

the poet and statesman. His opinions ought to be worth something on a question of this sort, and I will make no apology for reading to the House this extract:—

“Were I the chooser,” (says the author of the *Areopagitica*), “a dram of well doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing; for sure God esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious. How great a virtue is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanor of every grown man. For those actions which enter into a man rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his chooser. There were but little work left for preaching if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon these things, which heretofore were governed only by exhortation!”

It seems to me that the sentiment contained in that extract is truly scriptural in its sense, and it is full of sound useful suggestions for any body of legislators who choose to accept it. Some hon. gentlemen who preceded me in the debate made some reference to sumptuary laws. I am not sure myself that the term is rigidly applicable to the Canada Temperance Act: but still it is worth while to make a short inquiry into the operation of those laws, and how and when they were in use. I can recollect myself two instances which I have come across in the course of my reading. I can recollect one in English history about the time of Queen Elizabeth, and one of her predecessors. It had reference to the head-gear of the people in those days; but it was not purely and simply a sumptuary law. It was in part a protective law. The head-gear of the lower order, the mechanics and apprentices, was then a very unpicturesque woolen cap; and at that time the use of felt hats, such as hon. gentlemen have seen in the engravings of the distinguished men in those days—Raleigh, for instance—was greatly preferred by all classes to the old-fashioned woolen cap. The industry in providing those woolen caps was decaying in some towns, and consequently Parliament passed a law

to make it imperative on certain classes on Sundays and certain other occasions to wear those woolen caps. The law was found to be perfectly inoperative. It was enacted first for a period and subsequently re-enacted; but nobody recognized it. The people preferred the picturesque felt hat to the ugly and uncomfortable woolen cap. I recollect another instance in German history. I recollect that in the early days the burgher classes were prohibited from the use of velvets and jewels. I cannot speak with precision on this subject. I searched in the Library this morning in vain for a work referring to this subject, and failed to find it; and therefore I speak from memory on this matter; but I can say that the result of this line of policy was not what was anticipated. It is very true that the burgher classes had to abstain from the wearing of velvets and the use of jewels. Those were reserved for the use of the nobility and royalty of those days; but what kind of nobles were they? Freebooters, blackmailers, intemperate and illiterate; and for these men and the females of their families was reserved the use of velvets and jewels. What were the burgher classes? They were men from whom sprang first printers, amongst them were the sculptors, the poets, the painters, the artizans of the period. Which of the two were more likely to make their mark in history? Surely the burgher class who were forbidden to wear on their persons velvets and jewels; but they could not be prevented from improving and adorning the interior of their dwellings. They could furnish their book-shelves with books, and ornament the walls of their dwellings with paintings and sculpture. That was the result of the sumptuary laws of those days. An American poet, not so long since, visited the old town of Nuremburg, and closed his poem called *Nuremburg the Ancient* with these lines:—

“Not thy councils, not thy Kaisers
Won for thee the world’s renown;
But thy painter, Albrecht Durer,
And Hans Sach thy cobbler Bard!”

Those were the men remembered in history and whose works the poet embodied in his lines—not the emperors and nobles, who, as I said before, were freebooters, illiterate blackmailers; but the