

TRUTH.

OLD SERIES—17TH YEAR.

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TRUTH'S MUSINGS.

The tax payers of Canada have evidently to pay well for their luxuries, like other people. A few years ago an Agent-General for Canada in England was proposed and agreed upon, and Sir Alexander Galt was selected for the post, at what many people thought the liberal allowance of \$10,000 a year and full expenses. Last year it was proposed to allow the Hon. Minister of Railways to fill the office of Agent-General in London and Minister of Railways in Ottawa at the same time, drawing salary for the latter only, and living a part of the year in one country, and a part in the other. It now turns out that even with the arrangement of no salary, the present London arrangement will take a pretty prominent position in our public accounts. Even without salary the Agent must be supplied with a dwelling and surroundings in keeping with the honor of the position. According to a recent parliamentary return, a house has been rented at a round two thousand dollars a year, while nearly two thousand more has been paid out of the treasury for its painting and decoration, and another eight thousand for furniture, with another four thousand added for "sundries," and some other items of expense. TRUTH does not know what "sundries" may mean just here, for Sir Charles is a teetotaler. In some of our public accounts "sundries" has meant a good deal—both of liquids and solids. The rent, repairs and furnishing of a house for our London Agent last year altogether, makes the handsome sum of over sixteen thousand dollars. When a salary, travelling expenses, and all the other necessaries are added, a pretty large amount will be represented, but possibly the work cannot be expected more cheaply. In England every official is expected to put on a good deal of "style," and is counted of but little importance if he does not.

The success of the Scott Act vote in Oxford County last week is another significant indication of the progress of temperance sentiment throughout the country. There is no mistaking the signs of the times in this respect. The licensed liquor traffic in Canada has evidently outlived its popularity in the public estimation, and those in any way interested in the business may as well take note of the fact at once, and make their future arrangements accordingly. That public opinion is growing every year more strongly towards prohibition is undoubtedly true not only as regards Canada, but in England and the United States as well. That the Scott Act is as efficient a prohibitory law as can be reasonably expected, so far as its jurisdiction extends, the result of its operations prove. The Act was evidently framed with care and wisdom, and not nearly as many technical flaws have been discovered in it as are usually found in Acts of Parliament

when they come to be put to the practical test. The proverbial "coach and four" has not been driven through the Act, though any clever lawyer would have had a little fortune awaiting him if he could only have succeeded in doing so. The experiment has been fairly tried, too, but without success.

The Pavilion temperance demonstration on Monday evening was one of the most successful and most encouraging meetings of the kind ever held in this city. Not only was this so in regard to the numbers attending, but also in regard to the class of persons attending. Until this year a temperance meeting, of any size at least, under the auspices of the Church of England, was something quite unknown. It is evident, however, that this large and influential church now intends to fairly do its duty, as a church, in this great moral reform, and its influence will be greatly felt for good in the work. The other branches will be stimulated to greater efforts, and public opinion will be much strengthened. There was evidently a good indication of the growing spirit of Christian union in appearance on the platform of leading ministers and laymen of nearly every branch of the Church in the city. It will be a good day for us when all Christians will forget all denominational prejudices and jealousies and cordially unite in the one great work in which all should feel a common interest.

Before the closing of the Legislature an Act was passed authorizing the appointment of a special commission of three judges, with power to thoroughly investigate the noted "conspiracy" charges, and it is quite probable that something decisive will soon be undertaken in regard to this business. What judges will be selected for the purpose has not yet transpired, but no doubt need be entertained that they will be efficient men. Nearly all the judges appear to be very hard worked just now, and considerably behindhand in their work, and the case may not be possibly reached at once on that account. The sincere hope of all classes, unless of a few of the real party hacks, is that an investigation may prove clearly just who are implicated in the disgraceful business, and to just what extent. There is now a very strong suspicion in regard to some, at least, who may turn out quite innocent, and the sooner the whole business is unearthed the better it will be for those who may be wrongly suspected, and the better too for the people whose interest are wronged in any such attempt.

The Police Court investigation of the last few days in connection with the conspiracy case has evidently convinced the Magistrate and several others that Kirkland has not as much to do with the so-called conspiracy as was at first supposed. This may not yet turn out correct, but

the facts as far as they have been elicited in the evidence all go to indicate that while Kirkland was quite willing to pay out money pretty freely to any members who could be bought over to support his particular timber scheme, yet no money had been actually paid by him, or if there had it was in very inconsiderable sums. It does not appear that he cared much about the overthrow of the Party; as such, and would have cheerfully worked with either party to gain his own personal ends. Probably some other source will have to be looked to in order to trace out where the \$1,800 of hard cash came from that was paid into the Speaker's hands by the members approached.

Kirkland's mistake appears to have been in supposing that Legislators can be bought up as easily and as safely in Canada as in his own country. He stated to some of his new made friends that he had bought up some of the States Legislators before and had paid out successfully tens of thousands in that way. Very likely he told the truth. His experience in regard to that kind of business in Canada has not been very assuring. It is much to our credit that such has been the case. Probably his other great mistake was in falling into company with other hand greasers, of Canadian growth, who had quite different ends to serve, and who made him a victim of misplaced confidence.

The brewers have been again at Ottawa trying to get some assurance, or some relaxation of the present laws from the Government. It is evident they consider their case a pretty serious one, or so much anxiety would not be displayed. TRUTH does not desire to see any injustice done to the brewers or to any other class of men. There is little doubt but that the Government will require a good deal of courage to face public opinion even if it desired to relax the laws so as to meet the wishes of the brewers. The public feeling undoubtedly is that the success of the brewers, or of any other class of liquor makers, is not in the best interests of the people, and consequently any relaxation of the stringent laws now in force would be an unpopular move, to say the very least of it.

The first session of the present Legislature was brought to a close on Tuesday afternoon, with the usual military and millinery display. TRUTH hopes to see the day when the Lieut. Governor may not feel that his dignity is risked in omitting the present display in connection with opening and closing the Legislature. If it ever had any effect in impressing people with the importance and the dignity of official position surely the day is past. There was nothing very remarkable about the session just closed, except the connection it had with the noted "conspiracy case." The total number of Bills were

passed through, and of about the usual importance, but there was nothing of extraordinary interest. Before the session opened the much debated question of the probable support of the Mowat Government had been about settled, and the various test votes proved that the public opinion of its strength was about correct. It is now more probable than ever that the Government will live out easily the present Legislature unless some very unforeseen circumstances occur. The fidelity of the different men elected to their party has evidently been put to the practical test, and it is not at all probable that many more extra-hazardous experiments will be tried in the way of drawing any off. It is now evident enough that the entire business of the session could have been done, and better done, in one half the time spent but for the determination of the Legislature to play at Parliament, and to waste so much time in following up Parliamentary routine.

The German people are still alarmed in regard to the danger they incur of trichinosis in eating raw pork. A police edict has lately been published in the country to warn people about it. The eating of raw pork appears to be quite a common custom there, notwithstanding all the dangers and deaths there have been. It may here be remarked that the prohibition against the importation of American pork continues because of the danger of importing diseased meat in that way. A good deal of hard feeling is springing up between the two countries about the matter, the American pork dealers asserting that it is only an excuse to protect the home pork producer. Quite an agitation has sprung up in favor of prohibiting the importation of beer, or some other German product, as a measure of retaliation.

There appears to be a determination on the part of some leading men in England to sit down on the patent medicine dealers. A good many of this class have been successful in accumulating large fortunes, by dint of good advertising and fair business energy. A bill is now before the British House of Commons the object of which is to prohibit the sale of any patent medicines until they have been first officially examined and pronounced not poisonous. It is not probable that any such measure will affect the trade to any considerable extent. Patent medicines are made to sell as well as to cure—especially to sell. The manufacturers of them know well enough how unsafe as well as unpopular it would be to mix anything in that might be poisonous, or even dangerous in any way. People of all diseases, and without any kind of disease buy a tent medicines, and they are swallowed by the barrel in every town or city in England, as well as in Canada. One thing can be generally calculated upon respecting them and that is that they are, generally, neither poisonous or dangerous.