

The Prohibition Puzzle.

Ethical writers of great ability differ so widely in their treatment of the subject of prohibition of the sale of liquor that we are not surprised at receiving the letter from a correspondent published in this issue of THE CHRONICLE at his special request. During the heated debates upon the question of parliamentary prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of spirituous and malt liquors, we preserved calmness and self-possession, and declined to show surprise at what some people are foolish enough to call unreasonable interference with the liberty of the subject. However, it seems that our championship of moderation proved unpalatable to those whose crusade against the liquor traffic cannot brook any half and half measures for its regulation and suppression. Believing with the Rev. Dr. Grant that intemperance is a decaying vice, and Canada a remarkably sober community, we endeavoured to demonstrate the absolute uselessness of the plebiscite; but the sober dictates of reason and the mild suggestions of benevolence are drowned and lost in the storm which shakes and agitates the soul of a true believer in prohibition.

However, it is somewhat of a solace to our feelings, wounded by the charge of making "very absurd statements," to find a zealous defender of what he believes to be right admits that he was "greatly interested" in THE CHRONICLE'S opinions upon the subject in dispute. We are deeply sensible of our sin in supposing that Canada does not need prohibition, and it is with a broken and a contrite heart we admit the truth of every word in the letter of our correspondent telling of the evils of intemperance. But when he asks if we have ever studied the liquor traffic from a financial and insurance standpoint, he betrays a disposition to let slip from his mind the many paragraphs we have penned for our constant readers (and we like to regard our present correspondent as one of this class) fearing upon the superiority of teetotalers as life insurance risks; the cost of Great Britain's beer bill during the year of Jubilee, as indicating that the extreme loyalty of the Queen's subjects and their desire to drink to her health was calculated to discourage temperance workers; to say nothing of the publication by us of many statistical tables proving the longevity of those who never seek in the wine cup

"A sweet forgetfulness of human care."

We cannot rest easy under the imputation that we are blind to the moral and physical aspects of this most serious question. We have the greatest respect for good and earnest workers in the cause of temperance. At the same time we must maintain that the recent expenditure of the country's money on the plebiscite was of questionable wisdom. Let us see what an excellent English paper, *The Outlook*, has to say of the enviable record for sobriety held by the Dominion:—

"One might fancy from all the agitation there has been over this question of Canadian Prohibition that

Canada was a particularly drunken country. On the contrary, it happily holds a most exemplary record. Every Englishman pays 2 dols. 41 cents (say 10s.) in duty on alcoholic liquors; every Dutchman pays 2 dols. 31 cents; every citizen of the United States pays 1 dol. 44 cents, and every Canadian only 1 dol. 4 cents (or just over 4s. 2d.). Of wine the Canadian consumption per head is 0.6 gallon; the British and United States figure is 0.4 each. Of beer the consumption per head runs:—Britain, 27.0 gallons; Australia, 12.0; United States, 10.5; Canada, 8.0. And of spirits:—United States, 1.3; Australia, 1.0; Canada, 1.0; and Britain, 0.9. The total equivalent in alcohol of all three works out thus:—Britain, 1.9 gallon per head; United States, 1.2; Australia, 1.2; and Canada, 1.0. Canada thus holds the British record for sobriety. Let her be thankful."

Referring to our suggestion that an organized attempt should be made to ensure the purity and wholesomeness of wine and beer, our correspondent asks: "What's wrong with the wine and beer. Why cannot they be left alone as dry-goods and grocery stores and bakers and confectioners are?" We must be forgiven if we venture to regard this question as showing a want of thought on the part of the writer of the letter under review. Surely, he knows that the seller of flour, tea, sugar and everything eatable is not "left alone," if there is good reason to suspect that these articles are adulterated. However, the question put to the people has been answered in the affirmative. What will follow?

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*"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
Two Interesting
Decisions. By any other name would smell as sweet."*

In the legal decisions appearing in this issue of THE CHRONICLE will be found two very interesting judgments. When the immortal bard called attention to the fact that the rose would not lose its fragrance if an ignorant person should designate it a turnip, he did not intend his readers to infer that he placed no value in a name. On the contrary, the poet has shown he did prize a name, especially a good one. Is he not responsible for the following:—

*He that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.*

Yet it would seem from the legal decision printed elsewhere that so long as the use made of another person's name is not injurious or harmful to the owner, and does not entail pecuniary loss upon him, the said owner of the name has no special property therein. That such a decision if made known everywhere will tend to teach prudence of speech and promote a tendency to much reserve in expressing opinions upon things submitted to our gaze or taste goes without saying. A sound lawyer and an excellent judge may have rendered the decision whereby a certain doctor is deprived of the right to ownership of his name. Yet it opens a peculiar train of thought if the indis-