express our regret that it should not be done. *It might be done in two months.*

We see at this moment a letter in the *Western Christian Advocate*, dated at Portland, which after speaking of the amendment to their law, rendering it easier of execution, says :—

“There has never been a period of the same length, when there has been so little disturbance and crime, as for the last two months. I wish every man who doubts the good effect of this law could come and see for himself.”

The *Christian Guardian* of Toronto had a good leader on the Maine Law a few weeks ago. We make a short extract :—

Now, what is the real nature and design of a “prohibitory liquor law?” Are the principles which this measure involves in any respect different from those which sanction all other legal provisions for the protection of society? No person will pretend to dispute in this day, that the prevailing use of intoxicating drinks is the direct and most fruitful source of disorder and crime; and the evil which this article inflicts upon the community is admitted by the legal restrictions which Governments have found it necessary to impose upon its traffic. The very existence of the license system declares the fact, that the public safety requires the interference and supervision of the law. But experience has abundantly proved that all attempts to regulate the traffic in this article, short of absolute prohibition for common purposes, have failed to prevent the pernicious effects which invariably follow the use of intoxicating drinks. The license system so far from mitigating the evil, creates a privileged class of agents to supply the public demand; and these persons are protected from the consequences of their employment by the legal authority they possess. If they sell ardent spirits, and the unhappy victims of their traffic die, as the undeniable result; or commit injuries, and even murder, under the maddening influence of the “strong drink,” which it is the prerogative of the licensed agent to furnish all who can pay for it, their license affords them a perfect immunity from all legal responsibility for the crimes committed under an influence which their agency has been the means of creating. And yet the attempt to uproot this system of disorder and death is declared by the opponents of legal reform, to be an infringement of the “personal liberty of the subject. “Is such political philosophy applied to any other subject upon which prohibitory laws exist? Are not the statutes which render theft, forgery, robbery, licentiousness, murder, and a variety of other acts, “crimes to be punished by the judges, equally at variance with the “personal liberty of the subject?” And would it not stamp any person with the character of an abettor of crime, who should object to these laws on the ground that they interfere with the freedom of action to which human nature is disposed? And have the opponents of a prohibitory law any grounds of complaint when similar interferences are drawn from their opposition.

We conclude our Repository for this number with a brief extract from a long and sensible article on the main question, which we find in the *Guelph Herald* :—

After some twenty years’ consideration of the subject, we are persuaded that from the licensed public sale of intoxicating liquors nine-tenths of the evils of drunkenness arise, and until that almost irresistible temptation be removed, moral suasion has no fair field of action.

Since the world began, no mere human institution has made the rapid progress that has attended the Temperance movement. A progress which in Canada is not to be measured merely by the thousands of signatures appended to the temperance pledge, or the tens of thousands affixed to petitions for a prohibitory liquor law, it has reached the heart-core of society. The evils of the present system are admitted, and the necessity for a radical reformation is asserted by thousands, who, although they may take no active part in agitating for the Maine Law, will never, under any circumstances, be found taking part with its opponents; nay, not a few parties largely engaged in the traffic have assured us of their desire to abandon it, but that they could not do so with safety to their pecuniary interests while their neighbors continued to sell, and several liquor dealers in this county have become members of “the League,” with the object and desire of putting a stop to the traffic.

Keep it before the people, and despite all the obstacles which may be thrown in the way by the advocates of avarice and appetite, we shall assuredly have a prohibitory li-