

it has always been managed, and Canadians feel a just pride in its long and honourable career. It began in our national infancy, and it is just that it should share in the prosperity it has done so much to promote. There are only seven other joint stock banks in the Empire that were in existence in 1818—the Banks of England and Ireland, already referred to; four in Scotland, and one Colonial bank. The last five have paid-up capitals averaging little more than one-half that of the Bank of Montreal. The average number of branches of the four Scotch banks is one hundred and nineteen. The Colonial one—the Bank of New South Wales, established in 1817—has one hundred and eighty-two branches, and the market value of its stock is three hundred and fifty.

THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION AGAIN.

THE advocates of temperance seem to be divided for the moment as to the policy to be pursued on the question which is nearest their hearts. Some are unwilling to abandon "Local option" without further struggle, while others are disposed to commence an agitation for total prohibition, under the authority of the Dominion Government. High license and limited license meet no favour from them, which is not matter for astonishment. High license merely adds to the desire to sell more liquor to pay the tax. Reducing the number of taverns, while there are still sufficient to offer an open door to every inebriate, is as irrational as fastening the stable door after the horse is stolen. But of all the follies of which men have been guilty, in connection with the liquor question, commend me to the proposal to establish at public expense asylums for the cure of inebriates. License the tavern to enable men and women to drink and when their appetites have become depraved, try to cure them by a short abstinence and turn them out to fall once more under temptation, the fate of ninety-nine inebriates among a hundred!

The out-and-out prohibitionist is logical in his methods whatever may be thought of his chances of success. Absolute entire suppression of the traffic is a complete remedy for intemperance, and I do not suppose that the world would lose much if it were carried into effect, while the gain would undoubtedly be enormous. That the use of alcohol is often beneficial I have no doubt. A recent writer in the *Century Magazine* who speaks with authority, and is evidently master of his subject, declares stimulant to be a valuable aid to digestion, and many can support his statement from personal experience. But the view of Carpenter, and other writers on the side of total abstinence that stimulus can be had in a less seductive form than that which is now so common, is likewise true. It does seem, however, rather a strong interference with the liberty of the subject to grant the necessity for stimulant and proceed to limit not the quantity but the character of the agent. Every one knows how various are the idiosyncracies of the human stomach, that "what is one man's meat is another man's poison," and it is not probable that till the world at large has attained to a much higher state of development than it has yet reached will there be a general agreement to the total suppression of alcohol. It is true that Mahomet secured general obedience from his followers in the matter. The true believers, however, if we can rely upon the reports of travellers, have always drunk and now drink a good deal upon the sly, and it must be recollected that the false prophet found converts in hot countries only where the atmosphere affords of itself sufficient stimulus.

People may argue and joke about the liquor traffic, but it is beyond denial that drunkenness is a gigantic evil, destroying, soul and body, millions of men and women every year, and inflicting untold misery on their relations and friends. Very few deny that some remedy is needed. Numberless have been the checks put upon the liquor traffic from the earliest ages to the present time. All have failed. A thoroughly prohibitory liquor law for the Dominion would meet with strenuous opposition in Parliament, and from the press and people at large. It could only be enforced at enormous expense and with a repetition of the serious conflicts which have marked the career of the Scott Act. Not only men of the baser sort would resist the law, it would be set at defiance by many respectable citizens. Even an attempt could not be made to put it in operation without an expenditure of many millions to recompense the manufacturers. The smuggling from the States and the illicit manufacture would be enormous and have a demoralizing effect on large sections of the community. Temperance men have nothing just now presented to them by their leaders save a long expensive struggle, with no better result in view than the failure which the Scott Act has encountered.

Since my first letter on the subject appeared in THE WEEK, I have been frequently asked whether it was the Swedish law that I proposed to introduce into Canada? With the aid of City Librarian Bain, to whom no one goes for information in vain, I learned that the Swedish system is one of local option, the regulations being mainly left to the municipal authorities to formulate. What is called the Gothenburg system, introduced by the magistrates of that town under the Permissive Act, differs in one particular from any other that I have heard of. They do not allow the liquor sellers to make a profit from their customers. The municipality gives a monopoly to a company, composed of the best citizens, which supplies the dealers, twenty-five in number, with brantvin, a kind of whiskey. Cheap food is provided in all the taverns, and the keepers sell the liquor at cost, and make their living by the profits on the food. Hotels of a higher class and grocers are allowed to sell without much restriction. There is not much comfort for prohibitionists in these regulations, though drunkenness is said to have diminished in consequence of the low taverns having been closed. Those who go to the licensed taverns have every facility for drinking spirits with their meals, the price of brantvin being

low and the quality good, and there is apparently no fixed limit to the quantity, one writer mentioning that customers re-appear ten or twelve times during the day. The taverns close at eight p.m., and it is to be presumed that liquor would be refused to any one obviously intoxicated.

Prohibitionists desire the extinction of the importation, manufacture and sale of strong drink of all kinds, and they think that in time they will attain their object. But, in the meantime, they must see that liquor will be freely sold and drunkenness will increase. The assumption by the Government of the Dominion of the importation, manufacture and sale of liquor would be a long step towards the object desired by Temperance men. It would bring the traffic directly under the control of Parliament, and consequently of the people. The distilleries and breweries would be purchased or worked by their present owners under Government superintendence. As the sale was reduced by stringent regulations against the use of immoderate quantities by any one, and the entire stoppage of supplies to the intemperate, the manufacture would be gradually lessened, and machinery wearing out would not be renewed. Thus the violent measure proposed by the Prohibitionists of stopping the manufacture in a single day, without compensation to owners, would be avoided, and the Government placed in a position to follow public opinion as expressed at the polls. If it demanded total prohibition after a trial of restricted Government sale, it could be granted with very little trouble or expense. If, on the contrary, the system of restriction prevented drunkenness and consequent crime, the moderate sale would be continued. It may be said that suppression of drunkenness will be difficult, but it will not be impossible. Let the Government undertake the sale, aided, not merely by teetotallers, but by all the decent men in the community, and drunkenness can be put down by strict limiting of the amount sold to all and entire prohibition for the man or woman known to be intemperate. Even the secret drunkard is easily detected. His friends and relatives know his weakness, and by communicating the fact privately, to the authorities, would secure stoppage of the supply. The public drunkard would be reported by the police. All that is mere matter of detail. Give a willingness on the part of the public to submit to total prohibition—alleged to exist by Temperance men—and submission to a limited supply to the sober and total abstinence for the drunkard is easy.

I am prepared to find Prohibitionists reject this plan, but as time goes on, and they find themselves blocked in their efforts for total prohibition, they will be glad to accept my proposition. J. GORDON BROWN.

VILLANELLE.

SPRUNG from a sword-sheath fit for Mars,
Sharp and straight, of a gay glad green,
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars.

Barter, would I, for the dross of the Czars,
These golden flowers and buds fifteen
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars?

Barter, would you, these scimitars,
Among which lit by their light so keen
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars?

No! For the breast may break its bars,
The heart its shell at sight of the sheen
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars.

Miles away from the mad earth's jars,
Beneath its leafy and shining screen,
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars.

And I, self-scathed with mortal scars,
I weep when I see in its radiant mien,
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars,
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars!

SERANUS.

THE ANGLICAN SYNOD.

WE are glad that we are, on the whole, able to congratulate the Bishop of Toronto and his diocese upon the proceedings at the meeting of the Synod last week. In the first place, it was gratifying to learn that the various societies and organizations for educational and missionary purposes are in a flourishing condition, and that their financial state is more prosperous than in former years.

Again, it is a sincere matter of congratulation that the bitter party spirit which formerly marred the proceedings of the Anglican Synod, seems to be dying out. It is a scandal to Christians, in which not merely the particular community concerned is interested, when hot and bitter disputes break out among those who profess the same religion. It is surely worse when the strife is among members of the same Church. All communions must rejoice to know that this evil spirit is passing away. We do not, of course, mean that it is extinct in any denomination. Among Presbyterians it is still found that representatives of the old established Church of Scotland on the one hand, and representatives of the Free Church on the other hand, will go into different lobbies when a division takes place. And so, among Anglicans, the tendencies represented by the High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church (Altitudinarian, Plitudinarian and Latitudinarian, as Bishop Wilberforce used to call them) will