

the first question, that I would ask our friends of the proof-glass and the toddy-stick.

The *second* question that I would ask them is this:—What do you understand, gentlemen, by “sumptuary laws?”—because, if, in chasing after objections, you happen to get a wrong pig by the ear,” the public will not be very considerably *instructed*, how much soever it may be *waked up* by the squeal.

Blackstone speaks of *sumptuary laws*, as those “against luxury and extravagant expenses in dress, diet and the like;” and he instances those under the Edwards’ and Henrys’ of England “against piked shoes, short doublets, and long coats;” and such as ordain “that no man shall be served at dinner or supper, with more than two courses.” Webster says,—“sumptuary laws or regulations are such as *restrain or limit the expenses of citizens, as apparel, food, furniture, &c.*”

Now does our “liquor law” fit these definitions? Or do the definitions touch the law? Does the law limit, or seek to limit the expenses at which any citizen may live? Does it fix the length of his coat or doublet? Does it prescribe the extent to which his shoes may be piked? Does it tell us how many courses we may be served with at dinner or at supper? Nay, verily. It does not say what a man shall eat, or what he shall drink, or wherewithal he shall be clothed; how much it may cost him to live, or what he shall live upon, or even that he shall live at all. It does not tell any man what he shall not eat, or what he shall not drink. It simply tells him what he shall not *SELL*. It does not say that a man shall not drink any quantity of any quality of fluid that he can get down his throat. For all that this “sumptuary law” can do or say to the contrary, any bibber of beer or brandy may lie at the spigot, or even at the bung, and swig as long as he can “stomach it;” and the “liquor law” will not harm him whatever the liquor may do. How then, gentlemen, do you make it appear that this is a “*sumptuary law*?” Please explain, or please conduct to its final cadence, your cry of “Sumptuary Laws!”

THE FOUNTAIN.—BY JAMES RUSSELL, Lowell.

Into the sunshine,
Full of Light,
Leaping and flashing,
From morn till night !

Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower like,
When the winds blow !

Into the starlight
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day !

Ever in-motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never aweary ;

Glad of all weathers,
Still seeming best,
Upward and downward,
Motion thy rest ;—

Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same ;—

Ceaseless aspiring,
Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
Thy element.

Glorious fountain !
Let my heart be
Fresh, changeeful, constant,
Upward, like thee !

If you want to understand a *subject*, talk with a man whose business it is
if you want to understand the *man*, talk about something else.