

paign. Much needless irritation has been caused; Mr. Mowat has had a victory thrust upon him, and the Dominion authorities have suffered more than a defeat; in a quarrel of their own seeking, and which they ought never to have provoked, they have been convicted of meddlesome interference in a province which is not their own.

Let us hope that the lesson will have its uses. Honest differences of opinion between the Federal and Provincial authorities there will be; the Federal Republic on our border has, from the adoption of the constitution to the present day, constantly had such differences, and we cannot hope to avoid contentions which arise naturally out of the dividing line between Federal and Provincial authority. But neither side can be held excused if it raises such questions for the sake of enjoying the luxury of the contention. When such questions arise, naturally and honestly, they ought to be discussed in a spirit of forbearance, and with a determination to accept as final the decision of the ultimate tribunal of appeal. Nothing could be more unwise than for the Federal authority to attempt to encroach on the constitutional domain of the Provinces. Tendencies towards centralization may come later, but they do not exist at present. In more than one part of the Dominion, local life is stronger than national life. This is natural: most of the Provinces existed before Confederation, and they cherish their own existence more than that of the Federation by which they are somewhat loosely bound together. The national life will be of later growth. Each is essential, provincial and national life, and mutual antagonism is not the law of their being. If you touch the autonomy of the Provinces, you put your finger on a tender spot, and provoke antagonism where concord ought to prevail. The license question has been handled in a way that begat reaction and led to extravagance of statement about the general encroachment of the Federal authority on the rights of the Provinces. If a politician who holds a brief for a Province feels that he is in a stronger position than he would be if he held one for the other side, he may be relied on to thunder against the Dominion to the top of his strength.

The spirit of party ought to be kept out of these contests. In all cases, the remedy is judicial; and it is preposterous for the contestants to get into a heat of passion over the adjudication. Anger will not help us one step towards a decision, and will injure most whoever indulges in the savage luxury. The courts will in the end do justice, and the only rational course is to await the decision with calmness. As a rule, there is no question of encroachment, on one side or the other; there is a difference of view such as leads to legal contests between individuals. When communities are the litigants, the interest in the case is general; but it would be preposterous for persons who watch the progress of the trial to act as if the necessity of a reference to the tribunals gave every man a special right to hate his neighbor.

Whatever advantage there might be in a uniform license law for all the Provinces

must, under the circumstances, be forgone. Both political parties at Ottawa have in turn held that such uniformity was desirable. The question was first brought before parliament in 1878, under the late administration; the assertion of the desirability of uniform legislation in all the Provinces relative to the traffic in spirituous liquors being made in the speech from the throne, and a bill to meet the case was promised. A bill was afterwards introduced for the purpose of obtaining an expression of opinion on the subject. Even then the conflict of authority relative to the powers of the local legislatures had been begun. This was brought about by persons in the trade questioning the authority of the Provincial legislatures. The uniform legislation which Mr. Mackenzie's government had declared to be desirable, was sought to be attained under the next administration. Mr. McCarthy, who has developed a strange fancy for introducing bills which ought to be government measures, if introduced at all, stepping into the breach and producing the license bill to which his name has somewhat unfortunately, as it turns out, been attached. Next session the "McCarthy bill" was amended; but the amendments did not save it from being tomahawked by the Privy Council. Something may have been lost when the essay at uniform legislation on the license question proved abortive. But the loss is probably not great. It is even possible that some diversity may be called for in the different Provinces. On that point, the Provinces are perhaps the best judges.

It is possible that the decision of the Privy Council may give rise to a new question. Already the validity of the Scott Act is questioned. Should this Act be declared unconstitutional, the action of Provincial legislatures would be invoked to supply a substitute. Some time would be lost; and all the Scott Act contests would have to be made over again, sometimes under circumstances different from those in which they took place before.

A RAILWAY EXPRESS.

The Belleville Board of Trade passed a resolution the other day stating that "the rates at present charged by the Canada Express Company are altogether too high; we believe higher than necessary to yield a reasonable profit to the Company. We, therefore, are of the opinion that a rival company ought to be inaugurated, or that the great railway companies of the Dominion should withdraw the exclusive privileges granted to the Canada Express Company, and operate a system of express among themselves, unless the company enjoying the present monopoly rearrange the rates at moderate figures." We do not know what ground there may be for this complaint of overcharge; since the advent of the Dominion Express Company, the rates at competitive points have been made very reasonable. Belleville is probably not a competing point. But the suggestion as to forming a railway express is not a happy one, as would be soon learned if it were adopted.

There are, we believe, many Railway Expresses in the United States, but only one or two that are of any advantage to the public. The main objection to a Railway Express is that there usually is a minimum charge made by each road, and next, that the delays which are now incident to freight business at transfer points, would characterize such a system. Under the present express system, a parcel can be sent over one railway, or over ten different railways, for one charge, where, in the case of a railway express business, each company would get its minimum charge of say 25 cents, or say ten times 25 cents, or \$2.50 for what express companies now charge but 25 cents. Under a system of railway expresses, a package going over ten roads would probably be billed ten times, and delayed as many days. Under the present system, it is billed through from starting point to destination, regardless of the number of roads it passes over, and as most railways run the express trains to make close connections with the trains of other railways which they cross, there is no delay.

MANUFACTURERS' EXPERIENCES.

Messrs. Wm. Kennedy & Sons, Owen Sound, write us under date 19th December: "Having built a good stone shop 300 x 40 ft. we must have something to do. Our experience is that business in our line has been very dull during the year now closing. We have been able to keep all our hands employed, but work came in that 'hand-to-mouth' sort of way that keeps one in an uncomfortable frame of mind all the time. Prices, through competition, are cut so close that it requires hard work, good management and strict economy to make ends meet. Yet we hope for better days, and in the absence of an insolvency law, incapable men and insolvents will be forced out and leave more room for the 'fittest.' The credit system works mischief, and some of our leading shops the proprietors of which are against it, still take work at two, three and five years rather than refuse the terms."

The Paris Manufacturing Co. (Limited) who are manufacturers of shirts, drawers, hosiery yarns, &c., write us that they have "done a fair business this past year. It being now between seasons, we are getting samples ready and look forward to an improvement next year."

The old established firm of Patterson Brothers, makers of implements in the County of York, say that: "While trade has been very quiet here this fall, prospects now lead us to anticipate a large increase of business next year."

A merchant and manufacturer of furniture at Windsor, N. S., Mr. A. P. Shand, describes the condition of trade in his neighborhood as having been not so good as usual the past season. "Owing to the very low rates of ocean freight, very few ships are building in this county and we look for a quiet winter."

As an instance of the peculiar condition of things in their line, Messrs. R. W. King & Co., makers of knitting machinery at Georgetown, tell us that: "In our special line of knitting machinery there seemed to be complete stagnation last spring, and we had to seek occupation in other ways. But during the summer, trade improved, and at the present time we do not complain though a long way short of three years or more ago. We are running fewer hands but we trust with fair profit."