

improvement, for despite the well-known fact that the law was persistently broken, incurring incalculable evil to the poorer classes, it has been most difficult to obtain convictions. Now, thanks to the energy of the Chief of the Revenue Police, acting upon complaints and information furnished by this League, a large number of violators have recently been fined, with good effect; but nothing short of the absolute separation of the liquor and grocery business will ever really eradicate the evil.

Reduction of licenses in the city.—We regret to say that the following table shows a slight increase for the present year:—

	Hotels.	Restaurants.	Shops.	Totals.
1889-90.....	213	301	568	1082
1890-91.....	165	322	597	1084
1891-92.....	162	304	477	933
1892-93.....	154	307	474	933
1893-94.....	147	331	477	955

But, we are also pleased to be in a position to advise that the Government have, after consultation with this League and other bodies, ordered the following limitations to be observed by the Commissioners for hotels and restaurants:—

For 1894.....	440
For 1895.....	400

This is what the citizens of Montreal have pressed for for years, and cordial acknowledgments are now due to the Honorable, the Premier, the Hon. John S. Hall and the Hon. Louis Beaubien, for their assistance in bringing about the amendment.

Prohibition, prohibition, prohibition, is the almost universal reply to the third query, although there are a few secessions who do not feel warranted in attempting to voice public opinion in regard to this question. There is no doubt that a general, as distinguished from a local, prohibitory law, having the consistent moral support of the Christian Church, and vigorous enforcement by the state is, worthy of consideration and should be speedily introduced.

Many believe the legal enforcement of prohibitory measures to be a thing right in principle, and which will in the course of time be brought to pass through the exertions of others more interested than themselves. There are few who would look on such enforcement as a wrong against society, nor feel their conscience injured by it as a trespass, to which they as citizens were parties, against the right of others.

The large majority of our Church members hold, first, that such legal enforcement is right in principle, because, as it affects the liquor-seller, it would forbid instead of authorizing, as do license laws, men entering an employment the most degrading of any now openly followed in any civilized land.

As it affects the drinker, it would refuse to him an agent which necessarily produces an evil habit of appetite and of will, and leads to an abandonment of social duties, a public menace and moral suicide.

As it affects the drinker, it would remove the temptation of a most seductive and insidious custom from the plane of a legal responsibility to that of a secret vice. And, because, although it is claimed that such action compels the abstainer by the letter of the law to forego, what the evils of intemperance ought to lead him to forego in spirit of self-renunciation: it is at the expressed wish of abstainers that such action is to be taken, and is, therefore, on their part a voluntary act, publicly reasserting habitual self-restraint for the good of others.

And because, although it is claimed that such action coerces the law-abiding, in order to restrain the law-breaker; since drunkenness is a crime, there can be no indefeasible right to purchase intoxicating liquors.

That such enforcement is possible, because (a) prohibitory measures do violence to the conscience of an infinitesimal number, and because (b) their provisions are in harmony with the practice of a great majority of our most law-abiding citizens. Further (c) their enactment has been favored by the vote through plebiscite of a clear majority of our voters in four if not five of the provinces of the Dominion.

That the enforcement of such measures is of vital importance, because (a) all forms of the license system have failed to do away with intemperance; (b) the enactment of prohibitory measures, without means of enforcement by the same authority which enforces all other laws have proved ineffectual.

That the burden of the enforcement of these, as of all laws, should be borne by the state.

That such enforcement by the state should be imperatively demanded by church members and temperance workers, the very great majority of whom would give hearty support to such measures, which should be national, and not local.

A very small minority, instead of supporting, would violate a prohibitory law by purchasing alcoholic beverages.

Dr. Paton, the eminent missionary to the New Hebrides, who visited this country last year, interviewed President Cleveland and the authorities at Washington to endeavor to induce the American Government to help in suppressing the traffic in fire-arms, intoxicating liquors and opium in the New Hebrides, and other Pacific Islands. Good Dr. Cuyler overflows in righteous wrath in this

fashion: "Just think of it, a lot of converted cannibals, begging a Christian Government not to send them any more rum. Verily, the Christianity of our own land does need Christianizing at the very core. Ships sail from American ports with—missionaries as passengers to Africa, and with thousands of gallons of rum in their cargo; Heaven goes in the cabin, and hell goes in the ship's hold. How long will it take to convert the heathen in this style?"

In conclusion, your convener is firmly convinced that we are coming upon better times. To-morrow is going to be better than yesterday was, and God is taking care of all this great work and it is all right. While we cannot stop a man's drinking at his own table by any law that was ever made or ever will be made, we can stop it if he be a Christian man, by appealing to him in the name of Jesus Christ himself, who emptied himself, and whogaveup his rights.

In the National Temperance Almanac for this year appear the following lines:

There is a little public house,
That every one can close;
It is the little public house,
Just below the nose.

Now we say that is good common sense, and everybody knows it, and those two things, on the one hand the closing of the saloon, and the suppression of the liquor traffic by salutary law, and on the other by the persuading of God's people to let liquor alone in the behalf of their weak fellowmen. In the line of those two propositions, we believe lies the sensible prosecution of the temperance reform throughout this province and land. Let us have faith; let us believe that God can carry on his own work, and let us believe that he has not trusted it wholly to us to carry on.

For right is right—since God is God,
And right, the day must win;
To doubt, would be dishonour,
To falter, would be sin.

The Great Fast and the Great Fight.

There stood once on the border of Lake Nemi a temple much visited by Roman ladies from which this gem of the Alban Hills was called Diana's Mirror. The priest was a slave who had murdered his predecessor, and who was ever on the watch, bearing a similar fate. Whenever a new priest was installed, the road to this temple was crowded with the carriages of the fashionable devotees who eagerly went out from the city to see this priestly slayer of a brother priest. This drove to the beautiful Arician Woods was what passed for religion and religious worship at Rome, when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness and Jesus of Nazareth went out into the wilderness to fast and be tempted of the devil.

The meaning of this great fast and fight becomes clearer from a study of the times as seen in the attitude of Roman society toward the prime subject of religious belief, the reality of the world to come. The Epicurean philosophy was just then fighting the revival of faith in a hereafter which came in with Augustus. The history is familiar to every reader of Virgil. The Sixth Book of the *Æneid*, with its disclosure

of Tartarus, like the Inferno of Dante a thousand years later, was an agonizing revelation from which all who had leisure for thought fled to excess of unbelief. They took up again the polished epigrams of Cicero's letters, "There is no hereafter," and "No God ever comes to mingle in human affairs"; they repeated the maxim of desperate unbelief: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"; they revelled and intrigued and feasted with feverish eagerness to forget what they had heard and feared might be true, and so they drifted toward eternity, as the world neared the hour of Christ's manifestation.

It was a far cry from the Jordan where John was baptizing, to the Appian way along which equipages rolled to the temple of Diana. How could they hear that Voice: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" What mattered it that such events happened in Pilate's jurisdiction as have shaped the world's history and shaken the world's thought? What signify these things now to them who sneer at a belief in the temptation of Jesus as a revelation of what passes in the consciousness of men! The times are not so very different. The man right beside you to-day will take his own life and tell you to write over his body the old heathen falsehood: "Non fueram, non sum!" The enchantress of souls to-day will whisper the world-old lie: "There is no second death"; you can live but once and die but once; make the most of life, therefore, and think little and lightly of death. And all this while we live so near that world to come that it makes an echo in every heart; "we hear the drum-beat of eternity in our own breasts," we hear the stir of that great life in the speaking silences of this, and even when we lie down to sleep, we hear the surf thunder of the shoreless sea.

The fact of Christ's temptation is beyond dispute, if we accept the record. The details are given with various emphasis. The fast was an incidental necessity leading up to the conflict and the ministry of the angels. Let us so treat it. The abstinence practiced in Lent concerns not meat and drink, but a clearing consciousness of the world to come.—ROLLIN A. SAYER, D.D.



MR. W. DRYSDALE.