

The Advocate.

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TEA VERSUS ALCOHOL.

If the professors of hygiene had their say and the Prohibitionists had theirs, poor thirsty humanity would frequently have a pretty hard time. The one would have us refrain from drinking water when we are heated, and at all times unless it is absolutely pure or has been boiled. The other would forbid indulgence in anything stronger than tea, coffee or water charged with gas, and physicians say each of the latter, if freely imbibed, is unwholesome and disease provoking. What, then, are we to do? How are we to judge of the exact quantity? Nobody under heaven or above the earth can deny that alcoholic liquors in their proper season and taken in moderation are beneficial. Some say they can be done without. We do not believe it in all cases. But supposing that they can, what logically follows? That because some people can do without meat, and that meat when improperly used becomes hurtful, therefore we can dispense with meat. The same argument will hold as regards fruit, vegetables, candy and ice-cream. Yet nobody advocates their entire abolition. In connection with this subject we desire to direct attention to a little incident that occurred one day last week in the British House of Commons. It was after the proposed increase of duty on beer by Sir William Harcourt had been sustained by 18 in a house of 500 members that the following little discussion occurred:

Mr. Stanley Leigh asked Mr. John Morley, Chief Secretary for Ireland, if the Government had given any attention to the special report showing the increase of insanity in Ireland from the habit of tea-drinking. Mr. Morley said he had seen the report, which alleged that the affliction was due to excessive use of infanul tea, which led to dependency, restlessness and insomnia and finally resulted in insanity.

Mr. Leigh asked: "Then why not increase the duty on tea?"

Mr. Morley said that it could hardly be expected that the Government upon a conjunctural statement could increase the duty.

Mr. Leigh—"Is not excessive tea-drinking also mentioned in the report concerning the increase of destitution among the employed in Scotland?"

Mr. Morley—"I must confine myself entirely to Ireland." (Laughter.)

Prohibitionists and self-styled moralists ignore this kind of thing, as they usually ignore and calumniate everything

and everybody that does not fall in with their views. If they would go in more for facts and less for sentiment; if, for instance, they would consider the good as well as the evil side of alcohol, of water, of tea, of coffee, and so on, they would find that while all were helpful in their places, all were equally bad out of their places. It is a fearful indictment against tea to charge that it leads to dependency, restlessness, insomnia, and, finally, insanity, and yet if we have Prohibition its consumption will largely increase. The worst feature is that while we can all see and recognize the ill attributable to over-indulgence in intoxicants, the evil wrought by tea is rarely recognized until too late. One is palpable in its inroads, the other is silent and insidious, and, therefore, more harmful.

COMPENSATION OR CONTINUATION.

With the actual consideration of Prohibition must come the question as to whether compensation shall be granted. The law is very severe in its exactions as to the conditions that shall be satisfied before a license can be given. It should be correspondingly generous when its terms are complied with and it proposes to withdraw its previous encouragement for investment. It is nonsense to say that because the license is renewed from year to year, therefore no claim for compensation can justly lie. It is difficult to believe that the legislators of the country would enact a law that required so much accommodation as is insisted upon if the contract were really intended to cease at the end of the year. It would be unfair alike to the public and to the licensee-holder to pass an act on such a basis, for, whereas it would mean inferior service to the former, it would imply ruin to the latter. Supposing, for instance, that licenses were withheld without cause from any of our largest hotels, what would it involve? Disaster to the proprietors and discomfort and inconvenience to the public. That is not all, but a business would be wrecked on the instant that the country had directly fostered for many long years—that the country, the provinces, and the municipality had alike profited by. We are aware that these views will be jeered at by the illiberal on the other side, but they will have sooner or later to be reckoned with. In Great Britain, where a larger sense of fairness exists, even among Prohibitionists, than here, this phase of the question has already received marked attention. Extremists there, as here, favor confiscation out and out, but the more moderate acknowledge that when the matter comes to an issue the rights of property must be considered in this the same as they are in every other enactment. A contemporary that, although pledged to the total abstinence cause, takes a broad and enlightened view in the premises is the *Temperance Chronicle*, which is published in London, Eng. Speaking of the contention that though a license is only granted from year to year it really endows the holder with a vested

interest which far outlives the year, that paper says: "This is the idea which, based on precedent, has widened into liberty; it is this idea which has given the trade a sense of security from which the advanced Temperance party has endeavored to oust it. It is the idea enunciated by Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. The practice of English licensing law has, it is contended, 'transformed the license into a permanent and perpetual one,' so long as the licensee has not contravened the law of the land. Arbitrary closure has been reversed by Quarter Sessions time after time, and appeal after appeal has testified to the fact that the license is generally considered continuous."

THE MAYORALTY OF TORONTO.

MAYOR KENNEDY is evidently shaping himself for re-election. He has been saying kind things about the Conservatives, whose support with their 6,000 majority he is naturally particularly anxious for. It is about time the city had a chief magistrate of real live liberal views. We have had a full trial of Howland, Fleming and Kennedy. We could now well afford to take a rest and have a man to preside over our destinies who has a faculty for seeing beyond the tip of his nose. There are several men we know of lying low for the nomination, but in our opinion not one of them would properly grace the position. Although the election is six months off it is not too early to look around for a first class representative. Building and other trades are slack this summer and the poor are likely to have a hard time next winter. In that case we shall want a man with backbone who is not all soft sower and a dealer at wholesale in common but inconsistent platitudes—a man who knows his duty and will do it, a man who will have the interests of the city ever before him, a man who will not ignore the rights of any section of the community, a man whose actions will not be governed by cringing and impolitic views, a man whose methods will be in line with the spirit of the age and who will be able to preside with both dignity and influence at the Council board. That is the kind of man the city of Toronto wants and that she should set about making an effort to secure.

OUR EMPIRE.

Our excellent contemporary, the *Ottawa Journal* correctly points out that no gathering that ever took place before represented so great a portion of the universe as does the conference of the representatives of the British empire now being held at Ottawa. As the *Journal* says, even in the few years since a sort of inter-Imperial conference was held in England—it was in 1887—nearly a third of the continent of Africa has practically been added to Britain's domain. The British empire to-day represents three hundred and fifty millions of people and a quarter of the whole land of the earth. These are statements which one may with pride dwell on and rehearse in detail.

There are fifty millions of square miles of land on the surface of the globe. The British flag waves over more than twelve millions—nearly one-fourth—the main areas being the following, roughly figured:

	Square Miles.
Britain and Ireland.....	120,000
India, Burma, etc.....	1,600,000
Other parts of Asia.....	100,000
Cape Colony and Natal.....	250,000
Other parts of Africa.....	3,000,000
Canada.....	3,500,000
Other parts of America.....	100,000
Australia.....	3,200,000
Other parts of Oceania.....	400,000
Total.....	12,270,000

The population of these vast areas are roughly as follows:

Britain and Ireland.....	40,000,000
India, Burma, etc.....	290,000,000
Other eastern possessions.....	4,000,000
Australia.....	4,000,000
Canada.....	5,000,000
Other American possessions.....	2,000,000
Cape Colony, Natal and Gold Coast.....	4,000,000
Other African possessions.....	Unnumbered
Total.....	349,000,000

TOO CHEAP LIQUOR.

COMMENTING upon our item stating that the New York and Brooklyn license holders are doing their best to suppress places that sell whiskey for five cents and beer for three cents, *The Temper* says: "So, it appears, dives are not the exclusive product of the Scott Act." These places are not necessarily dives. They may be licensed houses at which an effort is being made to catch trade by selling an inferior article. Members of the New York and Brooklyn trade claim that the genuine article cannot be sold at the prices given. There are bad sheep in every flock and we are not prepared to swear that such men engaged in selling liquor is an angel, although taken as a body the license holders will stand comparison with the members of the general run of traders. Grocers sell oleomargarine, but that does not say that every grocer is a bad man or that all butter is vile. But the government insists as far as possible that oleomargarine shall not be sold for the genuine staple. Doubtless our New York and Brooklyn friends wish, as we do, that the public shall not be asked to buy any but wholesome beverages, and as they know such cannot be supplied at five cents and three cents, they are justified in carrying on a crusade against the establishments that pretend to do what cannot be done, on the ground that they injure the trade. If every trade would follow the example of the New York and Brooklyn license holders the people would not be the sufferers.

It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Our teetotal friends will be pleased to know that owing to the floods a special correspondent of the *Victoria, B.C., Times* reports that "The supply of whiskey at Revelstoke is almost exhausted, and unless more can be procured several of the inhabitants are liable to form the habit of drinking water, which is still plentiful around that burg."