

OLD COUNTRY NEWS.

Our Coming Men—Miss Weston's Army and Navy Work—The Teetotal Church—Army—Earlier Closing in Ireland—"The Fibroch" for "Puir Caladonna"—More about the Compensation Clause

The Young Abstainers' Union of London, of which Sir Arthur Blackwood, K.C.B., is president, has a membership of seven thousand.

The board of Guardians at Halifax have resolved to abolish the custom of giving beer, or money in lieu of beer, to the officers of the house.

Miss Weston, who is a great authority on such matters, estimates that there are not less than 10,000 total abstainers in Her Majesty's navy, or about one in every six. This is surely a most cheering fact.

The City of London Guardians have resolved to request the medical officer to report as to the consumption of liquor by the inmates, and as to whether it is necessary. This, too, is a sign of the times, and indicates how the tide is setting in the old country against the drink.

The Church Army, a kind of mission organization in connection with the English Church, and working on similar lines to those of the Salvation Army is said to have 12,000 workers connected with it, everyone of whom is a total abstainer.

Another Nail Driven Home. By a majority of 76 the House of Commons has just cut off a few hours from the liquor traffic in Ireland, and in future in all places of 10,000 inhabitants and upwards the liquor-sellers must be content to put up their shutters at 9 p.m.

"We're a John Tamson's Bairns." "The Fibroch" is the title of a new London Scottish I.O.G.T. paper, which is just to hand. It is a worthy effort and the little messenger should have long life and prosperity. It is issued especially for the Scottish—"far aw' frae bonnie Scotland" in the vast metropolis. The first number is nicely gotten up, and contains much that is interesting. As it grows in influence and power it is to be hoped it will continue sound and thorough "in the cause of truth and honor." Here is a smart thing from its pages:

ST. STEPHEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CLASS. Schoolmaster J. Bull: "Now boys, state the successive processes whereby 'Local Option' was included in the Government proposals?" Cony Ritchie: "It was entertained." Uny Joey: "It was embodied." Libby Harcourt: "It was eviscerated." Weo Randy: "It was embalmed." Witty Wilfy: "It was entombed." Schoolmaster: "All correct, boys, so you may keep your seats."

The Compensation Battle. The Compensation Clause are still the all-absorbing subject of thought and action in the United Kingdom; and, like every wrong, they are calling forth much opposing good, even from the least expected quarters. It is a good sign that, of all the obnoxious points of this miserable measure, these particular clauses alone seem to excite everyone's attention; and it is becoming more and more doubtful if this, the strongest Tory Government of recent years, will dare to press the issue. Perhaps one of the most desirable and welcome results of the agitation is that Mr. Gladstone (never a strong friend of the Temperance party) has, with all the vehemence at his command, denounced the attempt "to create a vested interest in licenses taken out by publicans." Add to this the fact that no point in his recent great speech at Memorial Hall was so heartily cheered as these scathing references to Tory toadying to brewers and bungs, and it is pretty clear that both the man and the people are learning at last.

Mr. W. S. Cairns, who has never been otherwise than true at heart to the interests of temperance (though during his "Unionist" campaign some bad blood was raised by what many considered a little slip) is working "like a giant armed" against his party on this question; and is raising such a mass of evidence, and calling forth such strong opposition to the clauses that any little disappointment formerly felt, will be swept for ever from every mind. Gathering statistics, writing letters, and speaking at a vast number of meetings, he is doing service second to none.

Already there is evidence that property has enormously increased in value in anticipation of the good time supposed to be coming under the Local Government Bill. For example, we learn that no less than \$50,000 have been realized within the last few weeks for an average "pub" in London, and not in a main road either.

The Church of England Temperance Society is perhaps the only portion of the Temperance party that is not thorough in its opposition to the Government proposals. The following suggestion from the Manchester Diocesan Executive reflects very correctly the feelings of the great Church party: "That inasmuch as successive Governments and the country at large have sanctioned the growth of the liquor traffic this Committee is prepared, under the changed conditions of public opinion, to concede the question of a claim to equitable consideration."

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FIVE BANKS WINDING UP

Such is the news from the Official Gazette of Ottawa. What an amount of loss the starting of those superfluous and worse than useless banks has inflicted upon the public. By subscribing to their stock at par, hundreds of men expected to make money through the rise in value and were bitterly disappointed. Thousands of innocent people invested their all in the stock, or placed the savings of a life-time in the savings bank branches, on account of the expectation of better returns than could be given by the sound and well-established banks. Now that the five young banks have failed these people, and a good many others, can see clearly that they did wrong, and acted foolishly, in putting their money at risk in those new, untried, experimental affairs. Their eyes have been opened since the failures.

But it was just as foolish for them to put their money there (upon the expectation of greater value for it than the older and richer banks could give) before their eyes were so rudely opened, as after. They did not then see, now they do see.

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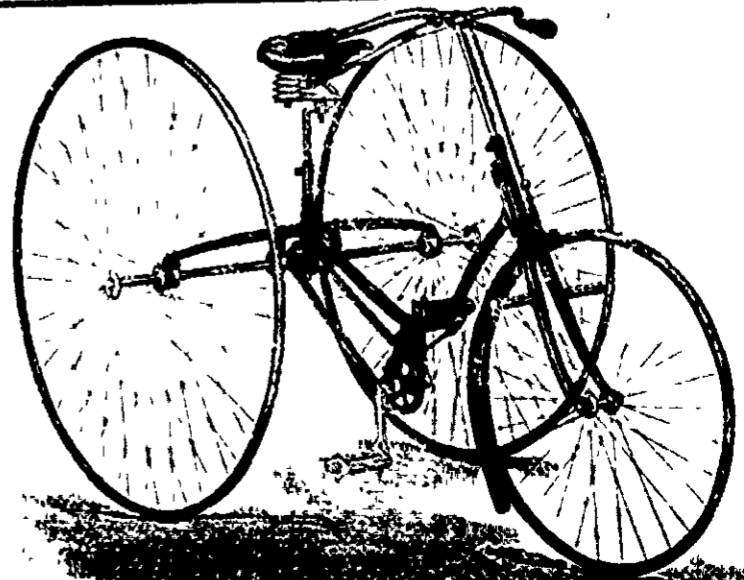
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