

the question would be a waste of effort. On the completion of the road, the stoppage of the heavy expenditure on construction will be injuriously felt along the line; a large amount of labour will be set free, a part of which may find new employment in working the road; another part will drift back whence it came, in search of new railway work, while some of the floating labourers will be transformed into farmers, near the line which makes settlement in the distant wilderness possible. The severest financial trials of the company will come at first, when it has the maximum extent of road to work and the minimum amount of traffic from which to derive a revenue. With settlement only can an increase of business come; and the rate of settlement cannot be ascertained in advance. The repayment of the loan of five millions obtained from the Government last session is an achievement which few believed it would be in the power of the Company to make at so early a period. A set-back came with the North-West insurrection; but the promptitude with which the uprising was quelled, by the exertion of the local force, is likely to create the impression that order will in future be maintained and life and property made secure in the North-West. It is due to those to whose charge the work of construction was confided, to say that they have performed their task with an energy and a promptitude which are almost if not altogether without parallel; and when it is done no one will grudge them any benefits which they may derive from the operation of the colossal machinery which they have put together and set in motion.

To those nearer the spot the successes of the Government in Antigonish and St. John, N. B., appear no mystery. If, they say, Mr. Thompson had appealed to the county on his personal merits and popularity, he would have been beaten by a great majority. But seven-eighths of the people are Roman Catholics, and it is the residence of the Bishop. It is surmised that the Bishop, *in majorem Dei gloriam*, entered into a holy covenant with Sir Charles Tupper. At all events he caused two pastoral letters to be read in the churches on two successive Sundays almost commanding the people to vote for Mr. Thompson. He compelled his priests to speak for Thompson in their sermons; and not only all the priests in the county, but a number of imported priests, took part in a house-to-house canvass and worked at the polls. The election of Mr. Thompson, in short, was rather a striking episode in the struggle which, where Roman Catholicism prevails, is always going on between priestly encroachment and public right. In the case of St. John material influences of a local kind are held to have done what spiritual influences did in Antigonish. Portland, which is practically a part of St. John, wanted a bridge over the St. John River. The Government furnished money to build the bridge. Carleton, a town on the opposite side of the river, had built a branch railway which became useless when the bridge was built. The Government bought the railway at its full value, and poured the money into the pockets of the Carleton men. Large sums of money have been spent in the constituency during the summer, and the city has been made to understand that the way to make the horn of plenty flow was to elect a supporter of the Government. Nevertheless the best classes, we are told, voted against the Government, and in the opinion of our informant they will win at the general election. It is possible that at the general election they may have some better object to stimulate their efforts than the National Policy as carried out by Sir John Macdonald or the same policy as it would be carried out in an attenuated form by Mr. Blake.

THE advocates of the Scott Act dwell upon the instances, five or six in number, of unsuccessful attempts to repeal the Act, as proof that it has been found to work well. The answer is that the same influences which are exerted to carry the Act in the first place are exerted to prevent its repeal. Intimidation, boycotting and ecclesiastical terrorism are called into play on the second occasion as on the first. The vote is neither full nor free. A large number of electors who are opposed to the Act, having no personal interest of any kind in the matter and being afraid of encountering persecution, stay at home, while all those who are in favour of the Act are brought by the organization to the polls. But in addition to this the adoption of the Act is necessarily followed by a great change in the Liquor interest. The licensed and respectable dealers who all, of course, oppose the introduction of the Act, are largely supplanted, when once it has been introduced, by illicit vendors of whisky who, as they are freely selling under the Act without a license fee, by no means desire to return to the license system. On the other hand, the fact that, after a three years' experience of the Act, the contest is renewed and a vote proportionally large is cast for repeal, seems to show that the beneficial effects of Prohibition cannot be so evident as we were assured they would be. If the need of gaols, police, courts of justice and lunatic asylums had

ceased or been visibly diminished, people would hardly be so mad as to seek the restoration of the former state of things. The more we see of the contest the more convinced we are of the large amount of intimidation employed in it and of the great number of those who stay away from the polls, or refuse to take any active part from fear of social or commercial consequences. Yet if these persons would only brace themselves up to a single act of courage, they would find that the bugbear was hollow and that the penalties which they dread would not follow. In constituencies like Haldimand, where the Act has been defeated, the feeling artificially worked up in its favour by organized canvassing and hired lecturers has speedily subsided, and hardly anybody has had reason to repent the manly assertion of his electoral freedom.

MR. W. H. HOWLAND, whose word cannot be doubted, gave us the other day, at a Prohibitionists' Convention, "a bit of secret history."

A gentleman referred yesterday to the attitude of the Manufacturers' Association in securing the return of a Protectionist Government. There was a bit of secret history which he believed had not been referred to in public before. He (Mr. Howland) was president of the Manufacturers' Association when it was decided to give their support to whichever party granted protection. The result of that motion was the overthrow of a government and the establishment of protection. If that could be done by a single association, and on such a question as that, surely they could do it on such a great question as that of Prohibition.

"Secret history," indeed; and, though on a far larger scale, precisely identical in character with certain pieces of secret history which when brought to light in election trials, lead not only to the voidance of the election, but to the disqualification of the candidate. This, then, is the history of the present fiscal policy of the country. The manufacturers, in conclave assembled, bartered their vote to the leader of a political party for protection, at the national expense, to their own commercial interests. They might almost as well have sold it for hard cash. Some of these gentlemen were Reformers, and if they were sincere in their political faith must have believed that in turning out a Reform Government and putting a Tory Government in its place they were doing the country a great wrong. We see how unfair it is to hold a single man responsible for the system of Government by corruption. How can Government be maintained otherwise than by corruption when the leading members of the commercial community thus give patriotism to the winds and trade away national welfare for their own gain? Deeply demoralizing as the system has been, prodigally wasteful as it has been of the earnings of the people, it might perhaps have been both more demoralizing and more wasteful had it been managed by a less skilful hand. We may be thankful, at least, that Sir John takes from sinister interests political support and not the money bribe which he might have often received if he had pleased. The Prohibitionists have not failed to follow the bright example revealed to them by Mr. Howland. There can be no more flagrant breach of a citizen's duty to the commonwealth than such a misuse of the suffrage, which he holds in trust for the general interests of the State; and whether the motive be lucre or the indulgence of a tyrannical crotchet the effect will be equally ruinous to the integrity of Government and to the highest interests of the nation.

As the time for the election in England draws on, the excitement increases; and well it may. The nation is going into a political and social revolution which fills the minds of wise men, however liberal may be their principles, with fear, and the ultimate results of which the shrewdest and most cool-headed observers profess themselves unable to foresee. The political change which has plunged the State into this peril was entirely gratuitous: no demand had been made for it by the great body of the people: it was brought about solely by the rivalry of the two Parties bidding against each other for votes. The shortsightedness or recklessness of its authors is shown by the absence of any attempt to review the constitution as a whole and see that its other parts are sufficiently strong to bear the great additional strain about to be laid upon them by the extended suffrage. Without the provision of any safeguard, without considering even whether any safeguard would be necessary, a share in the supreme government of the country has been given, with the vote, to great masses of people who, whatever their sufferings or their merits, have received scarcely any education and, being totally unfamiliar with politics, are incapable of forming a right judgment on any question of state. This is done, too, at a moment when rebellion in Ireland is threatening the nation with disruption, and when the blind extension of the suffrage puts political power into the hands of multitudes of Irish who avow beforehand their intention of using it for the dismemberment and destruction of the Realm. In the body of the nation there is still